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Quincy

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Quincy

Written by

Hunter Karas

A screenplay presented to the
Faculty of the School of Film & Television
Loyola Marymount University

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting

May 2018

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy
for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Screenwriting

Student: *Hunter Brown* Date: 5/3/18

Committee Co Chair (690): *Jud Alan* Date: 5/3/18

Committee Co Chair (691): *J.R. Kelly* Date 5/3/2018

Advanced Screenplay Project Title:
Quincy

Criteria for advancement to candidacy:

Student has demonstrated sufficient ability and knowledge to complete the thesis project.

Approved to Candidacy

Not Approved to Candidacy

Comments

ADVANCED SCREENPLAY PROJECT APPROVAL

The Advanced Screenplay Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting submitted by the candidate fulfils the requirements and standards set forth in the University Bulletin by the Division.

Screenplay Title: Quincy
Student: Hunter Karas *Hunter Karas* Date: 5/3/18

Committee Co Chair: SCWR 690 David Clawson
Signed: *David Clawson* Date: 5/3/18

Committee Co Chair: SCWR 691 Karol Hoeffner
Signed: *Karol Hoeffner* Date: 5/3/2018

Director of Graduate Screenwriting: Karol Hoeffner
Signed: *Karol Hoeffner* Date: 5/3/2018

Dean: Stephen Ujlaki
Signed: *Stephen Ujlaki* Date: 5/3/2018

This feature length screenplay written by
Hunter Karas

Hunter Karas

under the guidance of a faculty committee
from the School of Film & Television at
Loyola Marymount University, and approved
by the members of the committee, has been
presented to and accepted by the Graduate
School in partial fulfillment of the thesis
requirements for the degree of Master of
Fine Arts in Screenwriting.

Advanced Screenplay Project Committee:

David Clark

Committee Chair: SCWR 690

Scott Hupp

Committee Member: SCWR 691

Bill Hupp

Director of Graduate Screenwriting

Jim Wilt

Dean, School of Film & Television

Date

May 3, 2018

Quincy

A Screenplay

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Film & Television,
Loyola Marymount University of Los Angeles, California

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Fine Arts

By

Hunter Karas

Hunter Karas

QUINCY

Written by

Hunter Karas

Inspired by amazingly true events!

FADE IN:

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS BAY - NIGHT (CIRCA 1775)

The waves crash against a late 18th century British warship, trailing behind the fleet already at shore. It fires at COLONISTS, providing cover for REDCOATS taking the harbor.

INT. PEACEFIELD - CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

YOUNG QUINCY, 8, wakes to the explosions and gunfire of the battle in the distance. His SISTER and two younger BROTHERS lie asleep.

INT. PEACEFIELD - PARLOR - NIGHT

Young Quincy loads a musket by candlelight. His mother ABIGAIL ADAMS, early 30s, runs in, panicked.

ABIGAIL

Quincy, what are you doing?

YOUNG QUINCY

Father told me to protect the family while he leads the revolution.

He slings a bag of gunpowder over his shoulder and heads toward the door, musket in hand.

She watches him, confused.

ABIGAIL

George Washington leads the --

YOUNG QUINCY

Hide the children. I'll be outside.

The front door swings shut behind him.

She nods. It's scary how calm he is.

EXT. PEACEFIELD - NIGHT

Young Quincy wields his musket on the front porch of the Adams family estate. The sounds of the battle grow louder.

He runs away from the house, up a hill that overlooks the bay. In the distance, a fire rages in Charlestown.

The British warship struggles to join the battle through the choppy water.

His focus is pulled by a LARGE SILHOUETTE moving behind the warship, obscured by smoke and darkness. It disappears into the water.

The warship stops firing and waits still in the bay.

Young Quincy gasps as he watches the Silhouette emerge from the water right through the center of the warship.

It's a SEA MONSTER - like a hundred foot alligator or the extinct *Machimosaurus* - crashing into the water.

The warship sinks in pieces into the bay. Quincy watches the Silhouette disappear towards the ocean.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - DAY (CIRCA 1826)

The water is still in the early morning hours except for one man swimming across. He is --

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, early 60s, sixth President of the United States. He swims with the strength of a much younger man. And he does it bare ass naked.

His bald head is a beacon, reflecting the rising sun. His muscular arms cut through the water.

EXT. POTOMAC BANK - DAY

The old Quincy darts towards the shore lined with willow trees. The White House, still under construction, can be seen up the hill.

He stands, naked and proud. He freezes, hearing:

ANNE (O.S.)

Good morning, Mr. President.

ANNE ROYALL, late 50s, a Southern spitfire, sits on Quincy's pile of clothes.

Quincy squats back into the water to cover himself, only his mutton chopped face visible above the surface.

ANNE (CONT'D)

A reliable source said I could find you here.

QUINCY

Madam, I don't believe my wife
would appreciate --

She scoffs.

ANNE

I've been married. I'm looking for
an interview.

She shows him the ring on her finger and the notebook in her
hand to prove each point.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Besides, who do you think told me
where the President skinny dips?

QUINCY

(to himself)

Louisa!

(to Anne)

You can contact --

ANNE

(spitfire)

White House won't let me in without
press credentials. No paper in
Washington will hire a woman
without a hell of a story. I'm here
to get one.

QUINCY

I admire your ambition, but I'm
afraid I just don't have the time --

She dangles his trousers above her head.

ANNE

It's a long, cold walk from here up
to the White House.

Quincy grins as his bare chest briefly emerges above the
water. Catching himself, he ducks back down.

QUINCY

You have me at a considerable
disadvantage, Madam -- ?

ANNE

I'm not skinny dipping for you, but
my name's Anne Royall. Pleasure.

QUINCY

President John Quincy Adams at your service.

She flips a page of her notebook, fountain pen ready.

ANNE

What do you say to the Jacksonian lies that you pimped American girls to the Russian czar?

He cringes, mortified.

QUINCY

I guess, this means you're not writing for a women's publication?

ANNE

(shaking her head)

Andrew Jackson is determined to make you a one term President.

QUINCY

I beat him last time.

ANNE

Jackson maintains you won through a corrupt bargain.

QUINCY

Ridiculous.

Quincy emerges from the water and snatches the trousers from her grip. As he puts them on, she talks rapidly.

ANNE

Is it? Henry Clay throws you the Presidency, and you make him Secretary of State. Looks pretty damning, Mr. President.

