

MUMMY IIT

by

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NOTE: Dialogue in *italics* is in Chinese with English subtitles.

FADE IN:

THE UNIVERSAL PICTURES GLOBE

morphs into a glinting red sphere. PULL BACK TO REVEAL it's the eye of a malevolent-looking dragon that is carved into a massive door. A FEMALE NARRATOR, with a lilting Chinese accent, begins...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Twenty-two centuries ago, China was forged out of the will of one man, its First Emperor, Qin Shihuang.

The doors swing open and EMPEROR QIN SHIHUANG is carried in. He's sitting on a jewel-encrusted jade throne which is lugged by 30 MONGOLIAN EUNUCHS. He is dressed in an extravagant crimson-and-black robe and his face registers only the blank coldness of a dictator. He's just entered...

EXT. PALACE - DAY

A vast walled city comprised of a complex of pavilions, pagodas and ornamental gardens. The Emperor's army fills the monumental courtyard in front of the main palace pavilion. The 100,000 WARRIORS stand in perfectly ordered phalanxes.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

His thirst for power was unquenchable and his army was a merciless killing machine. He vowed not to rest until he had conquered the entire world.

As the Emperor is paraded past, the soldiers bow on one knee.

EXT. RIVER OF SPIRITS - DAY

TIGHT ON: A HUMAN SKULL as it is CRUSHED under the weight of a massive stone. PULL BACK to reveal an ancient construction site stretching as far as the eye can see.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

He forced his vanquished enemies to construct a great wall which he built over the blighted River of Spirits.

THOUSANDS OF SLAVES haul blocks into place over a snaking dry riverbed that is thickly carpeted with skeletons and skulls.

KEEP PULLING UP over the partially completed Great Wall of China as the image MORPHS into a 20x20 map of the ancient world. It sits on the floor of...

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

The Emperor stands with his Generals, flanked by his devoted eunuch, FU. A magnificent embroidered dragon tapestry shimmers on the wall behind him.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

As the years wore on, the Emperor realized that the world was too big to conquer in his lifetime.

Frustrated, the Emperor grabs a sword and sweeps off the model battalions that are spread out across the map.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

He had to overcome the one enemy that no man had defeated -- death itself.

INT. THRONE ROOM - PALACE - NIGHT

The Emperor watches as a motley crowd of GRIZZLED MEN, WILD-HAIRED HAGS and BESPECTACLED SCHOLARS are escorted in.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

He summoned all the mystics, alchemists and wizards in his kingdom and commanded them to find the answer to eternal life.

CAMERA RESTS ON the face of a SHRIVELED OLD SHAMAN as he reacts to the request with fearful trepidation.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE SHAMAN'S FACE. PULL BACK TO REVEAL his head is now pickled in a jar on a shelf. It's just one of a thousand jars containing the heads of other mystics in...

INT. ANCIENT LABORATORY - DAY

The Emperor stands in the middle of this dungeon-like chamber surrounded by smoking vats and billowing vials.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

They taught him mastery of the five elements -- fire, water, earth, metal and stone -- but the mystery of immortality still eluded him.

The Emperor conjures a blue flame in his palm.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Emperor had almost given up hope when he learned of a priestess named Zohora who was versed in the secret languages of antiquity.

EXT. PALACE GATES - DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

He sent Sun Tzu, his most trusted General, to find her.

The towering doors open and a BATTERY OF WARRIORS canters out on horseback. They are lead by a General, whose striking good looks are etched with nobility. This is SUN TZU.

EXT. BAMBOO FOREST - DAY

Sun Tzu and his men creep toward the stone temple that is nestled among the impossibly tall bamboo trees. A twig SNAPS. He turns and swings up his sword to the throat of a serene beauty, ZOHORA, just as she sweeps up a sword to his. As their eyes meet, there is an instant electric attraction.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Zohora holds on to Sun Tzu as they gallop down a track which runs parallel to the Great Wall. Sun Tzu turns and rides towards the Emperor's palace, which looms in the distance.

INT. THRONE ROOM - PALACE - DAY

Sun Tzu presents Zohora to the Emperor, who is clearly struck by her beauty.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Emperor gave Zohora access to his vast library.

INT. SCROLL ROOM - PALACE - DAY

Zohora sits at a circular desk in the middle of this colossal bookshelf-filled chamber, poring over boxes of scrolls.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She spent her days studying the ancient texts and her nights...

INT. SUN TZU QUARTERS - NIGHT

Zohora and Sun Tzu are entwined in a passionate embrace.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 ... wrapped in Sun Tzu's arms.

THE CAMERA FINDS the Emperor watching through a window. As his eyes glint with jealousy...

INT. SCROLL ROOM - PALACE - NIGHT

Zohora empties a box of documents onto the table and unrolls a dusty papyrus. It is written in hieratic and features images of Horus and Anubis. As she translates the text, her face fires with excitement.

INT. SUN TZU QUARTERS - NIGHT

Zohora bursts in holding the papyrus.

ZOHORA
The answer! I found it!

EMPEROR
I never doubted you would.

She spins and finds the Emperor in the doorway. She masks her shock and respectfully bows her head.

ZOHORA
My Lord.

He lifts her chin with his finger.

EMPEROR
Where is it?

ZOHORA
Written in a book hidden in the land of the Pharaohs.

Two Eunuchs step out holding Sun Tzu, who's been beaten.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 He ordered Sun Tzu to retrieve the book.

Zohora drops to her knees in front of Sun Tzu and begs.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 But Zohora pleaded that she should go in his place. Egyptian tombs are deadly traps and, without knowledge of their hieroglyphics, he would face certain death.

The Emperor considers her request, unsheathes a dragon-hilted dagger which he holds to Sun Tzu's heart.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Emperor gave her ninety moons
to return or he would execute her
lover.

Sun Tzu and Zohora exchange desperate glances.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Zohora headed west...

Zohora rides like the wind. She spurs her horse up over a dune, revealing the GREAT PYRAMIDS OF GIZA flickering like a mirage. She powers into the blistering heat.

EXT. HAMUNAPTRA - NIGHT

NARRATOR (V.O.)

... to the city of Hamunaptra,
resting place of Imhotep and
sanctuary of the fabled Book of the
Dead.

TWO MUMIA are sitting by a campfire, guarding the entrance, when -- PHHHT! PHHHT! Two bamboo blow-darts hit their necks. As they slump, unconscious, Zohora is revealed. She searches their pockets and retrieves the PUZZLE BOX KEY (from the first "Mummy" movie). As she flowers it open...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ANUBIS' CHAMBER - NIGHT

The impression on the front of the black Book of the Dead. Zohora twists the key and the latches snap open one by one.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Not wishing to incur the wrath of
the great god Anubis, Zohora
fashioned a copy of the sacred text
in terra cotta.

Under Anubis' watchful gaze, Zohora mixes a thick clay.

EXT. HAMUNAPTRA - DAWN

Everything is washed in golden light. Zohora wraps her copy of the Book in a blanket and places it in her saddlebag.

EXT. ZOHORA'S RIDE - NIGHT/DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She rode day and night, determined
no harm would come to Sun Tzu.

Zohora rides across the desert, immune to the scorching sun.
Silhouetted against the moon, she plows across the Himalayas.

Her face is a mask of determination as she races along the
Great Wall, sending WORKERS scattering.

EXT. PALACE - DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She returned to the palace on the
eve of the eighty-ninth day.

A snowstorm swirls as Zohora bursts through the gates and
rides past the legions of warriors who are training in the
massive courtyard.

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Zohora kneels at the Emperor's feet and holds up the copy of
the Book of the Dead. He beams as he runs his hand across
its surface.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Emperor was so pleased that he
rewarded Zohora with a gift.

The Emperor's Eunuch, Fu, steps forward, holding a lavishly
carved lapis box. Zohora tentatively opens the lid and reels
back when she sees SUN TZU'S HEAD. His glassy eyes stare up.

EMPEROR

*Now I will rule the earth as a god
with you by my side.*

The Emperor grins lecherously.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

He ordered her to read from the
Book and make him immortal. But
she refused.

Enraged, the Emperor plunges the dragon-hilted dagger into
her side. As she drops to her knees, the Book falls open and
Zohora WHISPERS an ancient Egyptian incantation.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Instead of granting him everlasting life, Zohora used the Book to curse the Emperor and his beloved army.

The Emperor utters a BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM. He tears open his robe, looks at his chest as his skin becomes translucent. Fu and the Eunuchs flee as the Emperor's heart starts to pump

BLACK BLOOD.

The poison courses through the Emperor's body from the inside out. Black veins viper up his arms, legs and neck and fissure across the whites of his eyeballs. The ooze seeps out of his pores, coating his flesh and clothes. Like molten clay, it sheets across his face, sealing his lips and tongue and silencing his agonized cry. When he's fully coated,

ULTRA-BRIGHT RODS OF WHITE LIGHT

needle out of his body. The Emperor jerks upright and his arms swing to his sides as the light fuses his bones and SUPERHEATS the clay shell, hardening it in seconds. When the light dies, the Emperor has been transformed into

A TERRA COTTA MUMMY.

A VOLLEY OF BANSHEE SCREAMS echoes from outside. Zohora peers out as the terra cotta curse washes over the Emperor's warriors like a wave. Their horses SHRIEK as they succumb to the unholy curse, too. Finally, they are all wracked by the blinding spindles of light and are violently snapped to permanent attention as their bodies are entombed in clay.

EXT. PALACE - NIGHT

Snow whips as the wounded Zohora gallops across the courtyard, clutching the Book. Tears freeze on her cheeks as she passes the rows of terra cotta soldiers who stand like a clockwork army. She rides into the whiteness.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She rode off into the night and was never seen again.

Snow PINGS off the warriors as CAMERA SWEEPS UP OVER their heads and INTO the window of...

INT. THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

PUSH IN ON the Emperor's expressionless face.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Eunuchs buried the Emperor in a crypt below the courtyard. As for his warriors, the palace became their tomb.

PUSH into his lifeless eyes.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The people believed that if the Emperor awoke, he would raise his army and finish his crusade to enslave the world.

KEEP PUSHING until THE SCREEN IS ENGULFED IN BLACKNESS and the only sound is EERIE WHISTLING SILENCE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

For two millennia, they laid forgotten under the sands of time until...

SUPERIMPOSED across the SCREEN are the words: **CHINA - 1940.**

A shaft of light cuts through the blackness and

A YOUNG MAN

rappels into view. This is ALEX O'CONNELL. He's 18 now, with floppy blond hair and an English accent. He's inherited his father's good looks and his mother's academic intellect.

LILY

Alex, you see anything?

He peers up at LILY CHEN, who's staring through a hole in the roof of the cavern 50 feet above. Lily's about Alex's age and her mysterious beauty is matched by a razor-sharp mind.

