

Journey to the Center of the Earth

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CENTER OF THE EARTH - DAY

CLOSE ON: A TRILOBITE FOSSIL embedded in a boulder.

SUDDENLY...

A REAL TRILOBITE skitters across the rock.

It drops onto the ground, LEGS AND ANTENNAE FLICKING WILDLY.

JUST THEN...

A BOOTED FOOT SMASHES THROUGH THE GRASS.

THE WRITHING TRILOBITE LEAPS RIGHT AT THE SCREEN.

A MAN RUSHES FORWARD, in a long-white beard, tattered khakis and a pith helmet.

Panting, he steals a glance behind him.

A TERRIFYING ROAR shakes the ground.

The man stumbles away, nearly sliding off a rocky cliff. He hauls himself up, but

WE SHOOT OVER THE CLIFF AND SOAR THROUGH...

A MASSIVE, UNDERGROUND MOUNTAIN RANGE!

A roof of solid rock arches out to the horizon. Huge stalactites glisten like stars, creating a subterranean milky way...

A BREATHTAKING, 3-DIMENSIONAL WORLD.

WE SHOOT BACK DOWN TO FIND...

THE MAN SCRAMBLING ACROSS A ROCK-FILLED VALLEY.

As we close in, we realize these shapes are...

BONES, FANTASTIC SKELETONS SCATTERED ACROSS THE GROUND. TEETH AND CLAWS AND TUSKS LOOM DANGEROUSLY CLOSE.

The man flicks open AN ORNATE, ANTIQUE BRASS COMPASS. HE PUTS IN HIS MONOCLE, checks his bearings...and smiles.

BUT ANOTHER ROAR RIPS THE AIR.

The man spins to see a MENACING SHADOW STREAKING TOWARD HIM.

He flings himself forward just as...

A LEATHERY CLAW SMASHES THE BONES AROUND HIM TO POWDER.

A GIGANTOSAURUS BELLOWS ITS RAGE RIGHT AT THE SCREEN.

THE MAN FLEES. Stumbling. Exhausted.

THE DINOSAUR CHARGES AFTER HIM. Bones crack under its feet, springing into the air like missiles.

The man races for A RUSHING RIVER...

BUT HIS FOOT CATCHES on a small ribcage, and he tumbles to the ground.

The beast roars with delight.

The man tries to jerk free, but his leg is tangled in bones.

The gigantosaur gnashes its teeth.

With one last effort, THE MAN FLINGS HIS COMPASS TOWARD THE RIVER.

The compass FLIES RIGHT AT US, splashing into the steaming water.

The man turns around just as...

THE MASSIVE DINOSAUR CLOSES IN,

HIS TEETH SNAPPING RIGHT AT US.

MATCH CUT TO:

AN OPEN HUMAN MOUTH, ALL TEETH, TONGUE and TOOTHPASTE.

We're...

INT. ALEX'S BATHROOM - DAY

ALEX LIDENBROCK (12) glumly brushes his teeth.

SINK P.O.V.: ALEX SPITS RIGHT AT US.

INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

ALEX FLINGS HIS TOOTHBRUSH ACROSS THE ROOM. It lands neatly in an open duffle bag on his bed.

Posters line the walls: Curt Schilling opposite Andre 3000.

BASEBALL TROPHIES CROWD THE SHELVES.

Alex yanks out a dresser drawer, carries it over to the duffle bag, and dumps the whole thing in.

JOANNE (O.S.)

That's one way to pack.

JOANNE, ALEX'S MOM, stands in the doorway, watching him sympathetically.

ALEX

I don't know what I'm gonna need.

JOANNE

You're only going to your father's house.

ALEX

Like he's even gonna know I'm there. In case you haven't noticed, I'm not an igneous rock.

JOANNE

He's promised to put all his experiments aside and spend time with you.

ALEX

He promises a lot of things. I'm still waiting for him to take me trout fishing. And that was two years ago!

She helps him pack.

JOANNE

So he's a little scatterbrained. You know he loves you.

Alex frowns over at A BASEBALL UNIFORM on the closet door.

ALEX

They're gonna put Mark Richiazzi at third.

JOANNE

A month without baseball might not kill you.

Alex looks at her very seriously.

ALEX
Can you afford to take that chance?

She gives him a hug.

JOANNE
Or would you rather come to Tempe
for a three-week seminar on
"Maximizing Productivity in the
Interactive Workplace?"

ALEX
I'd rather play third base.

JOANNE
Me, too.

She takes HIS CEL PHONE off the desk and hands it to him.

JOANNE (cont'd)
Just call me if things get weird,
okay?

He nods, sullen.

ALEX
Can I call you now?

EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE, SUBURBS - DAY

Alex hauls his bag to the car.

TWO KIDS PLAY BALL on the next lawn.

AN ERRANT BASEBALL bounces over and stops at his feet.

NEIGHBOR KID
Hey, Lidenbrock. Smoke one in
here!

Alex grins, winds up, and throws the ball...RIGHT AT US.

IT FLIES WILDLY OFF THE MARK AND GOES BOUNCING DOWN THE
STREET.

He sighs.

NEIGHBOR KID (cont'd)
Real nice.

ALEX'S MOM TOOTS THE HORN.

EXT. CROWDED STREETS OF BOSTON - DAY

HORNS BLARE as the station wagon negotiates the crowded streets around Harvard Square.

A BICYCLIST shoots right at us, then veers away at the last second.

Alex stares out the window, ABSORBING the city in MESMERIZING 3-D: the people, the cars, the buildings.

EXT. PROFESSOR LIDENBROCK'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

Alex climbs the steps of AN OLD BROWNSTONE. WEIRD FACES STARE OUT AT HIM FROM THE CARVED DOORWAY.

He rings the bell. Nothing.

He tries the door. Locked.

He drops his bag, and steps over to

A SUNDIAL in the corner of the stoop.

HE TURNS THE STYLE TO TWELVE...

THE MOUTH ON A CARVED FACE POPS OPEN.

A KEY GLEAMS INSIDE.

INT. PROFESSOR LIDENBROCK'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

Alex stands inside a silent, dusty entrance hall.

ALEX

Dad?

Nothing. Alex's eyes slowly swivel to the right, where...

A STUFFED WOLVERINE BATTLES A TAXIDERMIED COBRA on an end table. Their glassy eyes stare at him.

Alex frowns. He takes off his ballcap and wings it at them.

IT FLIES AT US AND BLACKS OUT THE SCREEN.

Alex sighs and heads upstairs.

Above, we hear MUFFLED VOICES...

INT. DAD'S STUDY - DAY

Fossils and scholarly journals crowd the shelves. Unopened mail lies on the desk. The answering machine blinks: 17 messages.

PROF. STROCK (O.S.)
I've covered for you all I can,
Davis.

A SERIOUS MAN IN TWEED stares at a WALL OF DIPLOMAS.

PROF. STROCK (cont'd)
But the committee has expectations.

He turns and finds...nothing. Then he looks down.

PROFESSOR DAVIS LIDENBROCK sits on the floor, surrounded by GLITTERING GEODES.

Lost in thought, he examines one of the rocks. Strock huffs.

PROF. STROCK (cont'd)
They're talking about revoking your
tenure.

Davis looks up -- intense and handsome, in an unkempt, scientist sort of way.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
And I'm talking about changing
science as we know it.

He tosses Strock a geode. IT FLIES AT US. Strock catches it.

PROF. STROCK
You've gone down a rabbit hole,
Davis. You're becoming a crackpot.
This isn't science, it's obsession.

Davis gets up to cross-reference his notes against an ANCIENT BOOK.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Come on, Don. Everything we know
about geology, seismology and
anthropology might be wrong.
Doesn't that intrigue you just a
little?

PROF. STROCK
Not if you can't prove it.

Davis flips the book open to the frontispiece. He stares at the etching of A BEARDED MAN WITH A MONOCLE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Fine. Then I'll prove it.

Strock looks over Davis' shoulder at the picture. He sighs.

PROF. STROCK
Will you? Arne Saknussemm
couldn't. Don't waste your life
like that crackpot wasted his.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I'm right on the verge. I just
need a little more time.

PROF. STROCK
I'm sorry, Davis, but you don't
have it.

Strock heads for the door.

PROF. STROCK (cont'd)
Unless you present your findings to
the committee by the end of the
summer...

He turns, his hand on the doorknob.

PROF. STROCK (cont'd)
Your career at this university --
and anywhere else -- will be over.

Strock opens the door...AND THERE STANDS ALEX, HAVING HEARD
THE WHOLE THING.

Strock just brushes past him.

Davis blinks at Alex, startled to see him.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Oh. Hi. Alex.

ALEX
Is this a bad time?

INT. DAD'S LAB - DAY

A PURPLE CRYSTAL ROTATES, affixed to a mechanical arm inside a complicated machine.

A DRILL whirs out and bores into the crystal. Sparks and shards fly at the screen.

Davis peers in at the machine. Around him, the lab blinks and clicks, a 3-DIMENSIONAL WONDERLAND of science equipment.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
So, um, your mom's in Tampa?

Alex frowns at his father's back.

ALEX
Tempe.

Davis weighs his geode on a scale, not hearing his son.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Lot of alligators in Florida.
Fascinating creatures.

Across the room, Alex sighs. He peers at a BIG FOSSIL TOOTH.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
How's baseball going?

ALEX
(encouraged)
Good. I might play third base this year. Coach says I-

Davis wanders over to another machine.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
(distracted)
Terrific...

Alex frowns. He strolls over to where A BATTERED BRASS COMPASS sits beneath a huge magnifying glass.

He peers down at the compass:

The ornate scrollwork is tarnished and green. The glass is cracked, AND THE NEEDLE SPINS ROUND AND ROUND.

ALEX
Looks like you need a new compass.

Davis peers up from his scale.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Ah!

He hurries over, FOCUSED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
My latest acquisition. It belonged
to Arne Saknussemm, himself.

Alex stares blankly.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
The legendary Icelandic explorer?
History's most misunderstood
genius?

ALEX

(still staring blankly)
Oh, THAT Arne Saknussemm.

Davis points to a picture pinned on a bulletin board: ANOTHER
IMAGE OF THE BEARDED MAN WITH THE MONOCLE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Arne Saknussemm was one of the
finest minds of the 19th Century.
His theories on the composition of
the planet were so advanced the
scientific community's still
arguing about them today. As you
may have overheard.

He smiles sheepishly.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Anyway, in 1864, he announced he'd
finally found definitive proof of
all his claims...but before he
could show anyone, he disappeared.
Never to be heard from again.

Davis grins and holds up the compass.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Until last month. When his compass
popped out of a geyser in
Yellowstone National Park.

He closes the compass lid, and there are the initials, "A.S."

ALEX
 (deadpan)
 I can see how you'd be psyched.

Davis puts the compass down, DISAPPOINTED. He trudges over to his computer.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 (muttering)
 I know your mother wants to raise
 "a grounded child" and all that.
 I'm not complaining.

Alex stares at the floor, a little guilty. He begrudgingly picks up the compass, running his thumb along the metal.

ALEX'S FINGER CATCHES ON SOMETHING. He peers at the compass.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 But a little imagination never hurt
 anybody.

Suddenly, there's a click...AND THE BOTTOM OF THE COMPASS SWINGS OPEN.

MUSIC PLAYS FROM THE OPEN COMPASS: A CREAKY, TINKLING MUSIC BOX TUNE.

Davis swivels slowly on his chair.

Alex gapes at the compass in his hand.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 What did you do?

ALEX
 Nothing.

Davis rushes over and examines the compass.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 A secret compartment...

Alex smiles proudly...BUT DAVIS JUST TURNS TO THE MAGNIFYING GLASS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 I can't believe I missed that.

Alex sulks.

ALEX
(quietly)
Yeah, you don't miss anything.

Davis slides the compass under the lens.

CLOSE ON: THE SECRET COMPARTMENT. SOMETHING'S LODGED INSIDE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Hand me those tweezers.

Alex gives his father a pair of fine tweezers from the counter. Davis carefully inserts them into the compartment.

ALEX
Take out his funny bone for 200
dollars.

Davis slowly draws out a SMALL, YELLOWISH WAD.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Good gravy.

He unfolds the wad, revealing...

AN ANCIENT, TATTERED PARCHMENT.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
It's in Latin. Let's see...
"Abyssus carus amicus--"

ALEX
Dad. English.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
"Greetings, dear friend. My name
is Arne Saknussemm, and I am
writing these words to you..."

Davis looks up at Alex, wild-eyed with excitement.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
"FROM THE CENTER OF THE EARTH!"