QUINCY

We're done here.

He tries to pull the other clothes free from under her, but Anne will not be moved.

ANNE

You and Mr. Clay were known to have secret meetings prior to the election.

Flustered, he stops fighting.

QUINCY

Private. We had private meetings.

ANNE

What's the difference?

QUINCY

You and everybody else knows about them.

She grins and hands him the rest of his clothes.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Quincy, fully dressed, walks with Anne the clear, grassy path from the river to the nearly complete President's home.

ANNE

The papers run Andrew Jackson's every attack, but you've stayed silent.

As they reach the building's entrance, Quincy stands a step above Anne.

QUINCY

When my father ran for reelection, he got down in the mud with Thomas Jefferson. And Jefferson won.

ANNE

But Jackson's popularity is growing. Aren't you worried?

QUINCY

If the people want me to lead, they'll choose me.

ANNE

The people who *need* you to lead don't get a vote.

Struck by her earnestness, he drops the bravado. He sits, speaking plainly.

QUINCY

(humbled)

Jackson is a brutal man with no regard for the Spaniards, much less the lives of Natives or slaves.

She sees the weight of the world on him.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

I hope your trust in me is not misplaced, Mrs. Royal.

ANNE

Anne. Please, trust in me to write your story, Mr. President.

He considers her, eager with notebook and pen in hand.

QUINCY

Quincy. If anyone could...
(nodding)
Hopefully, you'll keep me honest.

ANNE

Oh, I will.

He ascends the stairs and opens the door, giving her a peek at the impressive White House Foyer.

QUINCY

Then it's settled.

He enters the Foyer, leaving her confused on the steps.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

(walking away)

Where are you staying in town? I'll have someone deliver your luggage to Peacefield.

ANNE

Your family estate near Boston?

QUINCY (O.S.)

If you want to cover the President, you'll have to travel with the President.

Anne watches Quincy round a corner, out of sight. She tentatively walks through the threshold and closes the door behind her.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - DAY

In the square busy with BOSTONIANS, carriages are backed up in a nineteenth century traffic jam. Quincy sticks his head out the window of one.

I/E. QUINCY'S CARRIAGE - DAY

Quincy sits back down across from Anne.

QUINCY

It's these damned roads. I've been attempting to increase public works projects, but the Jacksonians hold the majority in Congress. Every action I take is blocked...

As he drones on, Anne's focus shifts to a scuffle happening on the street out of Quincy's view.

GEORGE WASHINGTON ADAMS, late 20s, a depressed drunk, is shoved into the mud by the much larger HENRY WOOD, 40s.

Wood's two CRONIES pick George up and hold him against a wall. Wood talks heatedly.

The carriage jolts forward. Anne turns her attention back to Quincy and jots down what he says.

EXT. PEACEFIELD - DAY

The Adams estate has been greatly expanded and renovated since the Revolutionary War. The CARRIAGE DRIVER halts in front of the main gate. Quincy and Anne exit.

LOUISA ADAMS, early 50s, elegant as her English accent, rushes from the house to Quincy.

LOUISA

(catching her breath)

I sent a messenger.

Quincy kisses Louisa.

QUINCY

We've been on the road.

Louisa hugs her friend.

LOUISA

Anne, I'm so glad to see you again. I wish it were under better circumstances.

ANNE

What's happened?

LOUISA
 Quincy, the doctor's with your
 father upstairs.

He sighs and nods. Anne looks shocked and embarrassed to be here right now. Quincy turns to Anne.

ANNE
 Go ahead.
 (pointing to Carriage
 Driver)
 I'll help him with the luggage.

Quincy follows Louisa to the front door.

QUINCY
 Have the children arrived?

LOUISA
 Yes, everyone's here.

INT. PEACEFIELD - CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

JOHN ADAMS, 90s, second President of the United States, lies in his massive bed, ready for death.

His son Quincy sits by his side with Louisa standing behind him. He's surrounded by his grandchildren:

JOHN ADAMS II, early 20s, proud, with his flirty fiancé MARY CATHERINE HELLEN, early 20s, and CHARLES ADAMS, late teens/early 20s, intellectual.

The family physician DR. WELCH, 50s, oversees his patient.

QUINCY
 We're all here, Father.

JOHN ADAMS
 What day is it?

LOUISA
 It's the fourth.

CHARLES
 America's fiftieth birthday!

The feeble old John Adams manages a grin.

JOHN ADAMS
 Independence forever!

Smiles and nods. John Adams clenches Quincy's hand.

JOHN ADAMS (CONT'D)
It's up to you.

QUINCY
(burdened)
I know, Father.

Satisfied, the dying man relaxes. He stares into the distance, brow furrowed.

JOHN ADAMS
Thomas Jefferson survives.

With that, he dies. Dr. Welch covers him with the sheet. Mary Catherine cries into John II's shoulder. Louisa hugs her husband, but he seems distracted.

INT. PEACEFIELD - SILK FARM - DAY

In her sericulture shack, Louisa tends to her silkworms. She feeds the live ones mulberry leaves. Above them, dozens of silk cocoons hang. Across the room sits her equipment wrapped in partially spun silk.

She works while listening to Quincy, sitting shocked.

QUINCY
Thomas Jefferson survives.

LOUISA
I heard him.

QUINCY
Why would his last thoughts be with Jefferson?

LOUISA
They're the last signers of the Declaration of Independence.

QUINCY
But they were political rivals for decades.

LOUISA
Jefferson started writing him weeks ago. Maybe he wrote back?

QUINCY
So they became friends again? After all that time.

Louisa shrugs.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

(skeptical)

I wonder if Andrew Jackson and I
will exchange letters in our old
age.

Louisa snatches up a newspaper from her work station.

LOUISA

I certainly hope not. Look at this:
now he's condemning you for putting
that billiard table in the White
House.

She shows Quincy the headline: "J. Quincy Adams: Gambling
Addict?"

QUINCY

I wish you would ignore this.

LOUISA

I wrote the editor.

QUINCY

You did not.

LOUISA

Anonymously. I'm just giving them
the facts.

QUINCY

Facts will not sway a Jacksonian
newspaper.

LOUISA

Anne thinks it's a good idea.

QUINCY

She would.

She laughs. They embrace.

LOUISA

How are you?

He nods, strong, silent. Anne pokes her head in the door.