ALEX

Not yet, but I know the palace is down here. It has to be.

LILY

That's what you said about the other nine caverns.

ALEX

This is the one, Lily. I'm going deeper.

LILY

I don't think that's a good idea.

ALEX

Trust me, I was rappelling into tombs before I could walk. I'm a pro.

As he loosens the clamp, the rope slides free and Alex is sent plunging into the darkness. Lily reacts as Alex's rope rapidly uncoils at her feet. She SHOUTS into the abyss.

LILY

ALEX! ALEX!

Alex scorches his palms as he desperately tries to reattach his harness to the rope. Finally, he pounds his fist into the head of the clamp, causing its teeth to lock back into place. As the rope jerks him to a stop, he instinctively snatches his glasses out of the air as they tumble free.

LILY

Alex, are you okay?

ALEX

I'm hanging in there.

He pulls out a flare-stick and cracks it open. He holds it out as he slowly twists himself around and comes face to face with a FEARSOME TERRA COTTA WARRIOR. Alex grins.

ALEX

Lily, radio Willoughby, tell him I found it.

INT. TOMB OF THE TERRA COTTA WARRIORS - DAY

Time has turned the palace courtyard into a vast subterranean vault. Warriors are lined shoulder to shoulder. Lily supervises a CHINESE CREW who are illuminating the giant space with torches. Alex waits for an OVERWEIGHT ENGLISHMAN, in a white linen suit, who is awkwardly clambering off a rope ladder. This is SIR COLIN WILLOUGHBY.

WILLOUGHBY

My colleagues at the Bembridge Society thought I was crazy to put my faith and money in an O'Connell. But I knew you could do it, Alex.

ALEX

Thank you, Sir Colin. That means a great deal coming from you.

Willoughby pulls a magnifying glass from his pocket and rudely brushes past Lily as he crosses to admire a warrior.

WILLOUGHBY

Look at the detail. I wonder how long they took to carve.

LILY

They weren't carved, they were cursed.

WILLOUGHBY

According to whom?

LILY

Chinese legend. The terra cotta warriors have remained poised in time, waiting for their Emperor to return.

WILLOUGHBY

Alex, you should tell your girlfriend not to put so much stock in old folklore.

Alex awkwardly shuffles.

ALEX

Actually, Lily's not my girlfriend. She's a Ph.D. student at Shanghai University. I couldn't have found this tomb without her help.

Willoughby regards Lily, skeptical.

WILLOUGHBY

What's your field of expertise?

LILY

Ancient Chinese history and languages.

Unimpressed, Willoughby turns back to Alex.

WILLOUGHBY

Once you take the Bembridge oath, I trust you'll leave such fairy-tale hokum behind.

ALEX

But only full scholars take the oath.

WILLOUGHBY

You are our youngest associate, now I predict you'll be our youngest scholar. They couldn't deny you after this discovery.

ALEX

Sir Colin, I don't know what to say. That's been my dream ever since I desecrated my first tomb.

Before Alex can correct himself, Willoughby wraps him in a sweaty bear hug.

WILLOUGHBY

You've got a lot of work ahead of you. This place is going to take decades to excavate.

As Willoughby puffs his way down a row of warriors, Alex turns to Lily, grinning like a kid at Christmas.

ALEX

Alex O'Connell, Bembridge Scholar. Wait until my mum hears about this.

LILY

You don't need that pompous ass Willoughby to validate you. It would take him three lifetimes to learn what you already know.

He smiles, looks at her, clearly enchanted.

ALEX

Lily, I was wondering when we get back to Shanghai if maybe we could do something together, you know, that doesn't involve digging holes or climbing down ropes.

LILY

Is that your way of asking me out on a date?

He nods shyly. Although touched, she lets him down gently.

LILY

I'd love to, but I kind of make it a rule not to date colleagues.

ALEX

Of course, absolutely, good thinking. Wouldn't want to blur the lines with all the work we've got ahead of us.

OFF Alex masking his disappointment as she heads away...

CUT TO:

A BRUSH -- flicks the dust from the dragon insignia that embellishes the chest plate of a terra cotta warrior. Alex stands back, confused, as Lily steps to his side.

LILY

Everything okay?

Alex points to three pairs of terra cotta warriors who stand side by side and bear the Emperor's insignia.

ALEX

You have any idea what six of the Emperor's personal bodyguards are doing in the middle of a formation of foot soldiers?

LILY

Maybe they got lost.

ALEX

They would never have left his side.

Alex bends down, sweeps away some dirt, revealing a track-like groove. He looks back at Lily and grins...

ALEX

You want to meet an Emperor?

Alex steps between the first pair of warriors, puts his hands on their chests and pushes them over. The statues slam into the ones behind them, knocking them over like bowling pins. As the third pair topple, they lurch to a stop and a doorway GRINDS OPEN in the floor between the six statues. OFF Alex and Lily's excitement...

INT. CRYPT - DAY

Four stone Chimera, mythical dragon-like tomb guardians, stand in the corners of the chamber as Alex leads Lily and Willoughby down the steps. The trio stares in awe at the Emperor's ornate sarcophagus. It's sitting on a carriage harnessed to a chariot drawn by four bronze horses.

WILLOUGHBY

The final resting place of Emperor Qin Shihuang. You've guaranteed your place in the history books with this one, my boy.

Willoughby steps to the sarcophagus. It's carved out of red jade and is inlaid with the Emperor's dragon insignia.

WILLOUGHBY

I want the sarcophagus taken to the British Embassy in Shanghai for safe keeping immediately.

Alarmed, Lily steps in front of Willoughby.

LILY

No, the Emperor can't leave this chamber!

WILLOUGHBY

I don't remember requesting your opinion on the matter.

LILY

If you move the Emperor, you'll be making a huge mistake.

Willoughby rolls his eyes, turns to Alex.

WILLOUGHBY

I suggest you have a word with your lady friend if you want her to remain on this dig.

Alex waits until Willoughby exits.

ALEX

Lily, we're archaeologists. We don't dig something up to leave it behind. We have to take it back and study it.

LILY

The ancient scrolls say that if the Dragon Emperor awakes, he will lay waste to the entire world.

ALEX

In order to raise a mummy, you need the Book of the Dead. There's only one copy and, trust me, it's buried under the Sahara.

Alex turns away, studies the lid of the sarcophagus.

ALEX
This guy's just terra cotta and
bone. He couldn't hurt a fly.

As his hand brushes over the dragon insignia, Lily sees the
stone Chimeras' mouths snap open.

LILY
GET DOWN!

She dive-tackles Alex and they roll under the chariot just as
ROARING 20-foot jets of flame shoot out of the mouths of the
Chimera. When the inferno ends, Lily looks at Alex.

LILY
I've never seen someone cheat death
so many times.

ALEX
You should meet my parents.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

TITLE SUPERIMPOSED ON SCREEN: **AGRA, INDIA.**

Clouds of billowing steam. As it disperses, RICK AND EVY
O'CONNELL are revealed. They're in the middle of a
passionate kiss. They finally come up for air, look into
each other's eyes, clearly still very much in love.

O'CONNELL
Happy anniversary, Evy.

Evy peers through the view-finder of a Baby Brownie camera.

CLOSE ON: An upside down image of the Taj Mahal.

EVELYN
Remember when Alex climbed that
minaret?

O'CONNELL
Yeah, I bet him a year's allowance
he couldn't do it. Then we dodged
the Indian police for two hours.

He smiles sadly as they make their way through the THrong.

O'CONNELL

I miss being the fun dad Alex
couldn't wait to hang out with.

EVELYN

Well, somewhere between the tombs
of Egypt and the temples of Persia,
your son grew up.

O'CONNELL

I know and I'm really proud of him.
But the truth is he's closer to you
than he is to me.

EVELYN

If you want to know what he's up
to, why don't you read his letters?

O'CONNELL

Honey, they're in ancient Egyptian
with jokes about obscure pharaohs.

EVELYN

He did inherit my wry sense of
humor.

Rick shakes his head. Evy tries to stay positive.

EVELYN

Look, you need to reconnect with
him in your own way. When you were
his age, what did you like?

O'CONNELL

Girls, guns... girls.

EVELYN

Trust me, your son has no time for
romantic dalliances. He's a
freshman at Yale. I'm sure he's
absorbed in his studies.

O'CONNELL

What are you going to do when Alex
finally does bring somebody home?

EVELYN

I'll be fine... as long as she's a
librarian.

As they reach the entrance, Evy scans the crowd.

EVELYN

Any sign of General Okumura?

Rick points to an ASIAN MAN with aristocratic features. This is GENERAL OKUMURA. He's climbing into a bicycle rickshaw.

O'CONNELL

Looks like he's doing some sightseeing.

As they clamber into a rickshaw and follow...

EXT. RICKSHAW - DAY

Rick and Evy trundle through the sweltering odyssey of decrepit traffic, market stalls and cows.

O'CONNELL

I still can't believe you talked me into spying for the British Government.

EVELYN

We're in the middle of a war, Rick. I wanted us to do our part. Besides, I've talked you into worse.

O'CONNELL

You don't even know why you're following him?

EVELYN

The Home Office said the less we know the safer we are. We're just supposed to observe his movements and report back.

O'CONNELL

Lucky your husband likes to live dangerously.

EVELYN

Rick, what did you do?

Rick grins mischievously.

O'CONNELL

Played a little poker with the Defense Minister's brother and let him win occasionally. According to him, Okumura claims to have access to a doomsday weapon.

Evy's instantly intrigued.

EVELYN

And what might that be?

O'CONNELL

Nobody knows, but the Japanese High Command weren't impressed. They bounced Okumura and his followers out of Tokyo faster than you can say sushi.

As Okumura pulls up in front of the Taj Mahal, he is met by TWO FIERCE-LOOKING SIKHS wearing blue turbans.

EVELYN

What's a rogue general doing in India?

O'CONNELL

That's where the spying part comes in.

INT. TAJ MAHAL - DAY

Rick and Evy head into the miraculous domed interior.

ATTENDANT

Shoe! Shoe!

They turn and find an INDIAN MAN pointing to a sign, "NO SHOES!" Rick pulls off his boots and hands them over.

O'CONNELL

Guard them with your life.

Now barefoot, Rick and Evy dash across the marble. They surreptitiously watch as Okumura and his crew head into...

INT. PEACOCK CHAMBER - DAY

Rick and Evy hustle in, then stop in their tracks. There's no sign of Okumura and there's no exit.

O'CONNELL

One way in and no way out.

The walls are covered with marble reliefs of Indian wildlife. Elephants, monkeys, tigers and peacocks. They push and prod at the menagerie. Evy sighs in frustration.

EVELYN

I better take some pictures of
where the trail went cold.