INT. DAD'S KITCHEN - DAY

Davis sweeps weeks worth of newspapers and take-out containers off the kitchen table.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Do you know what this means?

ALEX
That you need a maid?

Davis hurries to the refrigerator, and takes out...

A COMPLICATED-LOOKING PROJECTOR.

ALEX (cont'd)
I'm not gonna ask.

Davis sets the projector on the table. He turns dials and flicks switches...

AND A HOLOGRAM SHOOTS OUT OF THE PROJECTOR.

There, right in front of our eyes, hovers...

THE EARTH, spinning slowly on its axis.

ALEX (cont'd)
Okay, that's kinda cool.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Scientific consensus is that the interior of the earth is made up of four parts.

Davis pushes a button. The earth splits in half, revealing A CROSS SECTION.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
The crust, the mantle and the outer and inner cores.

ALEX
We had that in Science last year. Everybody knows that.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Everybody thinks that. But the center of the earth is nearly 4000 miles down. The deepest anyone has ever drilled is 8.

He gestures toward the hologram.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
What you're looking at is science's best guess.

He pushes another button, and the HOLOGRAM TRANSFORMS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
I have a better one.

NOW THE EARTH RESEMBLES A ROTATING BALL OF SWISS CHEESE.

ALEX
So the earth is full of holes?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Tunnels.

THE EARTH GOES TRANSPARENT. Tunnels twist through the planet toward a HAZY CENTER.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Saknussemm theorized that our planet is riddled with natural passageways running back and forth and, more importantly, up and down. He proposed that a person could navigate these tunnels...all the way to the center of the earth.

ALEX
What about lava? Volcanos? It's like a million degrees down there.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Please, at most it's maybe nine thousand.

ALEX
Oh, well, then.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Look, some of these tunnels are filled with lava...

He points to the tunnels. Some are FIERY RED, some are COOL BLUE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
But there are just as many that aren't.

He holds up SAKNUSSEMM'S PARCHMENT.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
To get to the center, all you need are the proper directions.

Alex looks at the hazy center of the hologram.

ALEX
And what's down there?

Davis grins giddily.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That's what we're going to find
out.

And then, ZAP, THE PROJECTOR SHORT CIRCUITS, SENDING SMOKE
AND SPARKS OUT AT THE SCREEN.

The hologram vanishes and the room goes dark.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.) (cont'd)
That's why I keep it in the fridge.

INT. DAD'S BEDROOM - DAY

Davis packs in a hurry.

Alex freaks out behind him.

ALEX
Iceland? I can't go to Iceland!

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Sure you can. You can borrow my
jacket.

LIKE HIS SON, DAVIS DUMPS A DRAWER FULL OF CLOTHES INTO A
BAG.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Come on, Alex. This is our chance
to spend some quality time
together.

Alex just gapes at his father, disappointed.

ALEX
I don't believe you.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex, there's a chance, that in
Iceland, at the top of an extinct
volcano, is a doorway to the center
of the earth. Don't you want to
see if it's true?

DAVIS PEERS AT ALEX THROUGH A SPYGLASS. IT TELESCOPES OUT AT
THE SCREEN.

ALEX
 No, I want stay here. Where it's
 warm. And I'm alive.

EXT. BLUE SKY - DAY

A 747 FLIES RIGHT AT THE SCREEN.

ALEX (O.S.)
 Help. I'm being kidnapped.

INT. 747 - DAY

Alex looks pleadingly at a STEWARDESS.

She looks alarmed. Davis awkwardly musses his son's hair.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Ha. Kids.

She smiles and moves along the aisle. Davis turns to Alex.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 Don't you think you're being a
 little overdramatic?

ALEX
 You're the one planning on climbing
 down a volcano.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 We're not climbing down any
 volcano. All we're doing is
 finding the crater, charting the
 entrance and then going home. Safe
 as pie.

He reclines his seat and shuts his eyes.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 I'll do the real exploration later
 with a full team of experts.
 That's when I'll get my proof.

The stewardess returns with their drinks.

Davis keeps talking, eyes closed.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
It's not like I'd just drag my son
on some wild journey to the center
of the earth.

She peers down at him.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
I'm mean, I'm not crazy.

Alex twirls his finger at the side of his head.

EXT. BLUE SKY - DAY

A TWIN-ENGINE PROPELLER PLANE PASSES RIGHT OVER OUR HEADS.
IT ARCS TOWARD AN ICE-COVERED MOUNTAIN RANGE.

ALEX (O.S.)
You're crazy.

INT. PROPELLER PLANE - DAY

Alex glares at his Dad as they bump up and down in a rattle-
trap plane.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That's what they said about
Galileo. And Columbus. And
Darwin. It's one of the laws of
nature: dare to dream and someone's
going to call you a nut.

ALEX
So what's the dream, Dad? What's
so important about the center of
the earth?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Does your mom still have that
terrarium on the kitchen window?

ALEX
The moss thing?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Yes, the moss thing. A closed
environment, protected from the
elements, perpetually thriving.

ALEX

So the center of the earth is full
of moss?

Davis grins.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

At the very least. Look,
everything we know about life from
previous eras, we know from
fossils. The dinosaurs died
because their environment changed.
What if there were a place where
the environment didn't change? A
place where those fossils...weren't
fossils?

ALEX

Living dinosaurs?

Davis winks and elbows his son.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Now, tell me that wouldn't be cool.

TURBULENCE HITS THE PLANE. They bounce about. Davis laughs
nervously.

EXT. GUANO INLET - DAY

A BATTERED FISHING BOAT CRESTS THE WILD, GREEN SEA.

ALEX (O.S.)

This is not cool!

INT. FISHING BOAT CABIN - DAY

Alex and Davis hang on in the lurching cabin.

DAVIS LOOKS A LITTLE GREEN. He smiles queasily.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Fortune favors the bold, Alex.

A porthole pops open and FREEZING WATER SPRAYS RIGHT AT US.

Alex shuts the porthole. Davis tries to spread out a map.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 And, anyway, we're almost there.
 (he swallows)
 I hope.

Alex eyes him.

ALEX
 You all right, Dad?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Oh, sure...

The map sways before his eyes. Suddenly, he claps his hand over his mouth and spins...

ABOUT TO PUKE RIGHT AT US.

But at the last moment, WE CUT.

INT. VIKING HALL - NIGHT

BROWN BEER GUSHES FROM A TAP.

A BLONDE BARTENDER fills stein after stein in a crowded hall.

Davis and Alex wander through the seedy bar, filled with HULKING, BEARDED MEN. Not the place for a tourist.

Alex trails Davis closely, trying to be invisible.

DAVIS
 (In rough Icelandic)
 Excuse me? Excuse me?

He taps on a man's shoulder. The man does not acknowledge his presence. Wisely, he moves on to the next LARGE MAN.

DAVIS (cont'd)
 Excuse me, sir. We're...looking for a guide to take us to Mount Sneffels...I need to chart the entrance to the center of the Earth.

With that, he finally has the large beast's attention. The man turns, slowly looking Davis up and down. Alex gulps.

The Icelandic giant SHOVES Davis back, narrowly avoiding Alex, but right into another GOLIATH -- spilling his beer all over his jacket.

Davis regains his balance, knowing trouble has just begun.

DAVIS (cont'd)
 You'll have to forgive me...
 (Trying to clean the beer
 splatter off him)
 ...I'd be more than happy to give
 you some money to have this
 cleaned. It's a very nice jacket.

The GOLIATH'S eyes go wild with anger. HE DIVES FORWARD,
 RIGHT AT THE SCREEN, GRABBING DAVIS BY THE THROAT.

ALEX
 Hey!

Alex tries to pull him off. Davis goes purple.

A huge CROWD gathers around, egging on the brouhaha.

HANNAH (O.S.)
 Einar! Stoova!

THE BLONDE BARTENDER shoves her way onto the scene. She
 STOMPS on one giant's foot, and LETS A KICK FLY to the
 Goliath's family jewels.

She quickly ushers them outside.

HANNAH (cont'd)
 You are okay?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 (gasping for breath)
 I only offered...to pay him...to be
 our mountain guide.

HANNAH
 You could have offered to take him
 out to dinner and a movie. They
 don't like strangers here. You
 shouldn't have come.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Oh.

HANNAH
 So, you need a guide to where?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 The top of Mount Sneffels.

HANNAH
My name is Hannah. I take you.

Davis takes in her bar apron.

ALEX
No offense, but you're the
bartender, aren't you? We need a
professional.

Hannah nods towards the bar, where the two giants begin to
recover.

HANNAH
Professionals don't need you. And
I know what I'm doing on the
mountain.

She yanks off her apron. Underneath, she's wearing a work
belt with A CANTEEN AND A LARGE HUNTING KNIFE.

Alex's EYES GO WIDE at the size of her blade.

EXT. ICELANDIC COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

A beat-up TOYOTA LANDCRUISER rumbles over a dirt road.

On either side lie FIELDS OF VOLCANIC ROCKS, dotted with tiny
ICELANDIC HUTS.

INT. LANDCRUISER - DAY

Hannah drives. She looks in the rearview mirror to see DAVIS
ASLEEP IN THE BACK, SURROUNDED BY GRAPHS AND MAPS.

HANNAH
Your father. He is a smart man?

Alex looks back to make sure Davis is asleep.

ALEX
When it comes to some things.

HANNAH
Science?

ALEX
Yeah, science. Math. Geothermal
tectonic hoo-ha...

Alex trails off. He stares sullenly out the window.

ALEX (cont'd)
But he sure doesn't know anything
about the Red Sox.

Hannah stares over at him, confused.

HANNAH
I wear blue socks.

EXT. ICELANDIC COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The Landcruiser rounds a bend. The volcanic landscape gives
way to...

A LONE, SNOW-DUSTED PEAK RISING IN THE DISTANCE.

MT. SNEFFELS.

EXT. MT. SNEFFELS - DAY

Hannah leads them up the mountain, their boots crunching in
the snow.

All around, TINY VENTS BLOW STEAM RIGHT AT THE SCREEN.

Davis scans the peak with binoculars.

HANNAH
(loudly, over the wind)
How deep into the crater do you
want to go?

Davis shoots a glance at Alex, who glares at him.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
We're not going in. We're just
marking the entrance.

HANNAH
Good for you. Climbing up is flat
fee. Climbing in, I get bonus.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Bonus?

HANNAH
200 kronas per foot.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You couldn't tell me this before we
left?

HANNAH
It slipped my mind.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You wouldn't happen to sell used
cars in your spare time, would you?

Hannah looks at him soberly.

HANNAH
No.

Behind them, Alex smiles to himself.

EXT. MT. SNEFFELS, UPPER RIDGE - DAY

A DARK, OMINOUS PEAK rises above the clouds.

Davis and Alex stare up at it, winded.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
So...how do you like your summer
vacation so far?

Alex tightens his parka.

ALEX
Super. When do we go swimming?

Davis grins. Alex doesn't.

Hannah hikes past them.

HANNAH
Later, talking. Now, walking.

ABOVE THEM, STORM CLOUDS ROIL AROUND THE PEAK.

EXT. MT. SNEFFELS, CRATER - DAY

Alex frowns. Davis beams.

A field of inverted chimneys spreads before them: A HUNDRED
HOLES.

ALEX
So...which one is it?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Let's ask the expert.

ALEX PULLS OUT SAKNUSSEMM'S COMPASS. THE NEEDLE STILL SPINS USELESSLY.

He takes out THE PARCHMENT and gives it to Davis.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 "At one o'clock on a sunny day...
 Mount Scartaris points the way."

Hannah nods up at the DARK PEAK above them.

HANNAH
 That's Scartaris.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 (checks his watch)
 And it's almost one now. All we
 need is the sun.

Alex looks up. OMINOUS CLOUDS PUSH IN FAST.

ALEX
 Two out of three ain't bad, Dad.

Davis frowns from the darkening sky to the field of holes.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Come on, Arne. You couldn't mark
 it with a flag or something?

Just then A BRIGHT SPOT forms in the clouds above them.

Hannah notices. Davis and Alex do not.

ALEX
 (sarcastically)
 Don't feel bad, Dad. We're still
 spending time together.

Hannah turns Alex toward the SUNNY SPOT in the clouds.

ALEX (cont'd)
 Oh. Crud.

THE SUN BURSTS THROUGH, TURNING THE SKY TO GOLD.

Davis grins up at the clouds.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Thank you, cumulonimbus, for being
 so reliably patchy.

The sun blasts behind Scartaris, throwing A LONG, DARK SHADOW over the hikers.