ANNE

There you two are. This just
arrived.

She hands Quincy a letter. He opens it and reads silently.

In the background, Anne checks on Louisa.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 Anything else I can help you with,
 Louisa?

LOUISA
 Anne, you have been a godsend
 through all this.

ANNE
 I'm just glad to find a friend
 who's read Shelley. The woman's
 created a whole new genre!

Quincy's jaw drops as he hands the letter to Louisa.

LOUISA
 What is it?

QUINCY
 Thomas Jefferson died. The same
 morning as father.

Quincy grabs the Jacksonian newspaper and scans the headline:
 "J. Quincy Adams: Gambling Addict?"

He tears the paper in half.

INT. PEACEFIELD - PARLOR - NIGHT

George Washington Adams, cleaned up but looking troubled
 plays chess over drinks with John II. Charles tries to study
 by firelight, but Mary wants his attention.

MARY
 (to Charles)
 Why must all the Adams men study
 law? It's dreadfully boring.

John II answers from across the room.

JOHN II
 So we can provide for our wives!

She sneers at him and places a gentle hand on Charles's
 shoulder, making sure John II notices.

MARY CATHERINE
 I'll believe that when I see it.

Louisa enters, and Mary pulls away from Charles.

LOUISA

Mary, must I remind you which of my sons you are engaged to?

Quincy and Anne follow behind, continuing a conversation.

QUINCY

Could you stay with Louisa a bit longer? I leave for D.C. in the morning to meet some scientist.

ANNE

Of course, but I think, we need to respond to --

She cuts off, recognizing George approaching Quincy.

GEORGE

Father, I was hoping we could speak in private.

QUINCY

Glad you finally joined us.

George avoids his disapproving gaze. Off Louisa's own stern look, Quincy leads George out.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

We do have much to discuss.

EXT. PEACEFIELD - NIGHT

George follows Quincy in silence from the house up the hill overlooking the bay.

GEORGE

Father, I --

QUINCY

I've already heard, George.

George's face goes white.

GEORGE

You have?

QUINCY

I didn't want to say anything in front of your mother. She doesn't need anymore heartache right now.

Upset, George's head falls.

GEORGE
I don't know how to explain.

QUINCY
Just when I thought you couldn't
disappoint me anymore --

Anger boils out of George.

GEORGE
Disappoint you?!

QUINCY
Well, how else should I feel when
you lose another job?

George cools, understanding their confusion.

GEORGE
You're talking about me getting
fired?

QUINCY
Yes, George, what else?

George considers explaining, but stops himself.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Maybe attorney just isn't the right
fit for you.

GEORGE
(giving up)
Maybe not.

QUINCY
Have you reconsidered running for
office? The Massachusetts House has
a vacant seat this year.

GEORGE
(annoyed)
Seriously? I can't be a politician!

QUINCY
You have to do something! It may be
difficult, but --

GEORGE
It's impossible!

QUINCY
Don't be a coward, George!

Offended, George steps up to his father.

GEORGE
You know what you are?

QUINCY
What's that?

Quincy puffs up his chest, imposing. George shrinks.

GEORGE
You're right.

George trots off, back to the waiting carriages.

Frustrated, Quincy marches back to the house.

INT. PEACEFIELD - FOYER - NIGHT

Quincy slams the door behind him and fumes. Anne pokes her head around the corner.

ANNE
How's your son? George?

QUINCY
(sighing)
He'll be fine.

ANNE
Didn't sound fine.

QUINCY
Eavesdropping?

ANNE
Never! Journalist just have special hearing.

He chuckles and looks at a painting of John and Abigail Adams next to Quincy and Louisa, holding a baby, twenty years ago.

QUINCY
My mother wasn't happy when I named my first born after George Washington.

ANNE
Why did you?

QUINCY
My father had just lost reelection. He valued success above all.

ANNE

It couldn't have been easy being
the President's son.

Quincy pulls his attention from the painting and walks away.

QUINCY

George will be fine.

INT. GEORGE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The place is a wreck, like a tornado did the decorating.
George enters with his head low, defeated. He's greeted by
ELIZA DOLPH, 20s, pregnant.

ELIZA

You're finally home.

GEORGE

Eliza, I didn't expect you waiting
here for me.

She kisses him, but he seems distant. He finds a seat and
pours a drink.

ELIZA

I was just so excited. We're
finally getting engaged.

George finishes his drink and pours another.

GEORGE

It might not be as soon as we
hoped.

ELIZA

Your father won't help us?

He sips and avoids eye contact.

ELIZA (CONT'D)

You didn't even tell him about us!

He walks away from her, but she persists.

GEORGE

I tried, Eliza, he's just -- You
have no idea what he's like.

ELIZA

That Henry Wood came by today,
looking to collect --

GEORGE
You don't have to worry about him.

ELIZA
We are having a baby, George!

GEORGE
I know!

ELIZA
We can't live like this!

She follows him into a corner. Back against the wall, he sinks down.

GEORGE
I know!
(defeated)
I know. I'm sorry. I'm not who you
need me to be.

Seeing his pain, she holds his head against her belly.

ELIZA
I'm sorry, George.

She gathers her things and heads for the door.

ELIZA (CONT'D)
I'll be with my sister. She'll see
the baby and I are taken care of.

GEORGE
But I'm the father.

ELIZA
A father must provide for his
child. Protect his family.

She waits in the doorway. From the corner, he hangs his head. Tearful, she leaves.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - EAST ROOM - DAY

The door closes behind JOHN CLEVES SYMMES, late 40s, bookish.

WHITE HOUSE AIDE (O.S.)
Please wait in here, sir.

Symmes examines the unfinished construction and partially built furniture. An eight foot painting of George Washington hangs, imposing.

Crossing the room, he clutches his bag and charts close, hearing a deep BELLOW and splashing through another door.

Symmes puts his ear to the door. THUD!

Cautiously, Symmes opens the door to discover a bathroom with a full grown ALLIGATOR climbing out of the tub - and running right for him!

Symmes squeals and trips backward over a couch. As the alligator reaches the door, Quincy appears and wraps himself around it.

QUINCY
Settle, Lafayette!

Quincy wrestles the Alligator, placing a hand over its eyes and lifting its snout. After a struggle, it submits, and Quincy carries it back into the tub.

Symmes watches from over the edge of the couch. The alligator happily splashes.