Evy snaps photos while Rick tugs at an elephant statue. He yanks down on its trunk, breaks it off. As he tries to reattach it, Evy lines up a shot and sees something.

EVELYN

Pinch my cheeks.

Rick quickly slips the broken trunk in his pocket.

O'CONNELL

Not now, Honey, we've got a bad guy
to catch.

EVELYN

Look through the view-finder.

She hands him the camera and points to a design inlaid on the wall above a relief of a peacock. Its tail feathers glint with semi-precious stone. As he peers through the camera...

WHAT HE SEES: Viewed upside down, the abstract design now appears to spell out a phrase.

EVELYN

Those symbols are actually
Sanskrit, except they're upside
down and backwards. They spell,
"Pinch my cheeks".

Evy reaches across, pinches the peacock's cheeks causing its "feathers" to fan back into the floor, revealing a doorway.

INT. PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Old brass lanterns illuminate the network of Moorish corridors and hallways. Rick and Evy come to a recently excavated hole in the floor. Distant VOICES echo from below. Rick drops a stone into the darkness and hears it SPLAT.

O'CONNELL

Sounds soft. After you.

Evy takes a breath, then drops in feet first. Rick follows.

INT. PIT - DAY

The duo torpedoes into the mud. They're up to their necks.

EVELYN

Why is the mud moving?

Both look down and see they've landed in a pit of writhing SLUGS! They slither out, frantically brushing slugs and slime off their clothes.

EVELYN

Disgusting doesn't even begin to describe that.

Rick plucks a slug out of his ear. Evy SQUELCHES up to a filigree grille and peers out.

WHAT SHE SEES: A giant, 50-foot silver statue of the elephant god Ganesh in the middle of a huge subterranean cavern. He holds a sword in each of his eight arms. Like a sinking ship, the whole place is weirdly tilted at an angle.

EVELYN

The Lost Temple of Ganesh. The final repository of...

OKUMURA (O.S.)

... the Eye of Pemako.

As they spin, Rick reaches for his gun but comes out with a handful of slugs. They stare at Okumura, who is flanked by the two sword-wielding Sikhs.

OKUMURA

When I heard the British had sent the infamous O'Connells to spy on me, I was flattered. Expertise like yours is hard to come by.

(beat)

Now, I'm going use it to get me the Eye.

Rick points to the diamond gleaming on Ganesh's forehead.

O'CONNELL

It's right there, get it yourself.

OKUMURA

You of all people should know these ancient temples are full of hidden dangers.

He tosses a flaming torch into the wide well surrounding Ganesh, revealing a pit of slumbering CROCODILES. Their bodies are entwined like a giant jigsaw puzzle. OFF Rick and Evy's distress...

INT. TEMPLE OF GANESH - DAY

Tiny oil lamps flicker in thousands of niches dug out of the walls. Rick stifles A YELP as he stubs his bare foot on the tail of a 20-foot croc.

O'CONNELL

No gun, no shoes and we're walking across a bunch of alligators. Who stays up at night and thinks of this stuff?

EVELYN

Actually, honey, they're Indian crocodiles, far more vicious. But lucky for us, it looks like they're hibernating.

O'CONNELL

Way to find the silver lining, Evy.

He glances at the sword-wielding Sikhs who are following.

O'CONNELL

So what does Okumura want with the Eye of Pemako?

EVELYN

They say the stone points the way to the Spring of Eternal Life which is hidden in Shangri-La.

O'CONNELL

As much as I'd like to take a swig from the fountain of youth and stay this ruggedly handsome forever -- that's a myth.

EVELYN

You used to feel the same way about mummies.

They scramble out of the pit and begin to climb the statue while the Sikhs stand guard at the base.

OKUMURA -- watches the duo clamber up the silver behemoth.

RICK & EVY -- reach the top of the statue. Evy waits behind one of its 6-foot ears while Rick reaches for the giant gemstone. He almost topples as he wrestles it free, hands the stone to Evy. As she examines it, her brow furrows.

EVELYN

Rick, this isn't it.

O'CONNELL

Looks like a big sparkly diamond to me.

She scrapes the stone against the edge of Ganesh's ear, then shows Rick its scarred surface.

EVELYN

Diamonds don't scratch.

A loud METALLIC CLANKING echoes from the belly of the statue. Like a giant clockwork toy, the statue GRINDS to life. Its eight arms swing their razor-sharp swords and its head nods.

RICK AND EVY

try to keep their balance but tumble off. As they plunge towards the pit, Rick drops the diamond but manages to catch hold of one of the statue's eight arms. He reaches out and grabs Evy's hand as she falls past him. As they dangle, Rick sees a sword sweep towards Evy. A second before

THE GLEAMING BLADE

slices her in two, Evy lets go, SCREAMING as she drops. Rick swings up his bare feet as the sword razors under him, then looks down and is relieved to see Evy hanging onto the end of Ganesh's trunk.

OKUMURA -- races down into the pit, BARKS orders to the Sikhs, who begin climbing up onto the statue.

As Sikhs stalk towards Evy, Rick is helpless until he sees three of the statue's arms converge, their swords form a makeshift staircase. Rick bounds across the blades and tackles the Sikhs right off the statue. As they tumble Sikh #1 is impaled on one of Ganesh's swinging swords while Rick and Sikh #2 crash into the croc pit.

OKUMURA -- is unaware of the commotion as he picks up the glass diamond and sees it's veined with cracks. Furious, he SMASHES it against the base of the statue, powdering it.

EVY -- peers into the statue's navel cavity. Two eyes stare back. She reaches in and pulls out a life-size SILVER SKULL. When she plucks it out, CAMERA SHOOT'S INTO THE EMPTY HOLE and ZIGZAGS between the statue's cogs and gears as they

GRIND TO A HALT.

CAMERA DIVES towards the base of the statue as a kinetic furnace unleashes a fury of hot steam. CAMERA FOLLOWS the steam into a maze of pipes and emerges through a grate under Rick, who is lying dazed. He GROANS as his bare feet are seared. He hops out of the way, watches as the statue shudders to a stop and steam billows from 100 other grates.

O'CONNELL

Evy, how did you turn off the arms
and turn on the steam bath?

EVELYN

I'm not sure, but I found the Eye.

Spangles of light ripple across Evy as she hinges open the skull and stares at THE EYE. It's an egg-sized diamond with a large, pupil-shaped emerald embedded within it.

EVELYN

It was inside Ganesh's belly.
Which makes perfect sense; you see,
in Indian culture, the third eye is
about looking inward.

A BULLET zips past Rick. It's Okumura.

O'CONNELL

Fill me in later.

Okumura pops off TWO MORE SHOTS, Rick races away, dives for cover among the sleeping crocodiles. As he peers through the steam, he sees the eyes of a croc pop open. Then another and another. They're all waking up! He slowly turns his head until he's staring into the open eyes of the croc directly in front of him. It's got a shit-eating grin on its snout. Just as the ferocious reptile lurches towards him with its jaws snapping, Rick shoulder-rolls to his feet and takes off.

O'CONNELL

Evy, I figured out what the steam
does!

Evy slides down Ganesh's right leg, clutching the skull box, turns to find the cavern is shrouded in a carpet of steam.

EVELYN

Rick, where are you?

She jumps down, unaware of the threat. Suddenly, a shape emerges through the curtain of steam behind her. It's Sikh #2! He's holding a sword and creeping up on her.

He's about to slice her in half when a GIANT CROCODILE leaps out of the mist, vices the guy in his jaws, and drops out of frame with lightning speed. Evy hears the man's MUFFLED CRY, spins, but sees nothing. When she turns back, she is startled to find Rick right next to her. She swats him.

EVELYN

Don't do that!

O'CONNELL

We need to go. Now!

However, as they turn, Okumura steps out of the steam with his gun aimed at Rick.

OKUMURA

Give me the Eye.

O'CONNELL

Don't do it, Evy.

Suddenly, an ENORMOUS RUMBLE BOOMS from inside the statue and the whole place shakes, throwing them off their feet and sending the skull box flying. Okumura scrambles after it, Rick right on his tail. Evy follows, avoiding the jaws of a dozen starving crocs.

OKUMURA -- sees the silver skull, is reaching for it when Rick dive-tackles him. The two men exchange blows. As Rick falls back, Okumura clambers for the skull. He's just grasped it in his hand when A MASSIVE CROCODILE leaps up and bites his arm off at the elbow. Okumura drops to his knees and SCREAMS in agony. Rick scrambles right past him and after the croc as another RUMBLE echoes from Ganesh.

O'CONNELL

Come here, boy.

As the crocodile opens its mouth to SNARL, Rick sees the skull box is still clutched in the palm of Okumura's severed arm which is lying on the croc's tongue.

O'CONNELL

Good croc.

Rick gets an idea, pulls the marble tusk from his jacket. As the croc moves in, Rick thrusts the tusk into its mouth, wedging it open. He reaches in and grabs the skull box a second before the reptile's jaws snap shut, OBLITERATING the marble tusk like a toothpick.

Rick runs back to Evy, who's trying to fend off a trio of crocs. They hear GUNFIRE and turn to see Okumura SHOOTING his way out. They're completely surrounded by HISSING crocs.

O'CONNELL

I thought Ganesh was the god of good luck.

EVELYN

Actually, he's the god of wealth, intelligence...

Suddenly, there's A DEAFENING GROAN and the statue topples off its base. As it CRASHES, its sword-wielding arms impale the crocs that are about to devour Rick and Evy.

EVELYN

... and remover of obstacles.

The duo clammers up onto the statue, which forms a bridge over the crocodile pit.

INT. TAJ MAHAL - DAY

Rick and Evy look like they've been dragged to hell and back. Rick holds his shoulder as they cross to the shoe Attendant.

EVELYN

I should report to the Home Office and you should see a doctor.

Rick hands the Attendant his ticket. The man stares in shock. Rick's shirt is ripped and his face is streaked with dirt and blood.

O'CONNELL

The other guy lost an arm.

As Rick starts pulling on his boots, he surreptitiously takes the Eye out of its skull box and slips it into a compartment in the heel of his boot. As he ties his laces:

O'CONNELL

Now let's get this vacation started.

Evy, meanwhile, notices the "Times of India" sitting on the Attendant's chair. She picks it up and stares at the photo on the front page in disbelief.

EVELYN

Rick, did you know someone found the First Emperor of China?

O'CONNELL

You're kidding? Who did that son-of-a-bitch Willoughby finally get to do the job?

EVELYN

Our son.

She angrily spins and thrusts the newspaper into his chest.

EVELYN

Vacation's over.

As she storms away, Rick peers at the front page. It features a photo of Alex under the headline, "O'CONNELL DISCOVERS FIRST EMPEROR OF CHINA!" OFF this image...