The shadow stretches inexorably across the ground, inch by inch, until the peak points directly at one of the CHIMNEYS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
And thank you, Arne Saknussemm, for
just being you.

BOOM! THE SKY EXPLODES. THE SHADOW MOUNTAIN VANISHES.

STORM CLOUDS SWEEP BACK IN. RAIN POUNDS THE GROUND.

CRACK! LIGHTNING FORKS THE SKY.

HANNAH TACKLES DAVIS AND ALEX, KNOCKING THEM DOWN, JUST AS...

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING SINGES THE GROUND WHERE THEY STOOD,
INCINERATING A BAG OF STEEL CLIMBING PEGS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
The climbing gear. It's acting
like...

ALEX
Lighting rods!

They both turn to Hannah.

PROF. LIDENBROCK/ALEX
Thank you.

HANNAH
Dead men don't pay bonus.

THUNDER SHAKES THE MOUNTAINTOP.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Quick, inside the crater!

They stumble over jagged rocks. Lighting CRASHES behind them.

Finally, Alex and Hannah jump inside Saknussemm's crater.

Suddenly, Davis slips. HIS BAG GOES FLYING.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
My instruments!

ALEX
Dad! Come on!

But Davis dashes back for his bag, dodging lightning.

He grabs the bag and races wildly for the crater. But just as he leaps inside, the bag SNAGS ON A ROCK, tearing open.

HIS GEAR TUMBLES ACROSS THE ICE.

Alex and Hannah yank Davis inside, just as...

LIGHTNING ZEROES IN ON THE GEAR.

CRACK! BOOM!

THE ENTRANCEWAY COMPLETELY COLLAPSES.

INT. ENTRANCE CAVERN - DAY

DARKNESS.

Dad? ALEX (O.S.)

Alex? PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)

ALEX (O.S.)
Next time, leave the bag where it
is.

Suddenly, A LIGHT FLASHES ON, revealing...

HANNAH wearing a HELMET WITH A HEADLAMP.

ALEX SEES SOMETHING OVER HER SHOULDER.

ALEX (cont'd)
(whispers)
Oh, no.

Davis and Hannah turn to see...

THE CAVED-IN ENTRANCE.

MASSIVE ROCKS BLOCK THE WAY.

They scramble to their feet.

ALEX CLAWS AT THE SMALL STONES. DAVIS SHOVES AGAINST THE BOULDERS. HANNAH SWINGS WITH A PICK.

Finally, she steps back.

HANNAH

It's no use.

ALEX

What do you mean? We've got to get out of here.

Davis sags against the rocks, sweating.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

She's right. There must be six tons of rock here. It would take weeks to dig ourselves out.

ALEX

Weeks? We've only got food for a day. What are we supposed to do?

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Look, don't panic. Someone will notice when we don't come back.

He turns hopefully to Hannah.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

Right?

HANNAH

You said it was a top secret mission, tell no one.

(beat)

I told no one.

Alex glares at his father.

ALEX

Nice work, Dad!

PROF. LIDENBROCK

This isn't my fault, Alex.

ALEX

Tell that to Mom!

Suddenly, Alex gets an idea. He reaches into his bag and pulls out...HIS CEL PHONE.

ALEX (cont'd)

Maybe you really can.

He flicks open the phone...then frowns.

ALEX (cont'd)

No signal.

Davis peers at the rocks entombing them.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Not surprising, really, considering
the likely mineral content of all
this rock.

HANNAH

We need a plan. Now.

Davis puts on his headlamp. Alex follows suit.

Davis looks gravely from Hannah to Alex.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Well, if we can't dig our way out,
and if no one is coming to rescue
us, then we only have one option.

ALEX

Which is?

Davis swings his light around so that it illuminates...

THE TUNNEL.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

We go down.

Alex swallows nervously.

INT. CAVERN TUNNEL - DAY

Tiny flickers of light illuminate THE FANTASTIC ENVIRONMENT.

Sweating and dirty, Davis, Alex and Hannah squeeze past
STALACTITES, STALAGMITES, AND OTHER MISSHAPEN CRAGS...

DEEPER INTO THE CAVERN.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

If my theory holds up, this
arterial tunnel should intersect
with at least two or three smaller
tunnels. And at least one of those
should lead straight to the
surface.

He beams his light around, NOT SEEING ANYTHING.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Probably.

Alex takes out a canteen of water and unscrews the cap.
Hannah stops his hand.

HANNAH
You might want to save it.

Davis puts on a strained smile and presses forward.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Come on. I bet it's just around
the corner.

INT. TUNNELS AND GALLERIES - DAY

WE TWIST AND TURN WITH THE HIKERS THROUGH ROCKY TERRAIN.

WE STEP OVER A GAUNTLET OF CROOKED STALAGMITES.

WE DUCK UNDER A CURTAIN OF RAZOR SHARP STALACTITES.

Hannah expertly weaves through a dangerous passage.

SPIKES STICK RIGHT OUT INTO THE AUDIENCE.

Davis follows, rapt. He doesn't even notice when his shirt
catches on a spike.

Alex rolls his eyes, unhooking his clueless father.

INT. CAVERN TUNNEL - DAY

Headlamps cast wild shadows as Hannah nimbly picks her way
down the rocks. Davis ambles after her, whistling quietly.

Alex trails sullenly down the descending path.

ALEX
Your whole "tunnel that goes up"
theory's looking kind of wack right
now, Dad.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Theories change, Alex. That's why
we don't call them facts.

Davis peers closely at the wall.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 (to himself)
 Fascinating. This passageway is
 absolutely covered in schist!

Alex raises an eyebrow.

ALEX
 Excuse me?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Schist. It's a metamorphic rock.

He walks on, STARING AT THE CEILING.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 And check out these crystalline
 striations!

SUDDENLY, HANNAH SNAGS DAVIS BY THE SHOULDER, STOPPING HIM
 DEAD IN HIS TRACKS.

Davis looks down. His feet are poised at...

THE CRUMBLING EDGE OF A DEEP CHASM.

HANNAH
 That's twice.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 (swallows)
 Yes. It is.

TIME CUT:

Davis wraps a CYALUME GLOWSTICK in a handkerchief.

He cracks it...AND TOSSES IT INTO THE CHASM.

The stick falls for a few seconds, then POOF -- THE
 HANDKERCHIEF OPENS INTO A TINY PARACHUTE.

ALEX TIMES IT WITH HIS WATCH.

ALEX (O.S.)
 Thirty seconds.

The glowstick floats downward in a sparkling ring of green
 light, PASSING RIGHT IN FRONT OF US.

ALEX (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Sixty seconds.

CLACK! The glowstick hits an outcropping, but keeps falling.

ALEX (O.S.) (cont'd)
Ninety seconds.

A SPIDER WEB shimmers in the green light. A LARGE SPIDER scurries off as the glowstick floats by.

ALEX (O.S.) (cont'd)
Two minutes.

CLINK! The stick finally hits BOTTOM.

Davis, Alex and Hannah stare down at the tiny green glow.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
(mumbling)
Considering the drag coefficient...
per second per second...

He smiles cheerfully at the others.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Looks about 2600 feet down.

ALEX
That's down. We want to go up.

Davis just turns to Hannah.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Can we make it?

Hannah expertly surveys the shaft.

HANNAH
I could.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Then let's do it.

Alex grabs his arm.

ALEX
Dad. NO.

DAVIS SEES A TOUCH OF REAL FEAR IN HIS SON'S EYES.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex, we have no choice. We can't go back the way we came in, and we haven't seen any tunnels to the surface.

ALEX

You're not trying to get us out.
You're trying to prove your stupid
theory. And you don't care if we
all get killed doing it!

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Right now, that stupid theory is
our only hope. Either we find Arne
Saknussemm's trail -- and the food
and water it might lead to -- or
we're sunk.

Alex sags. Hannah tosses a length of rope over the side.

HANNAH

Who wants to go first?

INT. THE CHASM - DAY

Roped together, Davis, Hannah and Alex cautiously descend.

Rocks crumble under Alex's feet, dropping into the chasm,
CLICKING and ECHOING to the bottom.

ALEX

(under his breath)
We're in the schist now.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Alex...

THE CHASM WALLS SURROUND US. ROCKS AND LEDGES JUT OUT, CLOSE
ENOUGH TO TOUCH.

They use the rocky outcroppings as a natural ladder. One
handhold, one foothold at a time.

Suddenly, CRUNCH! A STONE BREAKS UNDER DAVIS' FOOT AND...

HE FREE-FALLS BACKWARDS!

HE SHOOTS STRAIGHT DOWN UNTIL...SNAP, THE LINE JERKS TIGHT.

Alex and Hannah strain under the weight.

DAVIS DANGLES IN THE CENTER OF THE CHASM.

Hannah grits her teeth and plants her feet.

HANNAH

Don't take all day.

Davis tries to swing to the wall...

PROF. LIDENBROCK
It's too smooth!

Hannah looks to Alex.

HANNAH
Alex! Use a peg!

Alex nervously pulls a steel peg from his belt. He goes to JAM it into a crevice...

BUT HE FUMBLES IT. The peg whistles away down the chasm.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Um, Alex...

ALEX
I'm on it!

Alex reaches for another peg, but can't find one. Instead, his hand touches...HIS CEL-PHONE.

Desperate, ALEX JAMS IT INTO THE ROCKS, forming a small step.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You're kidding.

ALEX
Mom gave it to me for emergencies.

Davis gingerly sets a foot down on it...AND IT HOLDS.

The rope slackens around Hannah's waist. She exhales.

Davis nails in a peg and re-ropes himself.

He pulls the phone from the crevice...a bit scuffed, but still in one piece.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Smart woman, your mother.

Alex smiles. Hannah clears her throat.

HANNAH
When you are ready.

INT. LOWER CAVERN - DAY

Exhausted, Alex and Davis wait on the cave floor, looking up.

After a moment, HANNAH DESCENDS.

She unslings her pack.

HANNAH
Okay. Now we drink.

Alex and Davis reach thankfully for their canteens.

HANNAH (cont'd)
Maybe for the last time.

Alex looks worried.

TIME CUT:

SEVERAL PIECES OF SCIENCE EQUIPMENT rest on an outcropping.

Davis makes notes by the light of his head lamp.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Barometer at 1743 millibars.
Pressure is 24.8 psi. Altitude...

He grins like a little kid.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
We're six and a half miles below
sea level!

ALEX
(sullen)
And other kids' dads just take them
to sea level.

Davis gives his son a look.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
We've also traveled over eight
miles horizontally. Which would
put the Atlantic Ocean...

HE POINTS STRAIGHT UP.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Directly above you.

Alex gapes at the ceiling. Impressed.

ALEX
All right. That's kind of cool.

Hannah taps Davis on the shoulder.

HANNAH

You said we are six and a half
miles down?

She holds out her palm.

HANNAH (cont'd)

2.7 million kronas. Bonus.

Davis laughs. Hannah doesn't.

Suddenly, A LONG, LOW GROWL cuts the silence.

Everyone freezes.

ALEX

Dad?

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Yes, son?

ALEX

Remember those living fossils you
were talking about?

ANOTHER EERIE SCREECH ECHOES OFF THE CAVERN WALLS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Right now, I wish I didn't.

Hannah pulls THE HUNTING KNIFE from her belt.

HANNAH

Let me handle it.

She creeps away into the darkness.

Embarrassed, Alex and Davis smile nervously at each other.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

She's worth every krona.

Another growl echoes off the walls.

THEY SCRAMBLE AFTER HANNAH.

INT. DARK GALLERY - DAY

Hannah creeps forward, knife at the ready.

Davis and Alex follow tentatively.

Ahead, sparkling out of the darkness...

TWO EYES STARE THEM DOWN.

The creature GROANS again.

Hannah gestures for Davis to flank the creature.

Davis nods, taking out...a tiny rock-hammer.

Alex rolls his eyes.

Davis and Hannah approach the creature from either side.

As they move forward, we can make out more...

THE CREATURE'S LONG HORN PROTRUDES INTO THE AIR, LIKE A GIANT TUSK...RIGHT OFF THE SCREEN.

HANNAH AND DAVIS JUMP OUT, WEAPONS RAISED...

Only to find themselves staring at...

AN OLD MINING CAR.

TWO QUARTZITE CRYSTALS BLINK atop the rock-filled car, shining like eyes.

A RUSTY HANDLE sticks up from the middle like a animal horn.

Davis moves it back and forth. IT GROANS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Here's your culprit. Hydrated iron oxide.

ALEX

You mean rust?

Hannah sweeps dirt away from the mining car, uncovering A STRETCH OF TRACK.