Quincy crosses the bathroom back to Symmes, taking his hand.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Mr. John Cleves Symmes, yes?

Symmes weakly shakes his hand and nods.

SYMMES
(shaken)
Mr. President.

QUINCY
Not the greeting you expected, I'm sure.

As Quincy closes the bathroom door behind him, Symmes jumps, noticing the Alligator look at him and bellow.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - TREATY ROOM - DAY

Quincy leads Symmes into his Presidential office, simple and functional. A burning fireplace keeps them warm.

QUINCY
-- eight years old, watching the Battle of Bunker Hill from my own home. I imagined a giant alligator breaking British ships.

Symmes sets up his presentation as Quincy talks.

SYMMES

Quite the imagination. Must've been scary.

QUINCY

Not at all. The beast was on our side!

Chuckling, Quincy hits Symmes's arm and sits at his desk.

Symmes unfolds the last visual aide. Maps show various routes to the Arctic, and charts hold data on everything from depth to minerals.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Let's hear what you have for me.

Symmes takes a deep breath and launches into it.

SYMMES

(rapid)

Containing a number of solid, concentric spheres open at the poles twelve or sixteen degrees --

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Symmes. Symmes!

QUINCY (CONT'D)

I'm afraid I'm not following you.

Symmes removes a wooden globe from his bag. He twists off the top and shows Quincy its inner shells surrounded by emptiness.

SYMMES

I declare that the Earth is hollow and habitable within. I pledge my life in support of this truth and am ready to explore the Hollow.

Quincy's face falls.

QUINCY

You must be joking.

Deflated, Symmes tries to recover.

SYMMES

Mr. President, the benefits of what I'm proposing --

Symmes pulls out a porous, otherworldly rock, and tosses it into the fire.

QUINCY
I was told by Representative
McDonald --

SYMMES
McBride, sir.

Symmes fishes the stone out of the fire.

QUINCY
That's the bastard. He never
mentioned any of this empty planet
nonsense. What the hell are -- ?

Symmes drops the stone into Quincy's bare hand. He panics at first but calms once he realizes:

QUINCY (CONT'D)
It's cold. Damn cold.

SYMMES
An associate found that on a recent
dig. I believe an earthquake pushed
it up from deep beneath the
surface.

Quincy marvels at the rock, steam coming off it. He drops it into a glass the water inside freezes.

QUINCY
How deep?

SYMMES
Deeper than we can dig.

Quincy gives the nervous Symmes his attention. He points to the opening of his hollow globe.

SYMMES (CONT'D)
The poles. That's how we get to the
Hollow.

QUINCY
And if you're right, we'll find
more of this?

He holds up the glass which melts to room temperature. Symmes removes the rock and holds it up.

SYMMES
Mr. President, if I'm right, we'll
find a world full of things we
never imagined possible.

Symmes hands him the hollow globe. Quincy studies it. Symmes and sits across from him, patiently hoping.

QUINCY

Even if I believed your theory, the Jacksonian Congress is likely to block my proposal as they have every other.

SYMMES

I suppose, it was optimistic to hope for a fleet.

Quincy shakes his head. He looks above the fireplace to a painting of George Washington's inauguration. In it, a short, bald man stands behind Washington.

Symmes follows Quincy's gaze to the painting, John Adams dwarfed by Washington.

SYMMES (CONT'D)

I voted for your father. Both elections. I believed, if given the chance, he could've been a greater leader than Washington himself.

QUINCY

My father's opponents blocked him at every turn as well. The voters aren't satisfied with improving our country. Jackson promises them expansion and --

Quincy traces his hand over North America on the globe.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

-- to destroy anyone in his way.

Symmes shifts the globe to the Hollow.

SYMMES

Mr. President. Quincy. With this expedition, we could expand America into the last New World.

Quincy's demeanor softens, a look of small hope.

QUINCY

You're certainly determined.

SYMMES

It's my life's work. I believe in this. I just need the chance to prove it.

QUINCY

I will take your petition before
Congress.

Symmes happily shakes Quincy's hand.

SYMMES

Thank you, Mr. President. I have
faith you'll see this through.

QUINCY

I'm glad someone does.

Quincy holds up a newspaper on his desk with the headline
"Gen. Jackson Warns JQA Opposes America's Manifest Destiny."

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

The SENATE debates Quincy's proposal; including WILLIAM,
SAMUEL and MARTIN VAN BUREN, 40s.

MARTIN VAN BUREN

JQA wants peace with the red man
and now the mole man!

SAMUEL

The President wastes tax payer
dollars and now our time.

WILLIAM

I propose we continue the debate.
We need more disruption, ah I mean,
discussion.

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - HALL - DAY

Outside the Senate Chamber, Quincy listens to the mocking and
laughter at his expense. He sighs and turns to leave but
bumps into ANDREW JACKSON, early 60s, holding a newspaper.

ANDREW JACKSON

Democracy at work.

QUINCY

General Jackson.

ANDREW JACKSON

Mr. President. Have you seen the
latest headlines?

Quincy takes the paper, scanning the headline: "Rachel
ROBARDS Jackson: Convicted Adulteress!"

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)
Usually I avoid the papers. Too
much false news.

QUINCY
This is wrong. How is Mrs. Jackson
handling -- General?

Quincy stops, noticing the gun in Jackson's hand.

ANDREW JACKSON
I can forgive attacking me during
the campaign, but I will never
forgive those who attack my wife.

QUINCY
Andrew, I assure you I had nothing
to do --

Jackson raises the gun.

ANDREW JACKSON
We'll settle this outside.

Quincy grabs Jackson's wrist to twist it and disarm him.
Jackson misses a punch. Quincy shoves him against the wall.

QUINCY
Enough!

ANNE (O.S.)
Quincy? How'd the proposal go?

Anne approaches from down the hall. Quincy releases Jackson.

QUINCY
This will be settled by the voters.

Quincy leaves the disheveled Jackson to intercept and escort
Anne away.

ANDREW JACKSON
(calling after Quincy)
You fought dirty, Quincy. Even your
soft intellectuals will turn
against you now.

ANNE
What was that about?

Leading Anne away, Quincy hands her the newspaper.

QUINCY
This wasn't you?

ANNE

Of course not! I may despise her husband, but Mrs. Jackson doesn't deserve a personal attack.

QUINCY

The Jacksonian papers will turn this against me.