SMASH CUT TO:

AERIAL VIEW of a twinkling metropolis. CAMERA SURFS PAST magnificent hotels, SWOOPS over market-choked streets and alleys zigzagged with lanterns and washing lines.

TITLE SUPERIMPOSED ON SCREEN: SHANGHAI, CHINA.

It doesn't stop until it FINDS a bubble-gum-pink neon sign. It's flashing above a glitzy nightclub "IMHOTEP'S -- COCKTAILS AND DANCING. OPEN 10 'TIL LATE!" CAMERA PUSHES RIGHT THROUGH the "O" of Imhotep and INTO the window of...

INT. "IMHOTEP'S" - NIGHT

It's decorated like an Egyptian fantasy. The GORGEOUS ASIAN BARMAIDS are body-painted like Anck-su-namun. JONATHAN holds court at the bar. He's wearing a white dinner jacket and has a BEAUTIFUL SOCIALITE on each arm.

JONATHAN

... so the entire oasis sank into the desert. I said that's it, I'm done with Egypt. It's off to the Orient to follow my true dream. And when that didn't work out, I opened this nightclub.

He raises his champagne flute in a toast.

JONATHAN

To Imhotep!
(under his breath)
May the bastard actually stay dead.

They're about to clink when the whole place goes SILENT. Jonathan turns and sees a TRIO OF JAPANESE OFFICERS, lead by MAJOR SUKI, striding towards a table of INTENSE CHINESE MEN. The Major stares at the leader of the group, CHANG.

CHANG

You're in the wrong bar, they don't serve sake here.

MAJOR SUKI

Show me your papers.

CHANG

I don't take orders from Japanese.

Suki's hand edges for his weapon when Jonathan intervenes.

JONATHAN

Gentlemen, this club has a strict no-senseless-violence policy.

MAJOR SUKI

These men are suspected Chinese insurgents. How can you serve their kind?

JONATHAN

I serve all kinds, including Japanese officers with no jurisdiction.

He SNAPS his fingers, THREE GORGEOUS BARMAIDS step over.

JONATHAN

Now please enjoy my hospitality.

As they lead the Japanese away, Jonathan addresses Chang.

JONATHAN

I think it's time you found somewhere else for your little get-togethers, Chang. I'm a lover, not a fighter.

As he turns back to the bar, Jonathan is slapped across the face. He stares in surprise at Evy.

EVELYN

How long has Alex been in China?

JONATHAN

Alex is in China?

She slaps him again.

O'CONNELL

You may want to rethink your answer.

EVELYN

My son makes the biggest discovery of the century and I have to read about it in a newspaper.

JONATHAN

I tried reaching you in India. But I guess you were out gallivanting on elephants or whatever you do on a second honeymoon. How was it?

O'CONNELL

Crocodiles, slugs, secret temples, you know, the usual.

JONATHAN

Maybe you two should go on a package tour next time.

EVELYN

Jonathan!

JONATHAN

(finally caving)

Alex sent me a telegram six months ago. He told me he needed extra money for books and would I be a good uncle and wire it to him. The next thing I know he's on my doorstep, said he had an opportunity of a lifetime.

O'CONNELL

Which part of "world war" made you think that was a good idea?

EVELYN

We sent Alex to America so he wouldn't be in harm's way.

JONATHAN

Don't blame me, he's your son, it's not like you two have been role models for playing it safe.

O'CONNELL

Where is he?

As Jonathan points upstairs and they head away, CAMERA FINDS Major Suki observing from a booth. OFF his face...

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

There's a KNOCK at the door. Alex swings it open, revealing Lily. She steps in and is surprised to see a candlelit table for two and a bottle of champagne in a bucket.

LILY

Do you always study with
candlelight and champagne?

Alex feigns nonchalance.

ALEX

Oh that. It was a gift from the
British Consulate, apparently my
discovery has been a big morale
boost to everybody back home.

(picking up bottle)

Come on, one drink between friends
before we hit the books.

Lily smiles her agreement. With macho confidence, Alex tries to open the bottle, but struggles with the cork, finally he puts the bottle between his knees.

LILY

Need a hand?

ALEX

I've done this a thousand times.
It's all in the wrist.

At that moment, the cork POPS and a geyser of champagne sprays over him, drenching his shirt. As he turns away, we see that Lily is clearly charmed by his awkwardness.

ALEX

Give me a minute.

Alex steps behind a screen, takes off his shirt and looks for a replacement. Lily sneaks a peep at his reflection in a mirror and clearly likes what she sees. There's a LOUD KNOCK at the door. Alex calls out...

ALEX

I'm busy, slip the telegrams under
the door.

Another LOUDER KNOCK.

LILY
You want me to get it?

Alex pops his head around the side of the screen, holding a lamp under his chin which casts spooky shadows.

ALEX
It's probably just a mummy.

LILY
Alex, that's not funny.

ALEX
(scary voice)
... a mummy! Mummy!

Suddenly, the door bursts open and Evy stands on the threshold. He looks at her in wide-eyed shock.

ALEX
Mummy!

Alex puts down the lamp as Rick joins her. Evy stares in horror while Rick smiles, amused by the situation.

O'CONNELL
Hey, kiddo, get lost on your way
to Yale?

Alex looks at Evy, who is seething.

ALEX
Mum, you look upset.

EVELYN
I passed upset two time zones ago.

ALEX
I can explain.

EVELYN
You're half naked, consorting with
a bar-girl. It's pretty self-
explanatory.

ALEX
Lily's not a bar-girl.

LILY
We're colleagues.

ALEX

We were about to exchange valuable research.

O'CONNELL

I bet you were.

EVELYN

And that required candles, champagne and taking off your clothes?

Flustered, Alex pulls on a shirt.

LILY

Alex, I'm going. You obviously have some catching up to do. Good night, Mr. and Mrs. O'Connell.

ALEX

Lily, wait.

As she heads out, Alex turns to his parents, exasperated.

ALEX

Way to go guys, thanks.

O'CONNELL

Let me get this straight. You lie to us and we're supposed to feel bad about ruining your date?

ALEX

It wasn't a --

(catches himself)

I didn't tell you about the dig because I knew what you'd say. That you don't want me running around a country on the brink of war.

O'CONNELL

Yeah, we're terrible parents holding you back like that.

ALEX

You parked me at Yale because you still think I'm a child.

O'CONNELL

We parked you at Yale so you'd live to see your next birthday.

ALEX

For your information I tried to enlist.

(off their shock)

But they wouldn't take me. Said I was 4F. Bad eyes. Flat feet.

EVELYN

I'm afraid you inherited my family's genes. The Carnahans aren't known for producing football stars. Just look at your Uncle Jon.

ALEX

When Sir Willoughby called and said I could be of service to my country, I jumped.

(to Evy, excited)

Mum, he's going to make me a full Bembridge Scholar.

O'CONNELL

That doesn't matter.

But Evy's face suddenly glows with pride.

EVELYN

Full scholar? Alex, that's fantastic. Just what we've always dreamed about.

ALEX

Sir Willoughby is throwing me a party at the British Consulate tomorrow night.

O'CONNELL

Evy, we're supposed to be mad. United front, remember?

EVELYN

Alex, it's terrible you lied...
(can't contain herself)
... but congratulations! Give me a hug.

As they hug, Rick rolls his eyes. Evy finally breaks off.

EVELYN

Now, tell me more about this Lily.

OFF Alex's embarrassment...

EXT. SHANGHAI - DAWN

The modern city of Art Deco skyscrapers sits on the banks of the Huangpu River which is home to a floating city of boats and sampans. CAMERA ZEROES IN ON a TATTERED THREE-MAST JUNK sitting in the middle of the flotilla of vessels.

INT. JUNK - DAWN

TIGHT ON OKUMURA as the HIDEOUS WHINE of a drill cuts the air. He twists a pair of meditation balls in the palm of his good hand. PAN DOWN FROM THE SHOULDER of his other arm TO REVEAL the lost appendage has been replaced by

A MECHANICAL ARM

A CHINESE ENGINEER, wearing thick magnifying glasses, is fine-tuning the arm's intricately constructed inner workings with a drill. The man takes his foot off the pedal.

CHINESE ENGINEER

Try again.

Okumura takes the meditation balls in his metallic hand. As his fingers close around them, the balls SHATTER in his grip.

CHINESE ENGINEER

Too strong. I need to adjust the tension.

As he's about to WHIR the drill back to life, Okumura reaches over and violently crushes the tool.

OKUMURA

Leave it. It's perfect.

(beat)

You have done a great service for Japan. When the storm comes, you will be protected.

He extends his mechanical hand. The Engineer peers at it, finally reaches out. He braces for a bone-crushing, but is surprised when Okumura gently clenches his hand. As the man hastily exits, he passes Major Suki from "Imhotep's".

MAJOR SUKI

The O'Connells are in Shanghai.

OKUMURA

Right on time.

OFF Okumura's look of satisfaction...

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

Jonathan's custom-white, CHAUFFEUR-driven Bentley crawls through the colorful sea of market stalls and rickshaws.

INT. BENTLEY - NIGHT

Jonathan is in front while Alex is squeezed between Rick and Evy in the back. They're dressed up for the big party. Rick rolls his eyes as an ELDERLY BICYCLIST passes them.

O'CONNELL

It would have been faster going by rickshaw.

Evy shoots him a look.

EVELYN

Rick, this might be a good time to give Alex his present.

Alex regards his dad with surprise.

ALEX

You got me a gift?

Rick sheepishly nods, hands Alex a box.

O'CONNELL

You know, in honor of your big discovery.

Alex RATTLES it gleefully, looks at Evy.

ALEX

I bet it's that new set of archaeological trowels I've had my eye on.

EVELYN

Don't look at me, your father insisted on picking it out himself.

Alex RIPS open the lid and stares in disappointment.

ALEX

Wow. A slingshot.

O'CONNELL

It's the super-deluxe model. It'll knock the head off a pigeon at 100 feet.

Alex tries to let Rick down gently.

ALEX

Thanks, Dad, but I kind of hung up
my slingshot when I was twelve.

A MAN suddenly dashes in front of the Bentley. The Chauffeur slams on the brakes and jerks the car to a stop. Alex slips the slingshot into his pocket as TWO JAPANESE SOLDIERS tackle the Man and drag him back to a LINE OF PEOPLE who have their arms up against a wall and are being held at gunpoint.

JONATHAN

The Japanese have been cracking
down on the Chinese resistance.

O'CONNELL

What will happen to them?

JONATHAN

Nobody knows, they just disappear.

ALEX

Lily said they get packed into
trains and sent off to work camps.
A couple of her friends got picked
up last week.

EVELYN

Please tell me you're not dating a
revolutionary.

ALEX

Lily's a student and, for the
hundredth time, we're not dating.

They see a JAPANESE SOLDIER club one of the resistance
fighters and start beating him with a baton.