HANNAH

This is the old Hofskgaard Mine.
Very large. Shut down after a cave-in.

She follows the track further down the tunnel.

HANNAH (cont'd)

Killed many men.

She disappears up ahead. Alex and Davis look at each other.

ALEX
Hey, super.

INT. MINE CAR CAVERN - DAY

Davis and Alex find Hannah standing at A BANK OF LEVERS attached to a GENERATOR.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Hannah, I'd appreciate it if you stopped leaving us alone in the dark.
(beat)
Alex gets nervous.

Alex scowls.

HANNAH
No problem.

Hannah pulls the levers.

THUNK. FLOOD LIGHTS SNAP ON, ILLUMINATING AN ENORMOUS ROOM FILLED WITH MINING CARS.

Alex gazes at the CRISSCROSSING TRACKS running off into DOZENS OF TUNNELS.

ALEX
Couldn't one of these lead back to the surface?

HANNAH
Not anymore.

She nods at A PAIR OF SKELETONS SLUMPED AGAINST THE ROCK.

HANNAH (cont'd)
Or they would have taken it.

Alex swallows.

ALEX
So what do we do?

CLUNK!

He looks over to see Davis inside a mining car, studying the mechanism.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Theoretically, if the tracks are still sound, we could use this to search the tunnels. And far faster than we could on foot.

He releases a lever. The car lurches forward, squeaking along the tracks.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

Come on, Alex. You loved them at Six Flags.

Alex sighs. Davis grins like a kid.

INT. MINE TUNNEL - DAY

Train wheels squeak against the track.

A MINE CAR rumbles slowly along.

ALEX sits inside, slightly apprehensive.

DAVIS sits in another car behind him, smiling at the rocks.

HANNAH follows in a PUMP CAR, the engine for the group.

WOODEN SCAFFOLDING CREAKS OMINOUSLY.

Suddenly, THE CARS JOLT TO A STOP.

They look around, confused.

Then, CABLES SQUEAK and GEARS CLANG to life, pulling the cars through a wooden tunnel, UP INTO...

INT. THE BIG MINE - DAY

The passengers look out over a tremendous MINING CAVERN.

We swoon with Alex as he peers over the 3-DIMENSIONAL LANDSCAPE.

TRAIN TRACKS BRANCH OUT IN EVERY DIRECTION, RUNNING ON STEEL SUPPORTS, SUSPENDED IN MIDAIR.

The cars lurch forward toward a SHEER DROP.

Alex looks around his car.

ALEX
They really should have put seat
belts in these things.

And then the car...

HURTLES DOWN THE TRACKS LIKE A ROLLER COASTER.

WE SOAR WITH THE CARS, snaking around curves and rolling down
straightaways.

We roll past a COLLAPSED SECTION OF THE CAVERN.

MINING CARS LIE CRUSHED AND BROKEN. HUMAN SKELETONS STARE
OUT FROM THE RUBBLE, TOOLS IN HAND, FROZEN WHERE THEY DIED.

The travelers hold their breath in horror.

We whip around another curve, only to find...

A GAP IN THE TRACKS AHEAD. Jagged rocks stab below the
washed-out rails.

HANNAH
Please hang on.

As we speed toward the GAP...

HANNAH PUMPS THE LEVER, SHOOTING THE CARS EVEN FASTER TOWARD
THE BROKEN TRACKS.

THEY HIT THE GAP.

THE CARS SOAR THROUGH THE AIR...

AND LAND SAFELY ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE.

They clatter on, unharmed.

ALEX WHOOPS. Davis gives Hannah a nod, impressed.

They approach A THREWAY FORK. A LOUD CLICK shakes the cars.

ALEX'S CAR SPLITS OFF ONTO ITS OWN TRACK.

ALEX
Um, Dad...

ANOTHER CLICK. Davis' car splits off.

NOW, ALL THREE CARS HEAD FOR THREE SEPARATE TUNNELS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Just sit tight and don't touch
anything.

ALEX
What am I going to touch?

The three cars roll inside their own tunnels.

INT. GEM TUNNELS - DAY

IN TUNNEL #1, ALEX rolls through a glittering world of RED
CRYSTALS.

ALEX
Rubies!

IN TUNNEL #2, HANNAH finds herself bathed in a DEEP GREEN
LIGHT.

HANNAH
Emeralds!

IN TUNNEL #3, DAVIS rolls along, fascinated by a world of
DULL BROWN AND GRAY.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Feldspar!

INT. DIAMOND GALLERY - DAY

The three cars shoot out of their tunnels onto parallel
tracks.

Everyone gapes: THE ENTIRE CHAMBER IS COVERED IN DIAMONDS.

DIAMOND SPIKES SHOOT UP FROM THE GROUND.

DIAMOND STALACTITES HANG FROM ABOVE.

Alex gets an idea. He steps up on top of the car, feet
precariously balanced on the SIDE PANELS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex! What are you doing?

ALEX REACHES UP TO GRAB A DIAMOND SPIKE.

ALEX
This way, you won't have to pay for
college.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
There are scholarships!

Alex strains farther and farther, until...

HANNAH
Duck, please.

Alex looks up to see a row of LOW HANGING SPIKES zooming toward him.

He drops back down into his car, KNOCKING OUT THE SIDE PANEL.

It swings and dangles wildly until...

CHUNK CHUNK CHUNK! IT SLICES INTO A SET OF DIAMOND PILLARS. They shatter one by one, chunks of diamond flying everywhere.

DIAMONDS PELT THE SCREEN.

SUDDENLY, A TEARING SOUND SCREAMS BEHIND THEM.

Alex looks back at the smashed pillars, where...

CRACKS FORM IN THE CEILING, SHOOTING AHEAD OF THEM LIKE LIGHTNING.

ALEX
Whoops.

Diamonds and rock rain from above. Then...

BOOM! THE CEILING OVER DAVIS' TRACK CAVES IN, DROPPING A WALL OF RAZOR-SHARP RUBBLE IN HIS WAY.

Davis grabs his brake. IT SNAPS OFF IN HIS HAND.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I expected more from Icelandic craftsmanship.

He looks around for a safe place to jump.

HANNAH
No!

Hannah yanks off her own STEEL BRAKE HANDLE.

She eyes Davis' car. Waiting. Judging.

ROWS OF DIAMOND SPIKES FLASH PAST.

At just the right moment...HANNAH JUMPS!

She SAILS across the tracks...and BAM...

LANDS RIGHT IN DAVIS' CAR. Davis stares in awe.

Hannah ties a rope to one end of the mine car. She knots the other end to the STEEL BAR.

SHE HURLS THE BAR INTO A DENSE STAND OF STALAGMITES.

It catches. The rope goes taught like an anchor, jerking the mine car...

RIPPING THE CARGO HOLD RIGHT OFF THE WHEELS.

DAVIS AND HANNAH FALL TO THE TRACKS WITH A THUD.

THE WHEEL CHASSIS HURTLES FORWARD...PLOWING INTO THE RUBBLE.

Davis and Hannah stand up, winded, but unhurt.

They turn as ALEX'S MINE CAR rolls around the bend and squeaks to a stop.

HE GRINS LIKE A KID -- ENJOYING HIMSELF FOR THE FIRST TIME.

ALEX

Can we go again?

INT. DARK GROTTO - DAY

Davis, Alex and Hannah sit in a tight circle. Their headlamps make A SMALL POOL OF LIGHT in the darkness.

Hannah rummages through her pack. She glumly hands each of them a baggie filled with...SOMETHING.

HANNAH

This is the last of the food. Chew slowly.

Alex opens his bag suspiciously.

ALEX

What is it?

HANNAH

Dried squid. With berry yogurt.

Alex hesitates. He tries the squid...

HIS FACE GOES GREEN.

ALEX
Does everybody in Iceland eat like
this?

HANNAH
No. Most stuff is gross.

Davis shuts off his headlamp.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
We should try to conserve our
batteries.

The others nod morosely and switch off their lights.

For a moment, the screen goes dark.

ALL WE HEAR IS CHEWING.

And then...THE GROTTA BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN.

ALEX
Is it getting lighter in here?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
It's your eyes adjusting.

Then, slowly, a RUSTLING SOUND rises, followed by...CHIRPING.

ALEX
What about my ears?

All three of them look up.

And there, on the grotto ceiling...

POINTS OF LIGHT SPARKLE LIKE LITTLE STARS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Well, that's interesting...

And then the points of light seem to MOVE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Very interesting.

WHOOSH! THE ENTIRE CEILING FALLS APART IN SPARKLING,
PSYCHEDELIC FRAGMENTS.

SUDDENLY, THE LIGHTS STOP IN MIDAIR...SPREADING OUT INTO A
GLOWING, FLUTTERING MASS.

ALEX

Birds!

THOUSANDS OF BIRDS HOVER ABOVE THEM, GLOWING LIKE FIREFLIES.

HANNAH

Electric birds.

They dart, stop on a dime, then whiz off...INTO THE AUDIENCE.

Our travelers gaze in awe at the living fireworks display.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

They're bioluminescent. Like
fireflies. Or glow worms.

ALEX

Cool. Glowbirds.

Alex holds out a bit of squid on his palm.

ONE OF THE BIRDS DROPS DOWN, HOVERING JUST A FEW FEET AWAY.

It closes in and pecks at the food in Alex's hand.

ALEX (cont'd)

At least somebody likes it.

The bird chirps. Davis smiles.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

It eats. And if it eats, it
probably drinks. Which means-

HANNAH

Water.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Exactly. Where they go, we follow.

WITH A WHOOSH, THE BIRDS KNOT TOGETHER AND STREAM AWAY IN A
GLOWING MASS.

The hikers grab their packs and scramble after them.

ALEX

Do you think anyone's ever seen a
glowbird before?

Sensing his son's enthusiasm, Davis reaches over and
genuinely musses Alex's hair.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Nope. I bet we're the first.

THEY SMILE AT EACH OTHER, ALMOST FOR THE FIRST TIME. Then...

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Except maybe for Arne Saknussemm.

ALEX
(frowns)
You really know how to ruin a
moment.

THE BIRDS DIVE, FLYING RIGHT FOR ONE OF THE CAVERN WALLS...

Just as they're about to smash into it, their lights
reveal...

A HONEYCOMB GALLERY. An endless network of passageways.

The birds dart in and out of the holes, their lights flashing
weirdly in the twisting tunnels.

Davis just stares in wonder.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Good gravy.

INT. HONEYCOMB GALLERY - DAY

Alex, Davis and Hannah wander through the passageways.

Their headlamps play off the walls, casting strange shadows
through the holes.

WE PITCH AND WEAVE THROUGH THE 3-D MAZE, looping around
corners, OCCASIONALLY JOINED BY THE GLOWING BIRDS.

ALEX
How do we know we're going the
right way?

Davis runs his hand along the smooth walls, fascinated.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That's the thing about science. A
lot of the time, it's your mistakes
that lead you to the truth. So,
really, there's no "wrong" way to
go.

Alex rounds a corner.

ALEX
Are you telling me we're lost?

No answer.

ALEX (cont'd)
You are, aren't you?

A long beat. A sick realization creeps over Alex...

ALEX (cont'd)
Dad?

Silence. Alex trots through the honeycombs.

ALEX (cont'd)
Hannah?

He ducks through a hole, only to find himself RIGHT BACK WHERE HE WAS.

ALEX (cont'd)
Where are you guys?

HE RUNS THROUGH PASSAGE AFTER PASSAGE, HOLE AFTER HOLE. THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME. Finally, he skids around a corner and...

SMACKS INTO A WALL.

ALEX STAGGERS BACK, FEAR IN HIS EYES.

ALEX (cont'd)
WILL SOMEBODY ANSWER ME!

Finally, cutting through the silence...

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)
Alex? Is that you?

ALEX
Dad?

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)
Walk toward my voice.

Davis sounds very close, on Alex's LEFT. Alex walks toward him, through a few holes.

ALEX
Say something else.

Silence again.

ALEX (cont'd)

Dad?

And then...SINGING.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)

"Strangers in the night, exchanging
glances..."

Alex smiles despite himself. He turns toward Davis' warble.

But suddenly, it shifts, now coming from Alex's RIGHT.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.) (cont'd)

"Lovers at first sight, what were
the chances?"

Alex stops, confused. Then, from another direction:

HANNAH (O.S.)

Professor?

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)

Hannah?

HANNAH (O.S.)

You have a lovely voice.

WE FOLLOW ALEX THROUGH THE HONEYCOMBS AS HE TRACKS THE
VOICES.

They play off the walls in a barrage of echoes.