He storms out. She follows, concerned.

EXT. DOLPH HOUSE - DAY

From inside, Eliza screams in pain. George listens in the bushes, drinking from a hidden bottle to calm his nerves.

He hears a baby cry as Dr. Welch emerges from the front door for a smoke.

DR. WELCH

George? Is that you?

George emerges from the brush.

GEORGE

Eliza? How is she? The baby?

DR. WELCH

Eliza is fine. The baby's a perfectly healthy little girl.

George's eyes tear up.

GEORGE

I have a little girl?

DR. WELCH

Would you like to meet her?

GEORGE

Eliza doesn't want to see me.

DR. WELCH

Your child will need her father.

George considers the front door but panic creeps over.

GEORGE

She's better off without me.

George stumbles, dizzy, his breathing heavily. Dr. Welch catches him. George pushes himself free and runs away.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - NIGHT

George wanders around in the rain depressed, drink in hand.

EXT. BOSTON ALLEY - NIGHT

John II and Charles find their Brother face down in the garbage.

JOHN II
He's over here.

They lift up George together. He's completely out of it.

JOHN II (CONT'D)
He seems worse this time.

GEORGE
Listen to me. If I should die --

CHARLES
You won't because father won't hear
of it.

John II and Charles carry George away.

INT. PEACEFIELD - PARLOR - NIGHT

A banner hangs over the room: "JQA 1828!" Quincy's SUPPORTERS drink, chat and party like it's 1828. Talking with a few, including running-mate RICHARD RUSH, 40s, Quincy does his best to appear positive.

RICHARD RUSH
The people will not elect a
backwoods barbarian.

QUINCY
What about all the people also from
those "backwoods"?

Nervous, Louisa pulls her husband aside. They walk and talk quietly, smiling politely at passing Supporters.

LOUISA
Anne told me about your
confrontation with Jackson.

QUINCY
His papers have convinced the
public my campaign slandered his
wife. I don't see how we can win --

LOUISA

It was me.

Quincy stops, shocked. Louisa quickly explains, upset.

LOUISA (CONT'D)

Quincy, it was me. The editor I've been writing wanted an interview. He asked about Rachel Jackson. I mentioned her previous marriage --

Quincy exhales and pulls her away from the party.

INT. PEACEFIELD - HALL - NIGHT

Quincy leads Louisa, increasingly upset, away from the party.

LOUISA

-- I thought it was common knowledge! I'd never attack her, or hurt your campaign.

Quincy embraces his wife, and she begins to calm.

QUINCY

I lost this election. Not you.

LOUISA

The results haven't arrived yet! You could still --

QUINCY

You and Anne were right. I should have better communicated my message, my story to the people.

Quincy kisses her forehead as she dries her eyes.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Why don't you go back to the party? I need to think some things over.

INT. PEACEFIELD - QUINCY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Quincy enters to find a surprised and embarrassed Symmes, examining maps and sea charts decorating the wall around a painting of three ships.

SYMMES

Mr. President!

QUINCY

Quincy. Shouldn't you be enjoying the party, Symmes?

SYMMES

I've never really enjoyed parties.

QUINCY

Neither have I.

Quincy crosses to his desk and fishes through a drawer.

SYMMES

I'm surprised you're not with your campaign, anticipating the election results.

QUINCY

I know the results.

Quincy pulls out a bottle of whiskey with two glasses and hands one to Symmes.

SAME - LATER

Symmes's presentation visuals are strewn about.

Quincy and Symmes sit on the floor beneath the maps, each a few drinks in. Symmes spins a nearby globe.

QUINCY

(sad drunk)

I couldn't convince Congress. I couldn't beat Jackson.

SYMMES

(mad drunk)

Damn that redneck and his mudsill followers! You know, I heard he believes the Earth to be flat!

QUINCY

He wants to take more and more land, from the Spaniards, from the Natives. We could have found new land, untouched.

Symmes stops the globe with his finger on the Arctic.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I couldn't help you lead America to your Hollow, Symmes.

SYMMES

It's been so long. I thought, this
time...

He trails off. The energy shifts as Anne knocks on the door
and enters.

ANNE

Quincy, the results are in --

She takes in the sad pair on the floor.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Looks like you already know.

QUINCY

Anne, you remember Symmes.

She nods, pours herself a glass and takes a sip. She sits
opposite them in a chair.

SYMMES

We're remembering an adventure
killed prematurely.

Symmes raises his glass in a toast. Anne looks over the
charts, maps and figures of Symmes's laid around the room.

ANNE

It looks like you have everything
well planned out.

SYMMES

It's been my life's work.

ANNE

It's too bad you can't just go.

The three CLINK glasses and drink. Quincy jumps, coughs on
his whiskey and stands.

ANNE (CONT'D)

What is it?

QUINCY

We *should* go.

Quincy grabs a pen and traces routes to the Arctic on a wall
map, checking Symmes's work.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

(mumbling to himself)

From a higher latitude, cut time at
sea, fewer crew, supplies...

SYMMES

But Quincy, an expedition like
this, we'd need America's fleet.

Quincy points to the painting of three ships on the wall.

QUINCY

Columbus found this New World with
only three ships.

Quincy offers a hand and helps Symmes up.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

We'll have to find the new New
World with just one.

Symmes traces the routes Quincy's drawn with his finger,
stopping at the Arctic. He smiles, tearful.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

As President, I failed, you and so
many others. But my story is my own
making. Symmes, we're going to find
your Hollow.

SYMMES

Thank you. Thank you.

Symmes, practically speechless, shakes Quincy's hand. Anne
pours another round of drinks.

ANNE

We're going to the North Pole!

QUINCY

We?

She hands back his glass with a look: *of course*.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

No telling how dangerous it'll be.

ANNE

If I want to cover the President, I
have to travel with the President.

QUINCY

I'm not the President anymore.

ANNE

You do this, you'll be remembered
for so much more.

Symmes raises his glass. The other two follow suit.

SYMMES
To discovery!

ANNE
To progress!

QUINCY
To legacy.

They cheers and drink.

INT. PEACEFIELD - QUINCY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Louisa helps Quincy pack for his trip.

QUINCY
And you're sure you'll be fine
while I'm gone?

LOUISA
I have my work here.

Through the open door, she sees George cross through the hall
to his bedroom and shut the door.