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

As the Soldier swings back his arm again, his baton is
whipped out of his hand. The Soldier spins and finds Rick.

O'CONNELL

You want a fair fight, how about
taking a swing at me?

The Soldier levels his gun and starts YELLING at Rick. Alex
races over, tries to calm the situation as other Japanese
Soldiers circle.

ALEX

Dad, get back in the car.

Rick holds his ground until the beaten man looks at him. It's Chang, the resistance fighter, from "Imhotep's".

CHANG

Thank you, friend, but this isn't your fight.

Rick reluctantly steps back and watches as the resistance fighters are loaded into the back of a truck.

EXT. BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

The landscaped compound sits behind 20-foot stone walls. Jonathan's Bentley CRUNCHES to a stop in front of the Palladium-style Consulate. Rick, Evy, Alex and Jonathan step out. Rick is still rattled from the incident.

O'CONNELL

I still can't believe we stood there and did nothing.

ALEX

Dad, if you'd done anything more, the Japanese would have us killed. They practically run Shanghai.

O'CONNELL

What about the British? Do they just throw fancy parties and pretend nothing's happening?

JONATHAN

They've got their hands full with the Nazis.

O'CONNELL

It's wrong.

EVELYN

War always is.

(beat)

Now cheer up, for Alex's sake.

As they head inside, Jonathan hands the VALET the keys.

JONATHAN

I've memorized every inch of this beauty. One scratch and we're going to have an international incident.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

The Emperor's sarcophagus lies on the back of the horse-drawn chariot Alex discovered in the crypt. It's being guarded by THREE BRITISH SOLDIERS and sits under the room's glass dome. A MILITARY BAND plays and the EXPAT CROWD is served by ELEGANT CHINESE HOSTESSES. As Rick, Evy and Alex make their way through, Alex sees Jonathan ducking away.

ALEX

Uncle Jon, where are you going?
The mummy's this way.

JONATHAN

I've seen enough mummies to last a lifetime, but I never tire of a well-stocked bar.

They step to the sarcophagus. Evy is captivated.

EVELYN

Fascinating.

ALEX

Get a good look. They're shipping it off to England tomorrow.

EVELYN

Tomorrow? But you haven't even opened it yet.

O'CONNELL

Does the phrase "rest in peace" mean anything to you two?

Evy runs her hand over the sarcophagus, stops when she comes across five Chinese characters.

EVELYN

I don't recognize the characters in this cartouche.

ALEX

They represent the five Chinese elements.

EVELYN

Of course; earth, fire, water, stone, metal.

ALEX

If you believe the legend, the Emperor could control them.

EVELYN

Better hope he doesn't rise again.

O'CONNELL

Wait. Nobody's rising again.
We've been there, done that. Evy,
step away from the mummy.

Rick and Evy notice Alex is staring at something, they follow his gaze and see Lily. She looks radiant in a mandarin-collared silk dress, and an unusual flame-shaped silver pendant graces her neck. She crosses to Alex.

LILY

What do you think?

ALEX

The operative word is "gulp."

Evy steps forward.

EVELYN

Lily, we wanted to apologize for last night. Alex caught us a little off-guard.

LILY

If it makes you feel any better, you're all he ever talks about, Mrs. O'Connell.

Evy smiles while Rick rolls his eyes.

LILY

If I could borrow Alex for a moment, the Dean of the University would like to meet him.

As Alex heads away with Lily.

EVELYN

I don't know, there's something about her that bothers me.

O'CONNELL

Maybe it's the fact that your son is clearly in love with her.

EVELYN

He said they're just colleagues.

O'CONNELL
Yeah, on a dig, all alone in the
desert. Sound familiar?

EVELYN
We couldn't stand each other.

O'CONNELL
That's because you were impossible.

EVELYN
And you were incorrigible.

Rick smiles.

O'CONNELL
I say we step outside and settle
this.

She flashes a sexy smile as Rick pulls her out onto...

EXT. PATIO - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

... he takes her in his arms and they passionately kiss.
When they finally break off, she looks into his eyes.

EVELYN
Still incorrigible.

WILLOUGHBY (O.S.)
Hello, Evelyn.

Flustered, they turn and find Sir Colin Willoughby.

WILLOUGHBY
Rick.

O'CONNELL
Colin.

WILLOUGHBY
Sir Colin now.

O'CONNELL
That's the beauty of being American
-- I don't have to call you by
those silly titles.

There's clearly no love lost between these two. Evy
attempts to make peace.

EVELYN

I'm grateful you've taken Alex under your wing. I know your mentorship has been invaluable.

O'CONNELL

Yeah, pulling him out of college behind our backs, putting him in danger. You're a real stand up, Colin.

WILLOUGHBY

I suggest you teach your husband some manners. Good night, Evelyn.

Evy waits while Willoughby exits, then turns to Rick.

EVELYN

You promised to behave!

O'CONNELL

That idiot's the reason you're not a Bembridge Scholar. You're lucky I didn't deck him.

A CHINESE HOSTESS, wearing a red-and-black uniform, steps out holding a silver tray with a note. She bows to Evy, who takes the note and reads it. She looks at Rick.

EVELYN

The Ambassador wants to see us.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Rick and Evy follow the Hostess through the crowd. She leads them into a hall just as the BRITISH CONSUL hushes the crowd.

BRITISH CONSUL

Ladies and gentlemen, if you will please proceed to the garden, the fireworks are about to begin.

INT. AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

AMBASSADOR FENWICK, a no-nonsense Brit in his 50s, drops ice into a glass while Rick and Evy look on.

AMBASSADOR FENWICK

What the devil happened at the Taj Mahal? You had specific instructions not to engage Okumura.

EVELYN

I know that, Sir, but I assure you that what we discovered will be of vital interest to the Home Office.

As the Ambassador takes a sip of scotch, his face stiffens.

EVELYN

Sir, if I may say, you're looking a little peaky.

A beat later, the Ambassador keels over, revealing a Chinese THROWING STAR imbedded in his back.

O'CONNELL

This meeting's definitely over!

When they spin, they come face to face with Okumura. He's flanked by TWO HOSTESSES who have throwing stars poised in their hands. As Rick reaches for his gun, Okumura's metallic hand flies up and vice-grips his throat.

OKUMURA

Where is the Eye?

O'CONNELL

I think you have me confused with a twenty-foot croc with a serious case of indigestion.

Okumura forces Rick to his knees.

WILLOUGHBY (O.S.)

I suggest you give the man what he wants.

Evy turns and finds Willoughby at the doorway holding a gun on her. Rick removes the Eye from the heel of his boot and tosses it into Okumura's waiting hands...

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

As the last guest heads outside, THREE HOSTESSES lock the doors. They smile flirtatiously at the three Soldiers guarding the chariot, then in a blur of hands expertly hurl throwing stars at them. The Soldiers drop to the marble, dead, just as Okumura and Willoughby lead Rick and Evy in.

EVELYN

(to Willoughby)

How could you do this? You're a knight of the crown.

WILLOUGHBY

Empires come and go, Evelyn, you should know that better than anybody. Britain is the past, Japan's the future.

O'CONNELL

Stupid son of a bitch. How much yen did Okumura pay you?

WILLOUGHBY

Enough for me to suggest to the Home Office that you two should follow him to India.

O'CONNELL

You set us up.

WILLOUGHBY

Those silly titles come in handy sometimes.

Suddenly, the chandelier goes out. Willoughby grins.

WILLOUGHBY

It's show time.

EXT. GARDENS - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

BOOOOOOM! A cascade of fireworks EXPLODES overhead. Alex heads through the crowd, spots Jonathan.

ALEX

Any sign of Mum and Dad?

JONATHAN

You know them, they're probably in some quiet corner snogging.

Alex smiles, then sees Lily heading for the Rotunda. As he follows after her...

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Evy stares at Willoughby in contempt.

O'CONNELL

There's a special place in hell for people who sell out their country.

WILLOUGHBY

I didn't sell out, General Okumura financed Alex's dig.

(MORE)

WILLOUGHBY (CONT'D)

Who better to find a mummy than an
O'Connell...

(turning to Evy)

... and who better to raise one
than you, Evelyn.

Another firework blossoms. Rick and Evy stare in shock as
Okumura holds up Zohora's TERRA COTTA BOOK OF THE DEAD.

EVELYN

Impossible! There's only one Book
of the Dead.

WILLOUGHBY

Emperor Qin Shihuang had a terra
cotta copy. I've been searching
for it for years. Finally tracked
it to a fishing village in Nepal.

EVELYN

I implore you if the Emperor rises,
he'll...

OKUMURA

... bring about death and
destruction. That's the point.

Rick understands.

O'CONNELL

He's your doomsday weapon.

OKUMURA

Japan will win the war without a
single casualty.

O'CONNELL

It's a mummy, not a genie. Trust
me, these guys only work for
themselves.

Okumura SLAMS Rick in the face. Willoughby steps to Evy with
the Book of the Dead.

EVELYN

I'll never read it.

Okumura shoves his gun against Rick's head.

OKUMURA

If you don't, your husband dies,
then I kill your son.

O'CONNELL
 You touch Alex and I swear to
 God...

Okumura COCKS the gun. Evy and Rick exchange anguished glances. Finally, she succumbs.

EVELYN
 Give me the Book.

WILLOUGHBY
 You always were the sensible one,
 Evelyn.

As Willoughby hands her the Book, Okumura steps to the sarcophagus. He taps the symbols in the cartouche like an ancient combination lock. The lid splits open with a DEAFENING CRACK. Evy and Rick watch in horror as the lid slowly slides away and Emperor Qin Shihuang's terra cotta mummy rises in the purple glow of another firework. Evy cautiously opens the book.

O'CONNELL
 Evy, don't do it!

Evy ignores his plea.

EVELYN
 God forgive me.

EXT. BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Alex steps around the side of the building, but there's no sign of Lily. Some petals drop in front of him, he looks up and sees Lily climbing off a wisteria lattice and onto...

EXT. ROOF - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Alex climbs up, doesn't see anyone. He steps across the gravel to the glass dome, stares down, and is shocked to see Evy reading from the Book of the Dead. He shakes his head.

ALEX
 I can't take them anywhere.

As another firework mushrooms, he sees Lily shimmying down a chain and stepping onto the enormous crystal chandelier that dangles directly over the Emperor Mummy's sarcophagus.

ALEX
 Lily?

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

PUSH IN ON EVY as she reads from the terra cotta Book of the Dead. The ancient Egyptian incantation echoes and fireworks wash everything in eerie Technicolor.

PUSH IN ON RICK as a fierce wind whips and the Emperor Mummy is cocooned in CRACKLING tongues of white hot energy.

PUSH IN ON OKUMURA AND WILLOUGHBY watching in awe as the spectacle reaches a crescendo, then subsides. Okumura and Willoughby step forward expectantly, but the Emperor does not move. He looks glossy and wet like a newly molded statue.