ALEX

It's no use! There are too many
echoes!

Davis' voice comes from somewhere else.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)

Hang on, I've got an idea.

ALEX

(muttering to himself)
Famous last words.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)

I heard that.

Suddenly, we hear THE SOUND OF A MATCH STRIKING.

Alex sniffs the air.

And then, through one of the honeycomb openings...

A WISP OF SMOKE WAFTS IN. IT FLOATS OUT OVER THE AUDIENCE,
HOVERING IN FRONT OF OUR FACES.

Alex dashes after the smoke, following it through the
honeycomb, finally stepping into...

INT. THE NEXT GALLERY - DAY

Davis holds a piece of BURNING ROPE.

ALEX
Nice trick.

Hannah stumbles after him. Davis grins and snuffs out the
rope.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
But wait, that's not all!

He turns and gestures grandly at...

A STACK OF ROCKS.

ALEX
Hey, great. You made a pile of
rocks.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Not me...

DAVIS BLOWS THE DUST FROM THE TOP ROCK, REVEALING A
CARVING...

"A.S."

HANNAH
Holy kúka.

Alex gapes.

ALEX
So we're not lost?

Davis puts his hand on Alex's shoulder.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Not by a long shot.

INT. HONEYCOMB TUNNEL - DAY

Davis leads them excitedly through the tunnels.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Saknussemm would only have left
markers at the most important
points. Near water sources, or
forks in the trail, or-

They step around a bend...AND STOP SHORT.

ALEX
Dead ends?

They all gape.

ROCK WALLS TOWER ON ALL SIDES. NO EXIT.

HANNAH
Maybe we missed a turn.

Davis crouches at the base of the wall, studying the rock.
HIS BOOTS CRUNCH THE SOIL.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Impossible. This is it. This is
Saknussemm's trail.

Alex throws down his pack.

ALEX
And it leads to nowhere!

Davis looks at Alex, surprised at his vehemence.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex, relax.

Alex steps up to his dad, HIS BOOTS JUST INCHES FROM HIS
FATHER'S.

ALEX
Relax? We're trapped miles
underground with no food, no water
and no idea how to get out!

PROF. LIDENBROCK
(trying to remain calm)
Arne Saknussemm clearly states-

ALEX
Arne Saknussemm's dead. And we're
next. Thanks to you!

As their boots grind the dust, A CRACK APPEARS IN THE GROUND.
No one notices.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That's hardly fair, Alex. I didn't
plan on this happening.

ALEX
YOU DON'T PLAN ON ANYTHING!

Hannah forcibly grabs their shoulders.

With her extra weight, THE ROCK CRACKS EVEN MORE. Still, no
one sees.

HANNAH
This is not helpful.

ALEX
AND WHAT KIND OF GUIDE ARE YOU?
WE'RE LOST!

HANNAH
Shut up.

ALEX
LIKE HECK I-

SHE CLAMPS HER HAND OVER HIS MOUTH.

HANNAH
No really. Shut up.

She listens intently for a moment. Then they all hear it...A
CRACKING SOUND.

THEY LOOK DOWN...JAGGED FRACTURES SPIDER BENEATH THEIR BOOTS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Nobody move.

Alex bites his lip. Hannah swallows. Davis eyes the ground.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Muscovite. Easily fractured.
Susceptible to the slightest change
in weight or pressure.

THEY FREEZE. THE CRACKING SEEMS TO...SLOW.

Alex lets out his breath.

And then...

GLOWBIRD FLIES OUT OF THE TUNNEL AND RIGHT UP TO ALEX'S FACE.

ALEX
(whispering)
Shoo.

Davis tries to wave off the bird, but the ground beneath him cracks. He stops.

ALL THREE OF THEM REMAIN ABSOLUTELY FROZEN.

The bird hovers another moment. Then he starts a slow flight around them.

They follow with their eyes, as he circles them...

ONCE...TWICE...THREE TIMES...

AND FINALLY LANDS RIGHT ON ALEX'S SHOULDER.

ALEX (cont'd)
Crud.

CRACK!

The earth falls out from under them.

INT. VERTICAL TUNNEL - DAY

DARKNESS.

We hear a whistling sound, like air flowing.

ALEX (O.S.)
Dad?

PROF. LIDENBROCK (O.S.)
Right here. Hannah, where are you?

HANNAH (O.S.)
I'll tell you when I land.

With a click, she turns on her headlamp, revealing all three travelers...

FREE-FALLING DOWN A VERTICAL TUNNEL.

They float, weightless, like astronauts in space. The dark walls speed past.

ALEX
This. Is. So. Not. Cool.

WE FALL WITH THEM. THE WEIGHTLESSNESS MAKES US DIZZY.

Davis takes out a pen...and lets go of it. It hovers right in front of his face.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Good old physics.

Hannah looks down.

HANNAH
This is perhaps...a bottomless pit?

Davis shakes his head sadly.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I'm afraid everything has a bottom.

ALEX
Yeah, and we're going to smash ours
all over the center of the earth.

JUST THEN, SOMETHING SPLASHES ON ALEX'S FACE, FROM BELOW.

They look down to see HUNDREDS OF GLOBULES OF WATER SHOOTING UP AT THEM.

THE GLOBULES FLOAT RIGHT OFF THE SCREEN, contracting and expanding.

Davis opens his mouth and lets one fly right in. He smiles.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Told you we'd find water.

The tunnel fills with the thunderous sound of RUSHING WATER.

HANNAH
Maybe too much.

Davis looks down.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Uh-oh.

AND THEN SPLASH!

The tunnel catches our travelers like a water slide and scoops them into a horizontal shaft.

WATER SPRAYS AS THEY TUMBLE TOWARD A GLOWING OPENING.

And then SPLOOSH! EVERYTHING GOES BLUE.

INT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Alex, Davis and Hannah shoot out into deep water.

Bubbles spew as Davis and Alex thrash helplessly.

HANNAH GRABS THEM AND KICKS TOWARD THE SURFACE.

EXT. LAGOON - DAY

They burst to the surface of A LAGOON.

Hannah drags them to shore.

They flop down, exhausted, EYES CLOSED.

A LONG MOMENT PASSES.

Finally, Alex opens his eyes.

ALEX

Dad. You might want to see this.

Davis and Hannah sit up.

HANNAH

This is going to be some bonus.

THE CAMERA SWOOPS HIGH, revealing...

AN UNDERGROUND PARADISE.

A WATERFALL POURS INTO THE LAGOON. FERNS AS TALL AS PINES SWAY ABOVE GIANT, MULTI-COLORED FLOWERS.

MOUNTAINS REACH TO A STRANGELY GLOWING, ELECTRIC SKY.

We swoop back down to find...

TIME HAS PASSED.

Wet shirts and shoes dry on a rock. Hannah coils her ropes.

Davis studies his barometer.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
According to these readings, we
just fell thirty-two hundred miles.

Alex peers over his father's shoulder as

DAVIS EXCITEDLY CHECKS HIS INSTRUMENTS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Atmosphere is oxygen-nitrogen. The
same as on the surface, only purer,
untouched by humans.

He looks up at the bright sky.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
And while that isn't sunlight, it's
certainly capable of producing
photosynthesis...

Alex smiles at his dad.

ALEX
Kind of like a big terrarium.
(Then; worried)
Except we don't know what's living
in this terrarium.

Davis grins, excited at the prospect.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex...welcome to the center of the
earth.

INT. JUNGLE PATH - DAY

A MACHETE HACKS THROUGH THE BRUSH...RIGHT AT US.

As Hannah forges through the jungle of GIANT FERNS,

DAVIS AND ALEX COLLECT SOIL SAMPLES.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
They want proof, I'll give them
proof.

Alex holds out A ROCK.

ALEX
Is this proof?

Davis takes the rock and puts it in A GREEN NYLON BAG.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You'd better believe it.

He stares at something in the brush.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
And wouldn't the University like to
get a hold of that?

He scoops up A SNAIL AS BIG AS A GRAPEFRUIT.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Have you ever seen anything so
beautiful in your life?

He holds the snail out to Alex. ITS ANTENNAE PROBE AT THE
AUDIENCE.

ALEX
No. No, I haven't.

EXT. DANDELION FIELD - DAY

The adventurers wade through a sea of WAIST-HIGH DANDELIONS.
YELLOW FLOWERS AND WHITE PUFFBALLS SWAY IN THE BREEZE.

Alex grabs a giant puffball.

ALEX
Hey, Dad.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Hmm?

ALEX BLOWS, SENDING FLUFFY SEEDLINGS ALL OVER DAVIS AND OUT
INTO THE AUDIENCE.

For a second, Davis looks annoyed. Then he starts laughing.
He blows another puffball right at Alex.

Hannah smiles, quietly amused. Finally, she clears her
throat.

HANNAH
Come. We'll rest under those
trees.

She points to a forest of THICK TRUNKS.

Davis' eyes widen.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Those aren't trees...

He cranes his neck upward to see...

GIANT MOTTLED CAPS HANGING FIFTY FEET IN THE AIR.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
They're mushrooms.

EXT. GIANT MUSHROOM GROVE - DAY

Alex, Davis and Hannah wander in the shadows of the MAMMOTH FUNGI.

ALEX
I wonder if there's a giant pizza
anywhere we could put these on.

Hannah peers at the ground.

HANNAH
Look.

FLAT ROCKS have been laid between the mushrooms: AN OLD,
BROKEN TRAIL.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I don't believe it...

DAVIS RUSHES AWAY DOWN THE PATH.

Alex and Hannah share a look, then take off after him.

WE PLUNGE WILDLY THROUGH THE 3-D FOREST, narrowly avoiding
collisions with the giant trunks.

Finally, Alex and Hannah burst out to find...

EXT. MUSHROOM HOUSE - DAY

Davis stands stock-still in the middle of a clearing.

ALEX
Dad? What is it?

Davis just points.

The path leads to A MUSHROOM...WITH WINDOWS.

At ground level, A DOOR HAS BEEN CARVED INTO THE STEM.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You think we should knock?

INT. MUSHROOM HOUSE - DAY

Davis leads them up a SPIRAL STAIRCASE hewn into the stem.
Light filters down from a doorway above.

INT. SAKNUSSEMM'S LAB - DAY

Davis, Alex and Hannah step inside, gaping at...

A FANTASTIC 3-D LABORATORY.

Beneath an observatory-like dome, rough-hewn tables support
all manner of HOMEMADE SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS.

SUNDIALS AND HOURGLASSES, WATERCLOCKS AND CANDLE CLOCKS,
WOODEN DOOHICKEYS DRIVEN BY WEIGHTS AND SPRINGS, ALL SIT
THERE, PERFECTLY PRESERVED.

On the wall hangs a HAND-DRAWN MAP featuring waterfalls,
mushrooms, and A GIANT OCEAN.

In flowing script, it reads: "SAKNUSSEMM'S LAND."

ALEX
Arne, we're ho-ome.

Davis stares at A GIANT GLOBE HANGING FROM THE CEILING.

CRISSCROSSED BY RED AND BLUE TUBES, THE BALL RESEMBLES A
CRUDE VERSION OF DAVIS' KITCHEN HOLOGRAM.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
(almost choking up)
Yes. We are.

He runs his fingers reverently over a shelf of LEATHER
NOTEBOOKS.

He almost opens one, then stops, overcome.

ALEX
Hey, Dad.

Davis looks at his son.

ALEX (cont'd)
 It's okay. I think he'd want you
 to read them.

Davis smiles, TOUCHED.

Hannah examines a STRANGE APPARATUS made of gourds and tubes.
 She turns a handle. AMBER LIQUID pours into a cup.
 SHE SNIFFS IT.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Hannah, I wouldn't do that-
 TOO LATE. SHE SIPS...THEN COUGHS, DELIGHTED.

HANNAH
 You celebrate your way...
 She downs the cup.

HANNAH (cont'd)
 I celebrate mine.
 FROM FLOOR LEVEL, WE WATCH DAVIS WALK OVER.
 Davis sips.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Do I detect a hint of...
 (gasping and coughing)
 Mushroom?
 OUR P.O.V. SCUTTLES ALONG.

ALEX
 Hey, let me have a sip.
 OUR P.O.V. DUCKS UNDER A TABLE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Right. Look around. Maybe Arne
 built a coke machine.

ALEX
 Aw, come on-
 OUR P.O.V. DARTS OUT FROM UNDER THE TABLE.
 Alex looks down...AND JUMPS.

REVERSE: A TRILOBITE SKITTERS ACROSS THE FLOOR, DOZENS OF LEGS CLICKING IN FORMATION.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Nobody move!