LOUISA (CONT'D)
It's George I'm worried for. He
hasn't talked about what happened
since John and Charles brought him
home.

Louisa looks at the packed bags then at Quincy.

QUINCY
Louisa, I know that look, and the
answer is no.

LOUISA
You spent most of your youth
traveling Europe with your father.

QUINCY
My father wanted to teach me
diplomatic relations. You don't
expect us to find Santa Claus and
his elves living beneath the North
Pole.

LOUISA
Traveling with your father made you
the man you are today.

She wraps him in an embrace.

LOUISA (CONT'D)
And it's how we met.

He grins; she got him.

 LOUISA (CONT'D)
George is suffering. I'm not sure
how to help him, but something has
to change.

 QUINCY
Fine. Maybe it'll be good for him.

George listens from the open doorway.

 GEORGE
You don't have to worry about me,
Father. I won't be going.

Louisa's embarrassed to be caught talking about George.
Quincy grabs his bags and heads for the hall.

 QUINCY
Come or don't. Your choice.

Quincy exits calmly, frustrating George.

 GEORGE
 (to Louisa)
You really want us stuck on a ship
together?

 LOUISA
I'm worried about you, George. And
about your father. He's not as
young as he thinks he is.

George sighs. His mother melts down his walls.

 GEORGE
He doesn't want me there.

 LOUISA
Go for me, son. And go for
yourself.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - EAST PORTICO - DAY

Twenty thousand JACKSONIANS have gathered around to watch the
inauguration of Andrew Jackson. Martin Van Buren and JOHN C.
CALHOUN, 40s, stand near Jackson.

With his left hand on the Bible and his right hand in the air, the new President is sworn in by Chief Justice JOHN MARSHALL, 70s.

ANDREW JACKSON
I, Andrew Jackson, do solemnly
swear --

EXT. PEACEFIELD - DAY

Anne hugs Louisa and steps into the carriage loaded with luggage. Quincy and Louisa embrace and kiss. When they break apart, Quincy is surprised to see George walk from the house, bags in hand.

ANDREW JACKSON (V.O.)
-- that I will faithfully execute --

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - DAY

Andrew Jackson rides a white horse to the White House. Adoring JACKSONIANS flank him on all sides.

ANDREW JACKSON (V.O.)
-- the Office of President of the
United States --

EXT. BOSTON HARBOR - DAY

Luggage in hand, Quincy, George and Anne meet with Symmes in the CROWD and board the *Passepartout*, a transatlantic passenger liner.

ANDREW JACKSON (V.O.)
-- and will to the best of my
ability --

EXT./INT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Thousands of drunk JACKSONIANS destroy the White House with their partying.

Some break and crawl through windows because the lines in and out the door is so long. Others drink and vomit on the lawn.

ANDREW JACKSON (V.O.)
-- preserve, protect and defend the
Constitution of the United States.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Andrew Jackson drinks away from the party with the NINE MEN of his "Kitchen Cabinet," including Martin Van Buren.

EXT. PASSEPARTOUT - DECK - NIGHT

Quincy stands at the bow of the transatlantic passenger liner sailing east on the ocean, ready for adventure.

ANDREW JACKSON (V.O.)
So help me god.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - DAY

The *Passepartout* docks in the growing French city. The harbor is full of MERCHANTS of questionable character and SHIPBUILDERS hard at work.

George, Anne, George and Symmes carry their luggage and exit down the ramp along with the other Travelers.

Anne nudges Quincy and nods towards George. He shakes his head, confused. She does it again, more aggressively. Quincy looks at his son.

QUINCY
Son --

GEORGE
Yes?

QUINCY
Would you ...

Quincy looks around for something and lands on:

QUINCY (CONT'D)
... like some ice cream?

He motions to a nearby Ice Cream VENDOR with mostly melted product.

GEORGE
Um. No, thank you.

George continues off the ramp. Quincy shrugs at Anne. She rolls her eyes.

The Travelers disperse off the ramp. George eyes the taverns.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
How about a drink instead?

Quincy scoffs.

QUINCY
It's barely noon!

Quincy piles George with luggage.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
You have work to do

GEORGE
(sotto)
I can do both.

QUINCY
Take these to our inn.

SYMMES
Perhaps I should go with him,
rendezvous with the crew my
associates arranged.

Symmes fumbles through his bag for a slip with the details. Quincy takes it and holds it out to George. Hands full of luggage, he takes it in his mouth.

QUINCY
George can do that. I need you to
help me find a ship suitable for
our journey.

George fumbles with the weight but rights himself and pushes through the crowd. Off his struggling, Anne glares at Quincy, arms crossed.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
It'll be good for him. Let's find a
ship.

They grimace at their options - seedy, undesirable ships captained by matching SAILORS.

MONTAGE:

-- Quincy, Anne and Symmes, Arctic Circle map in hand, stand before a RICKETY SAILOR in front of a rickety ship.

RICKETY SAILOR
No way my boat can make it through
those icy waters.

-- Quincy and Anne watch Symmes open his hollow globe for an UNIMPRESSED SAILOR.

SYMMES

You'll be a part of the greatest discovery in recorded history!

-- Quincy drops a small bag of coins in the hand of a WEALTHY SAILOR with a top of the line ship. Anne and Symmes watch, hopeful.

QUINCY

How much to charter your vessel?

The Wealthy Sailor hands back the bag and boards his ship, looking down on their comparatively plain attire.

WEALTHY SAILOR

More than your sort of rabble can afford.

Incensed, Quincy pulls his Presidential Passport from his pocket. Anne grabs his wrist and shakes her head.

ANNE

You don't want it getting back home that you're running around Europe pretending to still be President.

He pockets the passport.

QUINCY

Good point.

SYMMES

We still need a ship.

QUINCY

We'll think of --

They stop, witnessing two knife-wielding Haitian PIRATES chase the deceptively innocent MARIE SAMBIN, 30s, French, into an alleyway.

The rest of the harbor continues as normal.

SYMMES

We shouldn't get --

Hearing a woman's SCREAM, Quincy takes off for the alley.

SYMMES (CONT'D)

Involved.

Anne runs after Quincy. Symmes reluctantly follows.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - ALLEY - DAY

The two Pirates back Marie into a corner, knives drawn.

PIRATE

Ou pa ta dwe kouri.

(subtitled:)

You shouldn't have run.

Marie grins and clutches behind her back.