OKUMURA

Why hasn't the Emperor risen?

WILLOUGHBY

She must have misread the book!

EVELYN

(indignant)

I most certainly did not!

Willoughby jabs the wet clay with one of his fat fingers and shakes his head in contempt.

WILLOUGHBY

There's a reason I never let this woman into the Bembri--

With shocking suddenness, the Emperor's arm reaches up and grabs Willoughby's face. Willoughby ROARS in agony as the Emperor Mummy sucks his life force. As the Emperor Mummy's skin hardens, Willoughby turns to terra cotta. Finally, the Emperor Mummy releases his grip. Willoughby falls back and SHATTERS on the floor like a porcelain doll.

Rick and Evy watch in horror as the Emperor Mummy lurches up and gulps his first breath of air in 2,200 years. His hardened lids pop open and he stares at them with Willoughby's watery blue eyes. Okumura turns to them.

OKUMURA

At least you can die knowing you've aided a great cause.

As he raises his gun...

EXT. ROOF - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Alex watches alarmed. He gets an idea, whips out the slingshot and scoops up a stone. He carefully steps onto the glass rotunda and takes aim at Okumura.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Lily is crouched on the chandelier. She pulls out a dragon-hilted dagger. It looks exactly like the one the Emperor used to stab Zohora. She's about to leap down when...

EXT. ROOF - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

... Alex fires. The stone BULLETS through the glass...

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

... misses Okumura by a mile, ricochets off the bronze chariot, PINGS against the chandelier, before SHATTERING the nose of the Emperor Mummy clean off. As maggots writhe out through the stub, Evy turns to Rick.

EVELYN

He's still breakable.

But Rick is following Okumura's gaze up to...

O'CONNELL

Alex.

EXT. ROOF - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

ALEX

(shaking head)

I'm beyond rusty.

Bullets BLAST up through the dome. He looks down to see Okumura FIRING at him. Before he has time to run, the glass rotunda spiderwebs and Alex is sent tumbling.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

As Alex plummets in a shower of glass,

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE!

Lily reaches out, catches his arm and swings him onto the chandelier. Hostess #3 whips a throwing star up at Alex. It misses him by a whisker but nicks the chain holding the chandelier. Before Hostess #3 can get off another star, Evy smashes the Book of the Dead over her head, obliterating it.

EVELYN

Stay away from my son!

Rick slides across the floor, snaps Willoughby's gun out of his terra cotta fingers, and starts FIRING at the Emperor Mummy. The bullets drill right through his hard shell in a spray of desiccated bone and maggots. As Rick's gun CLICKS empty, Okumura steps to the Emperor Mummy's side.

OKUMURA

(in ancient Chinese)

*You must come with me. Everything
will be explained.*

Lily sees Hostesses #4 and #5 stalking Evy. As they launch their throwing stars, Lily somersaults off the chandelier and dive-tackles Evy out of the way. The Hostesses stare in horror as they are impaled by each other's stars.

As the Emperor Mummy sees Lily, his eyes flash with strange recognition. Then he presses his palm against one of the bronze horses, causing bolts of energy to cloak the statues. Rick watches amazed as

THE STATUES ANGRILY COME TO LIFE!

They stomp their hooves and whip their metallic heads. When the light show subsides, the Emperor Mummy and Okumura climb onto the chariot. Rick is about to give chase when he hears a SNAP! He sees the chandelier has broken free with Alex still clinging to it. Rick rolls out of the way as it SMASHES down while Alex falls into the sarcophagus, knocking himself out. Rick shakes his head.

O'CONNELL

That's my boy.

Lily dashes forward, rolls under the chariot and clutches the undercarriage as it speeds towards the French doors.

EXT. BRITISH CONSULATE - NIGHT

Jonathan looks around, irritated.

JONATHAN

Where the hell is everybody?

He's crossing back to the house when the chariot powers through the French doors in an EXPLOSION of wood and glass. Jonathan dives free and stares at the Emperor Mummy, who's holding the reins, as the chariot barrels past.

JONATHAN

Oh no. Not again.

Terrified GUESTS scatter as the four bronze horses stampede across the perfectly manicured lawn. The chariot's two-foot wheel spikes amputate the legs off a row of statues. Then Jonathan sees the chariot is headed for a row of parked cars. His Bentley is smack in the middle!

JONATHAN

Watch out for....

He winces as the horses SMASH right over it, their metallic hooves trampling it to the ground.

JONATHAN

... my beautiful, brand-new Bentley.

A canvas-roof truck SKIDS to a stop next to him. Evy is behind the wheel. Rick leans out of the back.

O'CONNELL

Get in! We have to save Alex.

Before he can protest, Rick yanks him into the truck. As it takes off in pursuit, we see the words "DRAGON FIREWORKS CO., SHANGHAI" painted on the truck's back-flap.

THE CHARIOT

speeds down the drive. TWO GUARDS OPEN FIRE, then scramble out of the way. The horses blast through the massive gates like an ancient battering ram. Lily desperately clings to the undercarriage as the gates SLAM to the ground in a shower of sparks and the chariot bursts out into...

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

It's like a demolition derby. The chariot destroys everything in its path. Rickshaws, bicycles and market stalls are SMASHED to smithereens. It plows through an open-air restaurant, sending CUSTOMERS scrambling.

EVY -- turns on her wipers as a deluge of chop suey and dumplings splatters across the windshield.

RICK AND JONATHAN -- are jackhammered around in the back. Jonathan RANTS as Rick searches crates of fireworks.

JONATHAN

God! You two are like mummy magnets.

Rick hands him a fat-ass rocket.

O'CONNELL

Aim for the Emperor. We can still shatter him.

Rick RIPS a section of the canvas away, giving him a view over the cab. He ignites the end of a firework and aims it at the chariot like a shoulder-held rocket launcher.

EXT. CHARIOT - NIGHT

Alex is coming around. He pokes his head out of the sarcophagus and sees a firework streaking towards him! He ducks back down as the projectile HISSES over him and snakes past the Emperor Mummy and Okumura. The Emperor Mummy whips the horses to go faster as TWO MORE rockets follow.

INT. FIREWORKS TRUCK - NIGHT

Jonathan grabs the biggest firework. It's a four-foot monster. He lights the fuse and heaves it onto his shoulder.

JONATHAN

Let slip the dogs of war!

KABOOOOOOOOM! The concussive force sends Jonathan flying back. The rocket SCREAMS down the street, misses the chariot, and impacts with a parked car, causing it to EXPLODE. The flaming vehicle is launched 10 feet into the air and flips as it crashes into the road right in front of

THE FIREWORKS TRUCK!

Evy frantically jerks the wheel and violently lurches the truck up a sloping side street.

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - NIGHT

Alex peeps up over the lid, sees the Emperor Mummy and Okumura. He's about to make a move when he's tackled back into the sarcophagus by Lily. Alex stares at her in shock.

ALEX

What are you doing? First you're climbing down chandeliers, now you're jumping onto chariots. Are you trying to get yourself killed?

LILY

I was trying to rescue you.

ALEX
 (flattered surprise)
 Really?

As the chariot speeds over a pothole, they are thrown into each other's arms.

INT. FIREWORKS TRUCK - NIGHT

Rick pops his head out and stares down over the rooftops and is surprised to see they've pulled ahead of the chariot that's charging down the street below. As the truck sweeps past a house that's under construction, Rick gets an idea.

O'CONNELL
 Stop the truck!

Evy hits the brakes, sending Jonathan flying onto his ass again. Rick dives off and grabs a bicycle that's leaning against a wall. He shouts back to Evy.

O'CONNELL
 Keep going!

Jonathan climbs into the front as she takes off.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rick leaps onto the bike, pedals furiously towards the construction site, rides up a wooden plank and onto the roof! Now, he careens down the tiled rooftops, flies right over an alley, traverses a courtyard. Finally, he powers down a long, sloping roof. He uses it like a half-pipe, launches himself up over the street just as

THE CHARIOT

passes. Alex and Lily disentangle themselves, stare up from the sarcophagus as Rick sails through the air.

LILY
 Was that your dad?

ALEX
 Yeah, he's got a hero complex.
 It's kind of embarrassing.

Rick SMASH-LANDS onto one of the front horses, lets go of the bike, which is MANGLED under the CLATTERING hooves. He pulls his gun as he swings up onto the beast's back and FIRES at the Emperor Mummy, BLASTING off one of his ears.

OKUMURA OPENS FIRE. Rick ducks as BULLETS ricochet off the metal steeds. But then one hits the harness strap and severs it in two! No longer constrained, the horse gallops free. Rick bounces, in nut-numbing agony, as the horse heads for an ornamental moon door that's way too small!

O'CONNELL

Whoa!

Rick ducks as the horse SMASH-DRIVES through and out into...

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

A parade is in full swing. A 60-MAN ceremonial dragon is weaving its way down the packed street. DRUMMERS pound and strings of red firecrackers BANG! Rick's horse "dissects" the dragon in three, plows through the drummers, then leaps over the heads of the COWERING CROWD and into an alley.

EXT. ANOTHER SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

The chariot is hurtling when the fireworks truck SKID-TURNS around a corner. Jonathan leans out, gun BLAZING. Okumura RETURNS FIRE. One of his rounds SHATTERS the truck's windshield and RIPS through the partition and into...

INT. BACK - FIREWORKS TRUCK - NIGHT

The bullet ignites a CRATE OF FIRECRACKERS, setting off a chain reaction.

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - NIGHT

Lily peeks out, then looks back at Alex as she climbs out.

LILY

Stay down.

ALEX

Lily, I have a lot more experience
with mumm--

She cuts him off with a kiss. He looks at her in shock.

LILY

Just wait here, okay?

As he tries to follow, his elbow inadvertently hits a button, which causes the lid of the sarcophagus to start to close. Alex reaches up and wrestles with the jade slab.

EXT. CHARIOT - NIGHT

Unaware of Alex's trouble, Lily stalks up to the front of the chariot. She pulls out her dragon dagger, but light glints off its blade, alerting Okumura. As he spins to face her...

INT. CAB - FIREWORKS TRUCK - NIGHT

... a roman candle side-winds into the window. As Jonathan tries to snuff it out, Evy watches through the smoke as Okumura SHOOTS Lily point blank.

EVELYN

Oh my God!

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - NIGHT

Alex has just about pried the lid open when Lily tumbles on top of him and the lid SLAMS shut with awful finality.

EXT. ALLEY - SHANGHAI - NIGHT

Lines of wet laundry whip Rick's face as the horse careens down the cobbles. He desperately pulls on the reins, trying to get it under control. He yanks a pair of bloomers off his face and sees he's headed straight for a -- DEAD END!