Davis studies the creature, fascinated.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
The Metacanthina trilobite has been extinct for 400 million years. If we could bring one back alive, it would make-

THWOCK! HANNAH'S KNIFE FLIES PAST DAVIS' EAR AND PINS THE PREHISTORIC BUG TO THE FLOOR.

HANNAH
Excellent dinner.

She pulls up the knife, taking the trilobite with it.

HANNAH (cont'd)
Now. Who is hungry?

EXT. MUSHROOM HOUSE - DAY

A CAMPFIRE GLOWS RED. Trilobite shells lie scattered.

ALEX
Not bad. A little stringy...

Alex and Hannah lie back, their bellies full.

ALEX (cont'd)
But not bad.

Suddenly, they hear CHIRPING. Alex turns to see...

GLOWBIRD hovering nearby, waiting for a handout.

ALEX (cont'd)
Hey, buddy. Back for dinner?

He holds out some trilobite. Glowbird gobbles it up.

Davis steps out of the mushroom house, poring over ONE OF SAKNUSSEMM'S NOTEBOOKS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex. What time do you have?

ALEX
 (checking his watch)
 Um, six...

He looks up at the ETERNALLY LIT SKY.

ALEX (cont'd)
 Day or night, I couldn't tell you.

DAVIS FROWNS. HE CROSS-CHECKS AGAINST HIS OWN WATCH.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 And the date?

ALEX
 Dad, what's this-

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 (suddenly stern)
 The date, Alex.

ALEX
 The 23rd.

Davis exhales slowly.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 You both need to see this.

INT. SAKNUSSEMM'S LAB - DAY

Davis, Alex and Hannah gaze up at THE RED AND BLUE TUBES COVERING SAKNUSSEMM'S GLOBE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
 Saksussem believed that the earth's tunnel system was in perfect balance, lava and water co-existing in perpetual equilibrium.

Davis looks admiringly at the globe for a moment.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 It's a lovely theory, actually.

He undoes a catch on the side of the globe.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
 Unfortunately, it's wrong.

THE GLOBE SWINGS OPEN. TUBES WIND AND INTERSECT.

ALEX

What do you mean, wrong?

PROF. LIDENBROCK

To be fair, it's only half-wrong,
but in this case, that's wrong
enough.

He points to THE ROTATING CORE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

The dead center of the earth, where
Saknussemm took most of his
readings and where we are right
now, that's constant. The big
terrarium. The tunnels on the
other hand...

Davis pulls a lever on the mechanism...

ALL THE TUBES FILL WITH RED LIQUID.

ALEX

That doesn't look good.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

It's not.

Davis holds up a rock.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

Alex, this is the rock you found
earlier. Solid, plain. It tells
me that this area's been stable for
several million years.

He holds up another rock -- this one is STRIPED.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

This, on the other hand, I picked
up in one of the tunnels. It's a
tidal rock, like you'd find on the
surface. Only these stripes aren't
sedimentary, they're igneous. And
the tide's not water, it's lava.

ALEX

Meaning...?

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Meaning all these tunnels will fill with red hot magma, as reliably as the tide. And there's be no way out until the tide recedes.

Hannah narrows her eyes.

HANNAH
When does this happen?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Every 187 years.

ALEX
Whew. You had me worried for a sec.

Davis consults his equations.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You should be. We're about 186 years and 51 weeks into the current cycle.

He taps the fiery red tubes.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
We've got three days to get out.

EXT. OCEAN'S EDGE - DAY

CLOSE ON: SAKNUSSEMM'S MAP.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
All right, the lab is here.

Davis' finger taps a drawing of A MUSHROOM.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Saknussem indicates he found an upward-flowing water tunnel north-northeast of here.

Davis points to a drawing of a RIVER on the far side of the map.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
If we can get to that, we can get out.

ALEX
But we still need to cross this.

Alex points to THE BLUE OCEAN on the map.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Sure, but...

Davis lowers the map, revealing...

THE ACTUAL OCEAN SPREADING OUT ENDLESSLY BEFORE THEM.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
(nervously)
How hard can that be?

Hannah frowns.

The three travellers stand on the sand, looking very small.

MONTAGE:

Hannah swings an axe at a GIANT tree. She steps out of the way as it falls RIGHT AT US.

Alex pulls down VINES. He yanks on a stubborn one...sending down A RAIN OF GIANT COCONUTS.

In the lab, Davis stuffs Saknussem's NOTEBOOKS into his pockets.

Hannah disconnects the ROPES AND PULLEYS from the globe. The globe falls to the floor and ROLLS TOWARD US...

Alex gathers the SHEETS off Saknussem's bed. He peeks underneath the mattress: A TRILOBITE SKITTERS RIGHT AT US, COVERED IN DUST-BUNNIES.

Davis yanks the CEILING FAN off the rafters.

Hannah looks over her shoulder as she fills her FLASK with gin from the still.

Davis pack his GREEN NYLON BAG with samples.

Alex lashes the trunks together with vines.

Davis runs the bedsheet up the mast.

Hannah attaches a rudder made from the ceiling fan blades.

They step back and admire THEIR RAMSHACKLE CRAFT.

The three of them push their boat out into the water...

EXT. UNDERGROUND OCEAN - DAY

The sail ripples, SNAPPING OUT AT US IN 3-D.

The stiff wind flutters Alex's hair as he scans the horizon with Davis' spyglass.

Davis grips the rudder, HIS KNUCKLES WHITE.

The GLOWBIRD swoops above them, chirping happily.

Hannah checks the knots on the sail, nervously eyeing the sea.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Don't worry...

She looks back at him. He offers a weak smile.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
(half-heartedly)
This is the finest ship on the
ocean.

HANNAH
It's not the ocean I'm worried
about.

She looks at the choppy waves.

HANNAH (cont'd)
It's what's under it.

They all stare at the ocean, unnerved.

The only sound is the rippling of the sail. Until...

A PHONE RINGS.

Alex looks down at his jacket, stunned.

He pulls out his cel phone...

RINGING 4000 MILES BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH.

Alex slowly turns to Davis. Davis looks flummoxed.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

I suppose...the ocean could be amplifying the earth's magnetic field...meshing with the sky's electricity...and channelling the signal through the air...down the mast to your phone.

Alex raises an eyebrow. Davis spreads his hands.

The phone keeps ringing. They all just stare at it.

HANNAH

It's probably for you.

Alex flips open the phone.

ALEX

Hello?...Hi, Mom. Where am I?

Davis looks tense. Alex thinks for a moment.

ALEX (cont'd)

We're...trout fishing. Yeah, he finally took me.

Davis blinks.

ALEX (cont'd)

Yeah, it is a little windy...What? Sure, hang on.

Davis waves him off, mouthing, "I'm not here."

Alex pushes the phone on him. Davis sighs.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Hello, Joanne. How's Tampa?...That's what I meant.

Water splashes over the raft. Davis fights for his balance.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

Well, where did you think I'd take him, the center of the earth or something?

HANNAH PEERS BEHIND DAVIS, WHERE THE WATER STARTS TO CHURN.

Alex sees it, too.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

Of course, he's wearing a jacket...

THE WATER BUBBLES AS...

A MASSIVE BLACK SHAPE RISES TO THE SURFACE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Well, look, Jo, if he catches a
cold, I'll give him an aspirin. I
am a scientist, you know.

Hannah and Alex point wildly.

Davis turns...and freezes. Before him...

A PREHISTORIC SEA MONSTER RISES FROM THE WAVES.

Yellow eyes beam from a scaly head. Jagged teeth jut from a
gaping mouth.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Joanne? I have to go.

He drops the phone.

TENTACLES burst from the water, REACHING OVER THE BOAT, and
RIGHT OFF THE SCREEN.

THE SQUID-BEAST SLITHERS STRAIGHT FOR THE SAILORS.

Alex, Davis and Hannah cower on the deck.

SUDDENLY, THE OCEAN EXPLODES BEHIND THEM.

They turn to see...

SIX GIGANTIC DORSAL FINS slicing out of the water.

A TREMENDOUS, PREHISTORIC SHARK LEAPS FROM THE SEA, A HUNDRED
FEET LONG FROM SNOUT TO TAIL.

The squid beast sees the shark...AND SHRIEKS.

The shark shoots forward...

AND THE FIGHT IS ON!

The squid's tentacles whip bloody gashes into the shark.

The shark batters the squid with its tail.

THE BATTLE RAGES IN LIFE-THREATENING 3-D. The creatures
lunge back and forth...ON AND OFF THE SCREEN.

STORM CLOUDS DARKEN THE SKY.

THE SAILBOAT SPINS LIKE A TOY. THE THREE ADVENTURERS HANG ON FOR THEIR LIVES.

Suddenly, the sailboat shoots into the air, riding on top of the SQUID'S HEAD.

Alex looks down, eyes widening at the roiling sea below him.

The squid crashes back to the water. The sailboat smacks with a huge SPLASH.

THE CREATURES SQUARE OFF AGAIN.

LIGHTNING FLASHES.

The squid raises its tentacles to deliver a death-blow...

But suddenly, the shark whips its tail, soaring out of the water.

IT OPENS ITS JAWS AND DIVES DOWN ONTO THE SQUID, CHOMPING ITS NECK, DRAGGING IT UNDERWATER.

The water churns, bubbles, then goes red.

Soaked and exhausted, Alex, Davis and Hannah sit on the boat in stunned silence.

And then the SIX FINS cut back to the surface.

THE SHARK CIRCLES THE BOAT.

Hannah jerks the rudder around.

Davis flips the sail to catch the wind. The little boat takes off across the water.

BUT THE SHARK FOLLOWS.

LIGHTNING STRIKES THE WATER, SENDING A BUZZ OF ELECTRICITY RIGHT OFF THE SCREEN.

Something clicks in Alex's head.

ALEX
Lightning rods!

Alex takes out the last of their STEEL CLIMBING PEGS. He points at the shark.

ALEX (cont'd)
For him!

Davis and Hannah pull out whatever metal they've got -- pickaxes, climbing gear, Hannah's knife. They quickly lash them to a rope.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Wait!

He pulls up his shirt, revealing A BIG, METAL BELT BUCKLE.

Alex peers at it.

ALEX

R.E.O. Speedwagon?

PROF. LIDENBROCK

They were good!

He ties the buckle to the rope. Hannah hurls it into the water like A STEEL-PLATED FISHING LINE.

Lightning flashes overhead, dangerously close.

THE SHINY REFLECTION DANCES IN THE SHARK'S EYES.

The big beast opens its mighty jaws and shoots straight for the metal.

THE SHARK CHOMPS DOWN ON THE ROPE, HOOKING ITSELF LIKE A FISH ON A LINE.

ALEX

Got him!

Hannah kicks the rope loose.

The shark whips angrily, metal clanging from its mouth.

LIGHTNING FLASHES.

THE BLAZING BOLT FORKS DOWN TO THE METAL...

AND RIGHT INTO THE SHARK!

The beast cries out in pain, thrashing menacingly.

Finally, it spins and swims in the other direction.

The sailors drop to the deck, exhausted.

Finally, Davis turns to see...

Alex shaking uncontrollably, near tears.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex, what's the matter?

ALEX
What do you think, Dad? I'm
scared.

Davis can sense JUST how scared he is...

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I know Alex...but you need to be
brave right now.

But Alex is showing no signs of bravery. Tears mix with rain
-- streaming down his face.

ALEX
I- can't. I don't want to do
this...I want to go home...

Davis thinks -- desperately trying to calm his son...

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Hey! You remember last year in the
State Championship game when you up
to bat...and there were two outs...
and you were the team's last chance
to win?

Alex is taken aback. He quietly nods.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Well I bet you were pretty scared
then...but you knocked the first
pitch for a double. You won the
game.

ALEX
How- how do you know about that?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I know about all your games, Alex.
I ask your mother about it all the
time.

Alex can't believe what he's hearing. And Davis sees the
surprise...and realizes...

ALEX
But you never came! Not once did
you ever come!

SUDDENLY...CRACK!

LIGHTNING BLASTS THE WATER.

MASSIVE STORM CLOUDS ROLL OVERHEAD, PELTING THEM WITH SLANTING RAIN.

Hannah grabs for the rudder. Davis holds down the mast.

WAVES HAMMER THE BOAT, TOSSING IT HIGH IN THE AIR.

BAM! THE RAFT PLUMMETS TWENTY FEET.

THE RUDDER BREAKS OFF. THE MAST SNAPS IN HALF.

Hannah and Davis duck as...

THE SAIL RIPS CLEAR AND FLIES OFF THE SCREEN.