MARIE

Ou pa ta dwe swiv.

(subtitled:)

You shouldn't have followed.

Quincy runs in heroically to the confusion of Marie and the Pirates. Symmes and Anne follow shortly behind.

QUINCY

Not another step.

PIRATE

Should mind your own business.

The first Pirate stabs at Quincy. He sidesteps, grabs the attacker's arm and swings him against the wall.

Arm held behind his back, the Pirate drops his knife and struggles against Quincy's superior strength.

The second Pirate moves towards Quincy. Anne steps between them, a Derringer pocket pistol drawn. The Pirate freezes.

ANNE

Walk away.

The second Pirate holds up his hands and backs off. Anne points with her gun, and he tosses the knife.

Symmes scoops up the knives. Quincy unhands the first Pirate, and the two run away.

Marie loosens her grip on the handle of a blade behind her back, hidden beneath her blouse.

PIRATE

(calling back)

This isn't over, Sambin.

Quincy grins at Anne, impressed.

QUINCY
I appreciate the assistance.

He looks back critically at Symmes, awkward.

SYMMES
What? I took their knives.

Anne puts away her pistol as Quincy approaches Marie.

QUINCY
Are you hurt, Ms. -- ?

Marie throws her arms around Quincy and feigns panic.

MARIE
S'il vous plaît, gentil monsieur,
aidez-moi. Help me.

QUINCY
You're safe now.

Quincy pulls himself free of Marie.

MARIE
Not me. My husband, Alexandre
Sambin.

QUINCY
What's happened, Mrs. Sambin?

ANNE
Did you know those men chasing you?

MARIE
Oui. Pirates. They captured our
ship and us with it. I escaped, but
the *corrompu* police would not help.

ANNE
This town didn't strike me as
served or protected.

Marie shakes her head.

Symmes pulls Quincy aside.

SYMMES
We have a mission.

QUINCY
She's a woman in need, Symmes.

SYMMES

We have needs too! Your boy will be
with the crew ready to set sail,
and we have no ship.

Symmes jumps at Marie, who quietly slipped beside him.

MARIE

Our ship is very fast.

SYMMES

We must sail through frozen waters.

MARIE

It's what she was built for.

SYMMES

The expedition will take us very
far away.

MARIE

Please sir, help rescue my husband,
and our ship will take you to the
ends of the earth.

Quincy and Anne grin at the reluctant Symmes.

INT. NANTES HARBOR - BAR - DAY

A mercenary CREW of a dozen French, Indian and East Asian men
enjoys drinks and games.

Sitting around a table with a stack of money, George plays
cards against the shady leader CORSAIRE, French, 40s, and two
Card Players.

George lays three cards facedown on the small pile. He's down
to two cards.

GEORGE

Three Jacks.

Corsaire squints at him. George holds his poker face.

CORSAIRE

Lie.

George smugly flips his cards and reveals three tens. He
raises a glass to Corsaire and drinks.

Corsaire seethes and picks up the card pile.

Card Player #1 lays down one card. No one notices Corsaire slip an extra card into his hand from his sleeve.

CARD PLAYER #1
One Queen.

Card Player #2 lays down two cards.

CARD PLAYER #2
Two Kings.

Corsaire confidently lays down four cards.

CORSAIRE
Four aces!

Others gather around to watch the game.

CORSAIRE (CONT'D)
(intimidating)
Go on. Call me a liar.

The other Card Players shake their heads. Corsaire sneers at George, but he checks his hand. He has two aces.

GEORGE
I'll call that. Lie.

Corsaire smirks. He flips the four cards over and reveals four aces. George throws his hand on the table.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
You damned cheat!

CORSAIRE
How dare you?!

Corsaire flips the table and lunges at unprepared George. They hit the floor covered in drink, cards and money.

George puts up his arms as Corsaire prepares a strike.

Quincy pushes through the gathering Crowd and grabs Corsaire's arm, pulling him off.

QUINCY
Enough!

Anne and Symmes catch up. George motions around.

GEORGE
(tipsy)
Meet our crew.

Anne turns to a particularly sketchy CREWMAN to her right.

ANNE
(dry)
Hi.

He pulls George, resistant but tipsy, towards the exit. He passes Symmes.

QUINCY
(exiting, to Symmes)
Pack it up.

The Crew laughs and mocks George. Corsaire gathers the money from the floor, scowling.

ANNE
(to Symmes)
Where'd you find these charmers?

SYMMES
They came highly recommended!

The sketchy Crewman gives Anne an inviting look. She grimaces.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - BAR - DAY

Quincy drags George, tipsy and fighting, out the back. He fully pulls away once they get outside.

GEORGE
Enough! I'm not a child!

QUINCY
Then why did I just prevent a schoolyard brawl?

GEORGE
That lowlife was cheating me!

QUINCY
That's not the point, George. I've warned you against gambling before.

GEORGE
Oh yes, what will the papers say?

QUINCY
You think, I'm worried about my reputation?

GEORGE
What else? Your biggest concern has
always been --

QUINCY
The people.

GEORGE
(dismissive)
Sure. The people. And what they
think of you.

Quincy looks away, hurt. George sighs and turns to leave.

QUINCY
And what are your concerns?

George stops.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Your string of failures?

George turns and marches back, ready to fight.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Your gambling debts?

George freezes just before he reaches Quincy, shocked.

GEORGE
How did you -- ?

QUINCY
A mister Henry Wood came to see me.

George steadies himself against the bar's exterior.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
He came for the money you owed him.

GEORGE
What did you do?

QUINCY
I paid him of course.

George slides down the wall and sits, his head in his hands.

GEORGE
Father. I --

QUINCY

No more apologies. No more explanations. It's a waste of time. For both of us.

George can't quite catch his breath or speak.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

How many opportunities will you waste before -- ?

George fights off an anxiety attack.

Quincy leans down next to him and puts a hand on his shoulder, too stiff to be comforting.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Set a goal for yourself, George. Let this journey be a goal. For both of us.

George gathers himself and looks at Quincy, upset.

GEORGE

Poor President John Quincy Adams, always fighting to improve the nation. And the family.

Quincy stands, insulted.

QUINCY

I did fight. And failed. I will not accept the same failure in my son.

Quincy leaves George alone. He pulls himself up against the wall. He looks up at two birds flying overhead. He vomits.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Quincy, Marie, Symmes and Corsaire look across at fifty black and Hispanic men and women - PIRATES - partying on and around two adjacent moored ships.