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - NIGHT

FIZZING rockets are now bursting through the fireworks truck's canvas canopy as it speeds after the chariot. Suddenly, the wall in front of them EXPLODES OPEN and

RICK AND THE HORSE

burst into view. Rick looks back at Evy and Jonathan, can't believe he made it. They point, only when Rick swings back does he see that the horse's head has been ripped clean off! As more BULLETS fly, Rick grabs the reins. Without its head, it actually seems to respond.

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - NIGHT

Pitch black. Alex flicks on a lighter, revealing Lily. She's miraculously unharmed.

LILY

Any idea how to get out of here?

ALEX

These things usually don't have directions on the inside.

As the chariot makes a wild turn, Alex is knocked onto his side and his lighter illuminates a saucer-size gold disc inlaid into the lid of the sarcophagus. It's engraved with five suns and five moons and is ringed by an inscription.

ALEX

Maybe the lock's under here.

He attempts to pry the disc out with his fingers, but can't.

LILY

Try this.

Alex reacts as she hands him the dragon dagger.

ALEX

Cool knife.

As he levers the disc free...

EXT. WOODEN WHARF - NIGHT

It stretches out into the Huangpu River. The chariot churns across the planks and barrels straight off the end! As it arcs toward the water, the Emperor Mummy holds out his hand. Concentric circles of blue-white energy ripple out from his palm and form a 100-yard-wide frozen path.

INT. CAB - FIREWORKS TRUCK - NIGHT

Evy and Jonathan watch as the chariot SLAMS onto the ice.

JONATHAN

Bloody hell, how did he do that?

EVELYN

He can control the five elements.

As she spins the wheel and follows Rick onto...

EXT. WOODEN WHARF - NIGHT

Rick hugs the broken neck of his horse as it speeds after the chariot. He closes his eyes as the steed leaps off the wharf and flies towards the ice.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The bronze horse SMACK-SLIDES down. It gallops after the chariot as the fireworks truck SCREECHES to a stop at the end of the wharf.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The chariot speeds towards Okumura's junk, which is sitting in the middle of the frozen river. Rick has almost pulled alongside, he takes aim and BLASTS the bolt attaching the sarcophagus carriage to the chariot.

As the sarcophagus carriage spins across the ice, the Emperor Mummy swerves into Rick's path. The chariot's foot-long wheel-spikes SPARK-SLICE through the horse's metal legs. As the horse buckles over onto the ice and shatters apart, Rick is violently catapulted free.

The chariot pulls up next to the junk. Okumura climbs onboard followed by the Emperor Mummy, who waves his hand across the river, causing the ice to melt. As the ice melts from under it, the carriage plunges into...

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The sarcophagus slides free of the carriage and nose-dives through the moonlit water.

INT. SARCOPHAGUS - NIGHT

Water shoots through the cracks. It's filling up fast. Alex looks into Lily's eyes, it's now or never.

ALEX

Lily, there's something I want to tell you before we die...

As the water overwhelms them, he manages to blurt out...

ALEX

... I'm in love with you.

Before she can respond, the space fills with water. Suddenly, the sound of HAMMERING echoes.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Rick is bashing the lid with a foot-long length of a broken bronze horse hoof. The lid finally cracks apart and he stares into Alex and Lily's grateful faces.

EXT. WHARF - NIGHT

The junk sails into the mist as Evy and Jonathan look out into the dark water, distraught.

EVELYN

Rick... Alex...

As if in answer, Rick, Alex and Lily break the surface and climb onto the dock. Evy races to Alex, fusses over him.

ALEX
Mum, I'm alright.

LILY
Thanks to Mr. O'Connell.

O'CONNELL
Years of practice pulling Alex's
fanny out of the fire.

Rick doesn't see, but we do, that Alex is stung by his quip. Meanwhile, Evy looks at Lily, unsure.

EVELYN
I'd say you can handle yourself,
too. Those were some impressive
moves back at the Consulate.

LILY
My mother taught me self-defense.

As Alex and Lily walk down the dock, Evy stares after them.

O'CONNELL
Evy, you've got that look, what's
wrong?

EVELYN
I could have sworn I saw Okumura
shoot Lily.

O'CONNELL
Must have missed.

They hear a WOLF-WHISTLE, turn and see Jonathan standing by the smoking fireworks truck.

JONATHAN
Come on, undead on the loose.
Chop. Chop.

As Rick and Evy climb in, Alex pulls Lily aside.

ALEX
Look, about what I said...

LILY
It's okay, Alex, you were staring
death in the face.

As she gets in, Alex shakes his head.

ALEX

Why couldn't I have just drowned?

As he climbs into a truck next to Lily...

EXT. JUNK - DAY

Its three triangular sails SNAP as the vessel silently sweeps past mist-draped mountains. Okumura stands at the bow, studying a map, while his CREW hustles around him.

INT. CABIN - JUNK - DAY

The Emperor Mummy studies his wounds in a mirror. Fat maggots feast on his fossilized guts which poke out of his bullet-riddled torso. There's A KNOCK. Without turning he looks up. Through the bullet hole under his left eye, a MAN can be seen at the door behind him holding a tray of food. As the Emperor spins to face him...

EXT. JUNK - DAY

A blood-curdling SCREAM rings out. The CREW of JAPANESE SAILORS instantly stops and fearfully looks at Okumura, who is studying a map with a TIBETAN MONK.

OKUMURA

Keep working!

INT. CABIN - JUNK - DAY

The Emperor Mummy holds the SCREAMING Man by the face. Daggers of light cut through the Man and heal the Emperor Mummy's wounds. As the Emperor Mummy drops the Man's corpse, which smashes onto the floor, Okumura is revealed.

EMPEROR MUMMY

Why did you raise me from my slumber? The curse still weighs on me.

OKUMURA

Your condition is temporary.

The Emperor Mummy looks at Okumura with piercing contempt. Without warning, the Emperor Mummy grabs Okumura's mechanical arm. As he thrusts it to Okumura's throat, the metal appendage morphs into a razor-sharp scimitar blade.

EMPEROR MUMMY

The last general I trusted betrayed me. How do I know you won't do the same?

The blade presses into Okumura's flesh.

OKUMURA

Because I have found the answer you spent a lifetime seeking -- the key to eternal life.

The Emperor Mummy lets Okumura go, taken by surprise. Okumura hands him the Eye. The Emperor Mummy gazes into the massive gemstone, awestruck.

OKUMURA

Once the curse has been lifted and you are immortal, there will be no battle you can't win, no country you can't conquer.

EMPEROR MUMMY

Conquest requires an army.

OKUMURA

Have no fear, your warriors will be ready.

EMPEROR MUMMY

What do you hope to gain?

Okumura steps to a large globe, spins it with his finger.

OKUMURA

To rule the world by your side.

The Emperor Mummy studies the globe, intrigued.

EMPEROR MUMMY

The world is round?

OKUMURA

Yes, and much bigger than the last time you conquered it.

The Emperor Mummy smiles malevolently.

EMPEROR MUMMY

When the dragon roars again, you shall receive your just reward.

INT. "IMHOTEP'S" - DAY

CLOSE ON: THE GOLD DISC. It's the one Alex pried off the sarcophagus. PULL BACK TO REVEAL the O'Connells, Alex Jonathan and Lily in a booth. It's after closing. Rick juggles the skull box while Alex and Lily examine the disc.

LILY

It's a Chinese talisman.

EVELYN

Can you translate it?

ALEX

It's a warning to the Emperor. Once awakened, he has five days to attain immortality or else he'll turn to dust.

O'CONNELL

So even though your mother read from the Book of the Dead, he's not immortal?

ALEX

Not yet. He's merely undead.

JONATHAN

Where exactly does one go to attain immortality?

Evvy puts the pieces together.

EVELYN

The Spring of Eternal Life. That's why Okumura needs the Eye of Pemako, to find Shangri-La.

JONATHAN

Is this Eye some sort of map?

EVELYN

More like a beacon. If the Eye is placed in the Temple of Whispering Skulls, it will point the way through the Valley of a Thousand Waterfalls. Behind one of them is Shangri-La.

LILY

But that's only a legend.

JONATHAN

This family's never met a legend
that wasn't true.

(beat)

Where exactly is this Temple?

ALEX

Hidden somewhere in the Himalayas.

Alex sees Rick playing with the skull box, gets an idea.

ALEX

Was the Eye in this?

O'CONNELL

Yeah, but I already checked it
over. Didn't find any map.

ALEX

In Tibetan tradition, skulls are
sacred keepsakes, they store
memories...

Alex grabs a votive candle from the table.

ALEX

... all we need to do is illuminate
them.

He flips open the skull's lid and places the candle inside.
Like an ancient jack-o'-lantern, the eyes project a crude map
onto the wall.

EVELYN

That's my boy!

She hugs him, but he pulls away, embarrassed by the display.

ALEX

Can you please not be that Mum
right now.

They cross to the map projection. It looks like a Chinese
silk painting and features a stylized impression of a vast
mountain range. The Temple of Whispering Skulls is in the
middle and overlooks a long, narrow valley of waterfalls.
Alex points to the river that snakes through mountains.

ALEX

Looks like the Tsangpo River. It
cuts right through the Himalayas
and leads straight to the Temple.

O'CONNELL
Explains why our friends were
travelling by junk.

Lily studies a block of text at the bottom of the map.

LILY
(translating)
"Climb the Ladder to Heaven or
cross the Devil's Gorge, either
path will lead to enlightenment."

Evy points to a staircase.

EVELYN
The Ladder must be these stairs in
the cliff face.

Rick's finger charts the tortuous overland route.

O'CONNELL
If we can cross the Gorge, we could
still beat them to the Temple.

JONATHAN
Or we could all die a horrible
frozen death.

ALEX
Way to stay positive, Uncle Jon.

LILY
Not to join the chorus, but that
region is completely inaccessible.

O'CONNELL
Who built the temple?

ALEX
Tibetan monks.

Rick grins, a plan clearly forming in his head.

O'CONNELL
Maybe it's time we found religion.

SMASH CUT TO:

The HIMALAYAS. The pristine peaks pierce the indigo sky like
shark's teeth. PAN ACROSS lines of whipping Tibetan Prayer
flags TO REVEAL the burned-out shell of a monastery.

EXT. TIBETAN MONASTARY - DAY

Rick, Evy, Jonathan and Alex inspect the devastated interior.

O'CONNELL

Who the hell would burn down a
monastery?

Lily approaches.

LILY

The villagers say it was ransacked
by Japanese soldiers two weeks ago.
All the monks were rounded up and
put on a train.

As they absorb this, Alex sniffs the air.

ALEX

What's the stench?

O'CONNELL

Smells like tequila.

LILY

More like yak wine.

JONATHAN

Yak wine? That's wrong in so many
ways.