When Davis looks up...

ALEX IS GONE!

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Alex!

ALEX (O.S.)

DAD!

Davis scrambles to the edge of the raft, where

ALEX THRASHES IN THE WATER.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Hang on! I'll get you!

But another tremendous wave swamps them both. Alex sputters to the surface.

Hannah struggles to tie a rope to the bottom of the mast.

HANNAH

We are coming, Alex-

BUT THE BOAT PITCHES. THE DECK SMACKS HANNAH IN THE FACE.

Alex stretches to grab the SHATTERED MAST.

But A WHIRLPOOL sucks the mast down into the deep.

Alex paddles backward.

WHIRLPOOLS OPEN UP ALL AROUND HIM.

ALEX
DAD! HURRY!

Back on his feet, Davis reaches out for his son.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I'm here, Alex. Right here.

Alex stretches out his hand.

ALEX
It's too far...

Davis watches in horror as THE WATER SWIRLS AROUND HIS SON.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Come on. You can do it. Reach.
Reeeeeeach!

But then a whirlpool opens up...

AND SWALLOWS ALEX WHOLE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
NOOOOOOOOO!

DAVIS GOES TO THROW HIMSELF IN THE WATER, but Hannah pulls him to the deck.

A massive wave catches the raft, tossing it across the sea.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. UNDERGROUND BEACH - DAY

The darkness slowly lightens, until we see...

A GIANT EYEBALL.

Alex thrashes to full consciousness, and he finds he's sprawled out alone on...

AN ENDLESS UNDERGROUND BEACH.

A GIANT SQUID EYEBALL lies half-buried in the sand next to his sodden backpack.

Alex rubs his hand over his DRY, CRACKED LIPS.

He spots a shell, half full of WATER. He takes a desperate sip...THEN SPITS IT OUT, GAGGING.

Finally, Alex looks inland...

TO THE GREEN JUNGLE BEYOND THE BEACH.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

BIZARRE PLANTS AND PURPLE IVY WIND OVER AND AROUND US.

Alex pushes through the dense jungle. He cuts A FAT STALK with his pen knife.

A GOOEY WHITE OOZE SEEPS OUT.

Alex sags and puts his knife away.

He starts to move on, but then he hears...

A SNAPPING SOUND. Like a deck of cards being shuffled.

He whips around to see...

ONE LITTLE LEAF WAVERING ON ITS STEM.

Alex takes a closer look and...

SNAP-SNAP-SNAP! The leaf opens and shuts like a VENUS FLY TRAP, only far more vicious.

THE WHOLE JUNGLE COMES TO LIFE!

PURPLE LEAF-MOUTHS SNAP AT THE AIR.

ALL AROUND US...SNAPPING CLOSER AND CLOSER...

TRYING TO BITE ALEX. AND US.

Alex backs up. The plants twist and jab, knocking him down.

DOZENS OF PURPLE MOUTHS MOVE IN.

SNAPPING, SNAPPING, SNAPPING...

Alex shuts his eyes, done for...

When suddenly, above the snapping, he hears...

A CHIRP.

Alex opens his eyes to see...

GLOWBIRD HOVERING IN THE JUNGLE A FEW YARDS AWAY.

ALL THE SNAPPING MOUTHS TURN FOR THE BIRD, biting at him, trying to swallow him whole.

Alex fights his way to his feet and breaks through the snapping plants.

GLOWBIRD TAKES OFF. ALEX FOLLOWS.

EXT. EDGE OF THE JUNGLE - DAY

Alex slumps against A SHEER ROCK WALL at the jungle's edge.

Glowbird hovers in front of him.

ALEX

Thanks, buddy. You saved my life.

He coughs, choking on his dry tongue.

ALEX (cont'd)

But it's not going to do much good unless I find some water. And some food that doesn't bite back.

Glowbird chirps and flutters along the rock wall.

SUDDENLY, HE DARTS INSIDE A CRACK AND DISAPPEARS.

ALEX (cont'd)

Hey! Where'd you go?

EXT. NARROW CANYONS - DAY

Alex weaves his way through a narrow canyon in the rocks.

Ahead, Glowbird chirps, impatient.

ALEX

You better know where you're going.

WE MOVE WITH HIM, THE CANYON WALLS CLOSE ENOUGH TO TOUCH, AS IF THEY COULD FOLD IN AND CRUSH US.

Suddenly, A LOW RUMBLE rocks the canyon.

Glowbird chirps worriedly, and darts ahead.

THE CANYON SHAKES, KNOCKING ALEX TO THE GROUND.

He looks straight up: THE CANYON WALLS SWAY.

Alex swallows, and hurries after the bird.

EXT. CANYON POOLS - DAY

Glowbird leads a thirsty Alex around a corner to...

A TINY TRICKLE OF CLEAR WATER RUNNING DOWN A ROCK.

Alex licks the rock desperately.

Finally, he leans back, exhausted.

ALEX

All right, you found water. Now,
can you find Dad?

Glowbird bounces a few times before taking off again.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

Glowbird floats to the crest of a hill. After a moment...

Alex, dirty and sweaty, hauls himself to the top.

He shakes off the dust and looks out.

His face drops. All around him..

A GIGANTIC DESERT STRETCHES IN EVERY DIRECTION.

No ocean. No landmarks. No signposts. No Dad.

He turns to Glowbird.

ALEX

Well, you found the water. That's
something.

Glowbird tucks his head under his wing.

Alex slumps down, eyes closed, defeated.

His bag drops beside him, flapping open...

Spilling out his pen knife, his extra underwear...

AND ARNE SAKNUSSEMM'S COMPASS.

It rolls on the rocks...and pops open.

A CREAKY MUSIC BOX TUNE TINKLES IN THE DESERT.

Alex's eyes snap open. He looks down at the compass.

ALEX (cont'd)

Nah...

Still, tentatively, he reaches for it.

He stares...and starts to laugh.

Where once the needle spun aimlessly, now it points...

DUE NORTH. STRAIGHT AS AN ARROW.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Alex trudges through the barren landscape, his lips dry and cracked.

EVEN SO, HE HAS A SMILE ON HIS FACE.

ALEX

Saknussemm's compass didn't work on the surface because it wasn't meant to. He designed it to work down here, where he needed it.

ALEX STUDIES THE COMPASS. HE ADJUSTS HIS COURSE, NORTH-NORTHEAST.

ALEX (cont'd)

I don't know, he must have reversed the polar magnetism, or re-magnetized the polarity...

On his shoulder, Glowbird shrugs.

ALEX (cont'd)

I'll ask Dad. When I find him.

EXT. PLATEAU - DAY

Alex climbs a high cliff at the edge of the desert.

He grits his teeth, straining.

Suddenly, HIS FOOT SLIPS. Tiny pebbles rain off the edge and down into the next valley.

WE SHOOT DOWN WITH THEM, bouncing and tumbling into...

THE SAME VOID ARNE SAKNUSSEMM SAW AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVIE.

At the top, ALEX CHECKS SAKNUSSEMM'S COMPASS AGAINST THE LANDSCAPE.

He presses on.

EXT. VALLEY OF BONES - DAY

Alex staggers out into a field of BLEACHED WHITE ROCKS. Glowbird flits around him.

The stones crunch under Alex's feet. He looks down and realizes he's walking on...BONES.

ALEX TURNS IN A SLOW CIRCLE, staring in silence at...

THE VALLEY OF DINOSAUR SKELETONS.

Alex grins.

A SCREECHING ROAR DESTROYS THE SILENCE.

Alex's smile vanishes. He spins.

And there on the rise stands...

The largest predatory dinosaur that ever lived:

GIGANTOSAURUS.

ALEX
(whispering)
Dad was right.

SPIKED RIDGES RIPPLE DOWN THE DINOSAUR'S BACK. RAZOR TEETH SNAP AND BITE.

ALEX (cont'd)
I wish Dad wasn't right.

THE GIANT REPTILE SCANS HIS VALLEY, BUT DOESN'T SEE ALEX...

Until Alex takes one tiny step...

AND LANDS ON GLOWBIRD'S SHIMMERING TAIL.

GLOWBIRD
PEEP.

THE GIGANTOSAURUS ZEROES IN ON ALEX, FLICKING ITS TAIL,
SENDING A RAIN OF BONES AND ROCK THROUGH THE AIR.

ALEX BREAKS INTO A DEAD RUN.

TERRIFIED. SCRAMBLING BLIND.

THE DINOSAUR POUNDS AFTER HIM, 8 TONS OF FORCE IN EVERY STEP.

Alex zig-zags through the skeletons. He spots a GIANT
RIBCAGE.

THE GIGANTOSAUR SCREAMS AND LEAPS...

JUST AS ALEX ROLLS INSIDE.

THE ENRAGED BEAST BANGS AGAINST THE BARS OF BONE.

Alex spies AN OPENING IN THE VALLEY. He takes a breath and
MAKES A BREAK FOR IT.

THE REPTILE'S GIANT CLAW SMASHES THE RIBCAGE TO DUST.

Alex scrambles for the mouth of the valley...almost there.

And then...

HIS FOOT SNAGS ON A JAWBONE. He goes down hard.

THE GIGANTOSAUR CLOSES IN.

Alex looks up as THE TREMENDOUS REPTILE RAISES HIS LEG...

AND STEPS RIGHT OVER HIM.

The gigantosaur stomps out of the valley, leaving Alex
behind.

Alex just pants, stunned at his luck.

Then suddenly...HUMAN SCREAMS ECHO OFF THE ROCKS.

ALEX

Dad?

Alex scrabbles to his feet.

EXT. GIGANTOSAUR'S CLIFFSIDE LAIR - DAY

Alex climbs over a rock and freezes.

THERE, JUST ABOVE A CAVERNOUS ABYSS, THE GIGANTOSAUR RAGES.

It swipes at a ledge above it, where...

DAVIS AND HANNAH press themselves into the rock.

ALEX

DAD!

DAVIS' EYES GO WIDE AND HE BREAKS INTO A HUGE SMILE.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

ALEX! YOU'RE ALIVE!

He steps forward. HANNAH YANKS HIM BACK JUST AS...

THE DINOSAUR'S CLAW SCRAPES THEIR NARROW LEDGE.

Davis points toward A CLOUD OF STEAM on the other side of the cliff-face.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)

You've got to get out of here! The tunnel's just over there!

ALEX

I'm not leaving without you.

Davis steps forward again.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

You're not dying because of me!

THE GIGANTOSAUR SWIPES. Davis looks down to see his shirt's been ripped.

HANNAH YANKS HIM BACK AGAIN.

HANNAH

Stop that please.

Alex looks around desperately. THE ABYSS yawns on one side, THE MOUNTAIN looms on the other.

He scans the mountainside...AND SMILES.

THE GIGANTOSAUR ROARS AT DAVIS AND HANNAH, LEAPING CLOSER AND CLOSER.

Davis spots Alex RUNNING OUT INTO THE OPEN.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

No, Alex! What are you doing?

Alex scoops up A SMALL, ROUND ROCK.

ALEX
I'm turning the double play!

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I have no idea what that means!

Alex sizes up the savage dinosaur.

He cocks back his arm...

AND LETS THE ROCK FLY...

Right past the gigantosaur's head...

Past Davis and Hannah's ledge...

Up the mountainside...

And SMACK into another, slightly larger rock.

NOTHING HAPPENS.

The gigantosaur roars. Davis and Hannah sag.

Alex bites his lip.

AND THEN THE SLIGHTLY LARGER ROCK STARTS TO ROLL...

SLIDING DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE...

SMACK INTO ANOTHER, EVEN LARGER ROCK.

WHICH REALLY STARTS TO ROLL...

BUMPING AND BANGING DOWN UNTIL FINALLY IT SMASHES INTO...

A MASSIVE BOULDER.

WHICH RIPS LOOSE A ROCK SLIDE, HURTLING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.

THE ROCKS SHOOT OVER THE LEDGE...

JUST MISSING DAVIS AND HANNAH...

SAILING THROUGH THE AIR, ALMOST IN SLOW-MOTION.

THE GIGANTOSAUR LOOKS UP. TOO LATE.

THE ROCKS SMASH INTO THE DINOSAUR'S FACE, SENDING IT
STAGGERING BACK...

OVER THE CLIFF...

AND INTO THE ABYSS, ROARING ALL THE WAY.

Alex collapses in the dirt, spent.

Davis and Hannah scramble down the cliff and run to him.

Hannah squeezes him in a silent, vise-like hug.

DAVIS AND ALEX LOCK EYES OVER HER SHOULDER.

Alex smiles.