Rick passes a scorched chest and hears a WHEEZING noise. He puts up his hand and they all stop. He pulls his gun, swings open the chest, causing a TIBETAN MONK to tumble out along with two dozen empty goat-bladder flasks. This is TEQUILA.

O'CONNELL

Looks like they missed one.

EVELYN

Is he dead?

Rick leans to check his pulse. Suddenly, Tequila lets out a God-awful BELCH. Rick backs away, disgusted.

O'CONNELL

He's not dead. He's drunk.

UNDERWATER - TROUGH - DAY

Tequila's face plunges into view and his eyes pop open with bleary shock. He's yanked back out. Rick smiles.

O'CONNELL
Rise and shine, Tequila.

EXT. MONASTARY - DAY

Tequila has dried off and sits on a stool in his saffron-and-maroon-colored monk's attire. Lily translates for Rick and Jonathan while Alex and Evy pack the mules in the b.g.

LILY
When the Japanese came, he was meditating in a cave. His lama had banished him there to sober up.

JONATHAN
Gives new meaning to "cold turkey".

O'CONNELL
Ask him if he can lead us over the Devil's Gorge?

Lily translates.

TEQUILA
(to Lily in Tibetan)
Crazy round eyes! Never. It's suicide.

LILY
(to Rick)
He's thinking about it.

Rick pulls out some money, fans it in front of Tequila.

JONATHAN
For God's sake, Rick, he's a holy man. He can't be bribed.

Tequila greedily snatches the cash, says something to Lily.

LILY
He says he'd be honored to show us the way.

As Tequila heads away, Rick turns to Jonathan.

O'CONNELL
Better pick up another mule and a six pack of yak juice for the road.

MONTAGE - EXT. HIMALAYAS - DAY

TEQUILA -- leads the way through a mist-wreathed forest.

A ROARING WHITE-WATER RIVER -- the party gingerly leads its mules across a flimsy bamboo-and-vine footbridge.

A SHEPHERD BOY -- stares with amused wonder as the gang trudges past, headed towards the cloud-capped mountains.

THE CARAVAN -- is silhouetted against the sky as they traverse the treacherous snow-covered spine of a mountain.

MOUNTAINSIDE -- sharp snowflakes cut the party's progress as they wade through banks of pure-white powder. They're now wearing heavy fur-lined coats and boots.

RICK AND EVY -- emerge through the clouds onto an undulating plateau of snow and stare in awe at the surrounding peaks.

TEQUILA -- leads the party single file along a narrow snow-covered path. It snakes around the near-vertical face of a gorge. Suddenly, the path disintegrates from under him. Lily just manages to reach out and wrench him to safety. As the group leaps over the three-foot hole, CAMERA FOLLOWS some dislodged rocks as they tumble into the clouds 1,000 feet below. As the rocks pass through the clouds, CAMERA REVEALS

THE EMPEROR MUMMY'S JUNK

barreling down the jade-colored river below. As the rocks CLATTER ACROSS the moss-covered boulders, the Emperor Mummy looks up into the clouds, curious.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

It's sheltered under an arching overhang. Evy studies a map by lantern light. Alex catches her stealing glances at Lily, who stands by the fire conferring with Tequila.

ALEX

Mum, you've been watching Lily round the clock. What's going on?

EVELYN

I'm not sure, but how well do you really know her, Alex?

Before he can answer, Lily and Rick join them.

LILY

Tequila says we should make it to the Devil's Gorge by noon.

O'CONNELL
 Good. Let's get some shuteye.

Alex follows Rick.

ALEX
 Dad, if you want to bunk with Mum,
 I could sleep with Lily.

O'CONNELL
 (patting him on shoulder)
 Nice try, kiddo.

Defeated, Alex steps to Lily, who's getting into her tent.

ALEX
 So if you need anything. I'll be
 right over there. Just holler or
 whistle or knock on my flap.

Lily smiles.

LILY
 Good night, Alex.

As Alex sighs, CAMERA FINDS Jonathan and Tequila sitting by the fire. Tequila rolls his eyes as Jonathan takes another swig of yak wine.

JONATHAN
 That stuff's not bad.
 (puckering lips)
 Once you get used to the vomit-like
 aftertaste.

Jonathan hands back the flask and steps to Rick. Tequila attempts to take a drink, but finds the flask is empty. As he angrily tosses the flask into the fire...

O'CONNELL
 Jonathan, you take the first watch.

JONATHAN
 Don't worry, Tequila's got it
 covered.

Rick looks over and sees Tequila with his eyes closed.

O'CONNELL
 Looks like he's sleeping.

JONATHAN

He's in a very deep state of meditation. If you approach, he'll spring into action, he's got the reflexes of a tiger. Trust me, we couldn't be in safer hands.

As they head into their respective tents, CAMERA STAYS ON TEQUILA. As he begins to SNORE...

INT. RICK & ALEX'S TENT - NIGHT

Alex is practicing his gun-drawing technique with his shadow.

O'CONNELL

Getting ready for a gunfight?

Alex spins and finds Rick at the threshold.

ALEX

Just practicing. Which one do you think I should carry? The Remington or the Colt.

O'CONNELL

It's funny, you look like my son, but he speaks twelve dead languages, spends most of the time in the library, and hates guns.

ALEX

Yeah, well, I realized that girls aren't interested in that kind of guy.

O'CONNELL

By girls you mean Lily.

Alex slumps onto his sleeping bag.

ALEX

I've been in love with her since the first time we met. I think she likes me, too, but there's something holding her back. I finally figured out what it is.

(beat)

She wants me to be more like you.

O'CONNELL

Alex, when I was your age, I was a macho jerk who wandered around the world looking for a good time.

ALEX

Yeah, but you were heroic and always saved the day and women were throwing themselves at you, right?

Rick shrugs, modestly.

O'CONNELL

Well, yeah, sure.

ALEX

We share the same genes, Dad, so my heroic side's got to be in there somewhere. How do I find it?

Rick looks at Alex, it's everything he's ever wanted to hear from his son, but he weighs his response carefully.

O'CONNELL

You really want my advice?

ALEX

I'm in your hands.

O'CONNELL

Be yourself, Alex. If Lily doesn't recognize what a great guy you are, then she's not the one.

OFF this father-and-son moment...

INT. EVY & LILY'S TENT - NIGHT

Evyn and Lily are in sleeping bags. Both reading by lantern light, Evyn casually looks up from her book.

EVELYN

Alex was telling me that Tibetan is one of the most difficult languages to master. Yours is excellent.

LILY

I've been studying it at university.

EVELYN

Is that so, because when I called they had no record of you being registered in any department.

Only now does Lily look up.

LILY

Why are you checking up on me, Mrs. O'Connell?

EVELYN

Because nothing about you seems to add up. You lied about being a student and you took an interest in Alex just when he started searching for the Emperor.

Lily holds Evy's gaze.

LILY

My intentions are as noble as yours.

EVELYN

What about Alex? You know he's madly in love with you. I'd hate to think you're using him.

LILY

I care deeply about your son, Mrs. O'Connell. That's the truth.

EVELYN

Alex may be well-travelled, but he's naive when it comes to affairs of the heart. If you hurt him, you're going to have to answer to me.

(beat)

Good night, Lily.

OFF Lily shaken, as Evy turns off the lantern.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

As the light goes out in Evy and Lily's tent, CAMERA TRACKS THROUGH the flurrying snow. It DRIFTS PAST Tequila, who's fast asleep and now has tiny icicles dangling from his nostrils. It CONTINUES into the bleakness until it FINDS TWO EMERALD GREEN EYES watching the camp from the shadows.

EXT. DECREPIT JETTY - TSANGPO RIVER - DAY

The crewmen bow as Okumura leads the Emperor Mummy down the gangplank. They join Major Suki and the Tibetan Monk.

MAJOR SUKI

He says this is the Ladder of Heaven. It leads to the Temple.

They stare up at the crumbling stone staircase that zigzags up the sheer cliff face. The Emperor Mummy and Okumura follow as Suki and the Monk lead the ascent.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Tequila guides the O'Connells up a steep snowbank and onto the crest of a 1,000-foot-wide chasm. He nods to Lily.

LILY

This is it. The Devil's Gorge.

As they cross to the gondola that's perched on the edge of the precipice...

EXT. LADDER TO HEAVEN - DAY

The Emperor Mummy and Okumura are followed by an entourage of JAPANESE SOLDIERS. Suddenly, a section of the steps breaks away, sending Major Suki and the Monk plunging to their deaths. The Emperor Mummy puts his hand on the cliff and replacement slabs ERUPT out of the stone. As he climbs on...

EXT. DEVIL'S GORGE - DAY

The gondola is suspended on a rope connected to two wooden towers on either side of the chasm. It's shaped like a boat and its extravagantly painted sides are faded with time.

INT. GONDOLA - DAY

Rick and Alex sit in the bow, furiously turning the handles of a set of wooden winches. Evy, Lily, Jonathan and Tequila sit behind them with their weight evenly dispersed.

JONATHAN

Come on, lads, put your backs into it. We haven't got all day.

Rick and Alex exchange a look.

O'CONNELL

It would be a lot easier if we had one less passenger.

Jonathan turns away, chastised. He looks over the side and peers through a patch of torn clouds and sees that the valley 3,000 feet below is covered with evil-looking stalagmites.

JONATHAN

Why don't I give you boys a hand.

As he makes his way to the front of the gondola, there's a horrible snap. All look up as the rope BREAKS and the gondola plummets into the clouds.

JONATHAN

We're all going to...

The gondola smacks down on the very edge of the gorge. It teeters for a moment, then dips forward and surfs down the mountain.

JONATHAN

....diiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiie!

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

The gondola powers through the snow, picking up speed. It SLAMS across a plain of moguls, jackhammering everyone inside. The plain narrows into

A SMOOTH-WALLED CHANNEL OF ICE.

Like an oversized toboggan, the gondola tears down the narrow chute. As the passage opens up, the gondola flies across a 30-foot chasm. It doesn't stop as it SMASH-LANDS back to earth. It plows on, RIPS a path through the lines anchoring 1,000 tattered prayer flags before

CRASHING

to a stop in a massive snowbank. There's an EERIE SILENCE before Rick pops out of the snow and finds himself staring into the eyes of a skull. It's one of a million that are embedded in the walls of the TEMPLE OF WHISPERING SKULLS.

O'CONNELL

I think we found our temple.

It looks like a square-tiered wedding cake and is crowned with a golden stupa. The structure is perched on the edge of a ridge overlooking the Valley of a Thousand Waterfalls. The others join Rick as he stares out at the breathtaking vista.

EVELYN

Looks like we beat them here.

ALEX

The Emperor's only got until dawn tomorrow to become immortal or he turns to dust.

Rick pulls a Thompson machine gun from a saddlebag.