DAVIS

I like baseball a lot better in
person.

ALEX AND DAVIS HUG, REUNITED.

BUT ALEX SPOTS SOMETHING ELSE...IN THE DISTANCE...

ALEX

Hey dad...I think there's something
you might wanna see.

His eyes indicate--

EXT. SMALL CAVE OF BONES - DAY

Davis, Alex and Hannah look down at...

A HUMAN SKELETON LEANING AGAINST THE WALL, WEARING A PITH
HELMET, KHAKIS AND A MONOCLE.

Davis can't believe his eyes.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Alex Lidenbrock, may I present Arne
Saknussemm.

Davis stares, humbled.

HANNAH

He must have tried to get out...the
same way we are.

DAVIS LAYS A GRATEFUL HAND ON HIS SON'S SHOULDER.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

But he didn't have anyone to help
him.

Alex takes THE COMPASS from his bag. He kneels down and places it in Arne's skeletal hand.

ALEX

Thanks.

SUDDENLY, THE EARTH SHAKES BENEATH THEIR FEET.

HANNAH

Time to say goodbye.

EXT. GIGANTOSAUR'S CLIFFSIDE LAIR - DAY

THE EARTH SHUDDERS VIOLENTLY.

Hannah, Alex and Davis stumble across the cliff...

DODGING THE RAIN OF ROCKS POURING DOWN THE HILLSIDE.

EXT. THERMAL RIVER - DAY

Alex, Davis and Hannah stagger out and stop, gaping.

Above them...THE SKY IS ALIVE.

A GIANT MUD SLIDE RUNS UPSIDE DOWN, DEFYING GRAVITY, FLOWING RIGHT OVER THEIR HEADS.

ALEX

It's...falling up.

HANNAH STARES AT THE UNREAL CHAOS ALL AROUND HER.

ALEX (cont'd)

Look!

He points to where A RUSHING THERMAL RIVER flows to...

AN UPSIDE-DOWN WATERFALL.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

That's it. Saknussem's exit!

Alex looks at the raging river.

ALEX

We'll sail out! Where's the raft?

Hannah and Davis exchange a look.

HANNAH
That's a funny story.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
You see, after we thought we lost
you, we decided to row for shore.

HANNAH
But we had no paddles-

PROF. LIDENBROCK
So we...chopped off part of the
raft...

HANNAH
To make paddles.

Alex stares, confused.

ALEX
And?

HANNAH
The raft sank.

Alex gapes at his Dad.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I nearly drowned.

He holds up his GREEN NYLON BAG.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
But I saved my samples!

Alex points at THE STEAMING RIVER.

ALEX
Well, I hope they float!

Suddenly, A BONE-JARRING CRACK SHAKES THE VALLEY.

THE MOUNTAINSIDE BEHIND THEM SPLITS OPENS, SPEWING FORTH...

A RIVER OF MOLTEN LAVA.

Steely-eyed, Hannah scans the area.

LAVA STEAMROLLS THE VALLEY, melting everything in its path.

HANNAH
There!

Hannah points to HUGE DINOSAUR SKULL.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
It's a lovely specimen, but this
might not be the time-

Hannah just grabs Alex and Davis.

HANNAH
Now!

They shove hard against the skull, sliding it along the shore.

BEHIND THEM, BONES HISS AND POP UNDER THE TSUNAMI OF LAVA.

With a last shove, the skull slides out and bobs on the river like a boat.

HANNAH TAKES A FLYING LEAP...

She lands inside the skull with a thump, jerking the skull into motion...

FLOATING IT DOWN STREAM.

HANNAH (cont'd)
Jump. Come on!

DAVIS AND ALEX RUN FRANTICALLY ALONG THE BANK AS BEHIND THEM...

THE LAVA KEEPS COMING!

Alex peeks over his shoulder, MISSING A STEP...

TWISTING HIS ANKLE ON A SLICK ROCK.

HE GOES DOWN HARD.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Alex!

Davis tries to grab Alex with one arm, his GREEN NYLON BAG in the other.

But it's no good.

THE LAVA PRESSES CLOSER.

DAVIS THROWS DOWN HIS BAG.

HE GATHERS ALEX IN HIS ARMS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
This is no time to rest, son.

ALEX
(grimacing)
Very funny.

Davis scrambles for Hannah and THE FLOATING SKULL.

HANNAH
Hurry! Now!

Davis takes a peek at the roiling river below him...and at the lava billowing behind him.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Ready?

ALEX
Are you?

Davis takes a breath...

AND LEAPS...

LANDING WITH A THUMP ON THE EDGE OF THE SKULL.

ALEX TUMBLES INSIDE, SAFE.

DAVIS' FEET DIP TOWARD THE BOILING WATER, BUT...

HANNAH PULLS HIM UP JUST IN TIME.

ALEX (cont'd)
Dad! Your samples!

They turn to see...

DAVIS' GREEN NYLON BAG GO UP IN FLAMES, CONSUMED BY THE RELENTLESS LAVA.

DAVIS PUTS A HAND ON HIS SON'S SHOULDER.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
It's okay. I got what I needed.

They share a smile as the skull

SHOOTS DOWN THE RIVER AND...

STRAIGHT UP THE WATERFALL.

THE LAVA POURS INTO THE RIVER.

SSSHHHHHHHH! STEAM EXPLODES EVERYWHERE.

INT. THE LAST TUNNEL - DAY

THE SKULL CRESTS THE WATERFALL, SHOOTS INTO A CAVE...

AND STOPS. In front of them rises...

A HUGE ROCK WALL.

ALEX

What the-

PROF. LIDENBROCK

I suggest everyone find something
to hang on to.

Glowbird chirps and ducks into Alex's shirt pocket.

And then...

SHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!!!!!!

THE SKULL SHOOTS UPWARD ON A GEYSER OF BOILING WATER.

DROPLETS SHOWER OUT AT US, SIZZLING IN THE AIR.

WE BLAST ALONG ON A HEART-POUNDING THRILL RIDE AWAY FROM THE
CENTER OF THE EARTH.

The rock wall passes by at thousands of miles an hour.

Faster....faster...faster.

Davis looks nervously over the side of the skull.

ALEX

What is it?

Davis points down. Through the water, Alex can see...

A BOILING RED DOT, RISING FAST.

PROF. LIDENBROCK

Lava, and it's coming up fast.

HANNAH

Look!

She points up. Above them...

A TINY DOT OF BLUE SKY BECKONS.

ALEX
Can we make it?

Davis checks his watch and smiles weakly.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That would be the question,
wouldn't it?

The skull hurtles along at breakneck speed.
Alex and Davis peer out of the eye sockets.
SPLASH! SSSSS! Water boils dangerously close.
Hannah yanks them back.
BELOW THEM, THE RED DOT GROWS MASSIVE.
ABOVE THEM, THE BLUE DOT SWELLS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
It's going to be close!

He grabs Alex and Hannah and they all hang on together as...
EVERYTHING AROUND THEM TURNS TO STEAM.
LAVA ROARS.
AND THEN...
KABOOM!

EXT. VOLCANO - DAY

THE SKULL BLASTS OUT OF A VOLCANO.

They fly into the air, blown aloft on A GIANT SPUME OF WATER,
STEAM AND LAVA.

WE SOAR WITH THEM TOWARD A SUNLIT, 3-D CLOUD...

WHICH SOON SHRINKS AS THE SKULL PLUMMETS BACK DOWN TO EARTH.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Hang on!

HANNAH
Stop saying that!

BAM! THE SKULL SMACKS OFF THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN, SKIDDING DOWN THE SLOPE LIKE AN OUT-OF-CONTROL BOBSLED.

Alex glances over his shoulder. Lava pours out of the volcano's cone.

When he turns back around, his eyes go wide as the skull rockets toward...

A HUNDRED ROWS OF GRAPEVINES.

ALEX

Duck!

VINES TEAR. WIRES SNAP. THE SKULL RIPS THROUGH ROW AFTER ROW OF VINEYARD.

GRAPES FLY OFF THE SCREEN.

Alex opens one eye and blanches again as they barrel straight for...

A WOODEN FARM HOUSE.

THEY SHOOT RIGHT AT IT...

AND CERTAIN DEATH.

But slowed by the vines, the skull...

GRADUALLY...COMES...TO A STOP...AT THE FRONT DOOR.

The three passengers just sit there, wide-eyed, covered in smashed grapes.

Then the door opens. AN OLD MAN STEPS OUT.

He looks at them, then up to the DEVASTATED VINEYARD.

OLD MAN

Il mio gran-nonno ha piantato
quell'uva.

(subtitles read)

*My grandfather planted those
grapes.*

He looks back down at them, eyes full of sorrow.

OLD MAN (cont'd)

Lo avete rovinato.

(subtitles read)

You have ruined me.

Davis blinks. He looks over his shoulder at the volcano.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Vesuvius?

The old man nods. Davis smiles.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Alex. If anyone asks you what you
did this summer, tell them your dad
took you to Italy.

Alex gapes.

Davis digs in his bag and pulls out A HUGE DIAMOND. He hands
it to the old man.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Sorry about your grapes.

The old man looks from the diamond...to Davis...AND SMILES.

OLD MAN
(in halting English)
Would you like to meet my daughter?

As our three grateful travellers climb out of the skull...

WE SOAR INTO THE SKY, looking down at the little house and
the still spewing volcano.

EXT. PROFESSOR LIDENBROCK'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

PROFESSOR STROCK stands on the sidewalk, gaping up the steps.

PROF. STROCK
You're leaving the University?
Just like that?

Davis carries down a moving box filled with notebooks and
papers.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I thought you thought I didn't fit
in here, Don.

He loads the box into the back of a brand new TRICKED-OUT
HYBRID S.U.V.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
What was it you called me again?

ALEX carries a box of fossils down the steps.

ALEX
You mean, "crackpot?"

Davis snaps his fingers.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That's it.

PROF. STROCK
But what about your research? What
about your funding?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Let's just say I got a grant. And
I hired a new assistant.

HANNAH shoves Strock aside, carrying Davis' hologram
projector.

HANNAH
I hope is big grant. Carrying
equipment is definitely-

PROF. LIDENBROCK
I know, I know. Bonus. Bonus.

Alex grins.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

The S.U.V. takes a corner fast, and SHOOTS RIGHT AT US.

ALEX (O.S.)
Hannah? Don't they have stop signs
in Iceland?

HANNAH (O.S.)
Stop-whats?

The S.U.V. squeals to a halt in front of...

EXT. ALEX'S HOUSE, SUBURBS - DAY

On the sidewalk, Alex and Davis say goodbye.

ALEX
Thanks for the trip, Dad.

PROF. LIDENBROCK
That was nothing. Wait until next
year...

With a devilish grin, he whips out ONE OF SAKNUSSEMM'S
NOTEBOOKS.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
I hear Atlantis is lovely in the
summer.

Alex grins and slings his bag over his shoulder. He heads
for the house.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Hey, son?

Alex turns.

PROF. LIDENBROCK (cont'd)
Want to catch a Red Sox game next
week?

ALEX
Really?

PROF. LIDENBROCK
Sure. We'll buy a sky box.

INT. ALEX'S HOUSE, SUBURBS - DAY

Alex steps inside his quiet house. For a moment, he just
smiles.

JOANNE (O.S.)
Alex? Is that you?

ALEX'S MOM rushes up and gives him a big hug.

JOANNE (cont'd)
So, how'd it go? You survive?

ALEX
Barely.

She ruffles his hair.

JOANNE
You look thin. Did he feed you?

ALEX
We...ate.

Alex looks down to see...

SOMETHING WRIGGLING INSIDE HIS BAG, TRYING TO GET OUT.

He gulps. But Mom's still smiling down at him.

JOANNE

Well, come on in the kitchen and
tell me all about it.

She leads him inside. Alex grabs his bag.

ALEX

Umm...I just need a few minutes to
myself...if you don't mind.

Mom stares as her son vanishes.

JOANNE

Oh, my god. He's becoming a
teenager.

INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alex shuts the door behind him.

He listens for a moment, then TURNS THE LOCK.

He goes to the OPEN WINDOW and shuts it, DRAWING THE SHADES.

Then he lays the wriggling bag on his bed.

He carefully undoes the zipper...

ALEX

Hey, little buddy.

GREEN LIGHT BATHES HIS FACE.

ALEX (cont'd)

Welcome to the surface of the
earth.

AND WITH THAT, GLOWBIRD WHOOSHES OUT OF THE BAG...

SWOOPS AROUND THE ROOM, AND...

SHOTS RIGHT AT US!

FADE OUT.