The larger *Méchante* flies red banners with the blue silhouette of two crossed arms breaking free from chains.

Marie points to the second ship, the *Brise-glace*, a streamlined icebreaker.

MARIE

Our ship. That's where they're keeping my husband.

CORSAIRE

If they got him, your husband's
dead. No reason we should join him.

QUINCY

You've been hired for a job, not
your opinions.

SYMME

I have to agree with Monsieur
Corsaire that it seems risky. We're
dangerously outnumbered.

Quincy looks in the alley below at the dozen Crewmen, Anne
and George preparing supplies in shadow.

QUINCY

We need a way to lead the pirates
away from your husband's ship.

Unnoticed, a lantern flies across from the *Brise-glace* and
ignites the deck of the *Méchante*.

The Pirates converge to fight the growing fire.

MARIE

(sly)
That was lucky.

QUINCY

Let's hope. Time to go.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - DOCKS - NIGHT

Under the cover of darkness, Quincy and Marie run up the ramp
of the unguarded *Brise-glace*. They're followed by Symmes,
Corsaire and a few Crewmen.

They remain unseen as the Pirates form a bucket brigade to
save the burning *Méchante*.

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Flanked by Symmes and Corsaire, Quincy rounds the corner.
SWISH! He barely dodges the sword swing of a waiting PIRATE.

STAB! The Pirate goes down.

Behind him, ALEXANDRE SAMBIN, 30s, Haitian, sheathes his
sword as he does all things - with a Musketeer flair.

Corsaire raises his sword against Alexandre just as Marie runs to him.

QUINCY
(to Corsaire)
Wait!

Marie and Alexandre kiss as if alone.

ALEXANDRE
Tu es revenu.

MARIE
*Je ne pouvais pas te laisser
derrière.*

SYMMES
This is your husband?

The couple ignores them. Quincy clears his throat.

QUINCY
I'm sorry we don't have time for a
lengthy reunion.

Corsaire, sword in hand, looks around at the ornately decorated cabin, suspicious.

CORSAIRE
And how did a man like you come to
possess such a fine vessel?

Alexandre stares him down.

ALEXANDRE
Inheritance.

CORSAIRE
Is that right?

BANG! BANG! Two gun shots echo from outside the ship.

QUINCY
We don't have time for this either.

EXT. NANTES HARBOR - DOCKS - NIGHT

Smoking pocket pistol in hand, Anne follows George up the ramp to the *Brise-glace* as it pulls away from the docks into the river.

The Pirates douse the last of the *Méchante's* fire and turn their attention to the escaping ship.

BRISE-GLACE - DECK

Crewmen swarm one lingering PIRATE and toss him overboard.

An ARMED PIRATE keeps George, Anne and Crewmen at bay with his brandished swords.

Alexandre and Marie emerged, rapiers drawn.

ARMED PIRATE

Vous!

The Sambins are on him in a flash.

CLANG! CLANG! He blocks left. He blocks right. But the Sambins are too fast.

Together, they disarm him. The now unarmed Pirate throws up his hands, peeks over his shoulder, then to their rapiers.

The Pirate jumps over the side of the ship.

Alexandre and Marie sheath their weapons and turn to the surprised crew.

ALEXANDRE

À vos stations!

The Crewmen disperse to their tasks as Quincy approaches George and Anne.

GEORGE

(re: Alexandre)

Is he a -- ?

QUINCY

He's the captain.

ALEXANDRE

One of them. *Bon chans.*

Alexandre kisses Marie and runs toward the bow. She ascends the stairs to the helm.

QUINCY

Mrs. Sambin, where are you going?

MARIE

It's Captain Sambin, and I'm going to steer my ship.

ANNE

(to Quincy)

Oh, I like her.

EXT. LOIRE RIVER - NIGHT

The *Brise-glace* sails through the harbor town. The *Méchante* follows with fifty armed Pirates aboard.

They reach a bottleneck of the harbor, crowded my incoming and departing ships.

BRISE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Quincy stands with Marie as she steers towards the mess of ships ahead.

QUINCY

Why would they pursue us so openly?

MARIE

Those pirates really want my ship.

Anne and George run up to join them. She points to the jagged rows of ships they're quickly approaching.

ANNE

We'll crash for sure.

MARIE

Calm yourselves. Allow me to show you why they want my ship.

LOIRE RIVER

The *Brise-glace* gracefully maneuvers through the tangled mess in front of them, creating waves that push ships aside.

The *Méchante* cruises through the newly opened path, gaining on them.

As they sail to the outskirts of the harbor, the congestion of ships is too thick.

Alexandre climbs the *Brise-glace's* ratlines to the crow's nest. He pulls a metal chain running through the jib sail to the bowsprit.

Below, the bowsprit rises! The front of the ship tips upward exposing the icebreaking bow. It stops, stuck.

BRISE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Marie points to Alexandre above, struggling with the chain and pulley system.

MARIE
Something's wrong!

GEORGE
What do we -- ?

George turns to his father, but Quincy is already in full sprint to the ratlines.

BRISE-GLACE - DECK

Quincy pulls himself into the crow's nest and tries to force the chain with Alexandre.

The *Brise-glace* is seconds from impact.

ALEXANDRE
It's not enough!

Quincy looks below at the height, then to his son. He exhales and jumps away from the bow, chain in his hands.

The pulley system raises the bowsprit as high as it can go, rearing the ship up like an animal on its hind legs.

The resistance slows Quincy's fall. He hits the deck running.

George's jaw drops at his father's bad-assery.

LOIRE RIVER

The bucked up *Brise-glace* reaches two nearly touching ships blocking its path. The icebreaking bow rams into sterns of the two fleeing ships, breaking through.

The *Brise-glace* speeds away through the clear water ahead.

The *Méchante* is stuck in the pileup of ships.

EXT. CELTIC SEA - NIGHT

The *Brise-glace* sails idly against the waves.

EXT. BRISE-GLACE - DECK - NIGHT

A few Crewmen mill about their duties

Anne looks amused to find George leaning against the railing, brooding toward the open sea.

She notices he's not looking at the water and traces his gaze to a window to the captain's quarters where Quincy sits with Symmes and the Sambins.

ANNE

Why don't you go join Quincy?

GEORGE

I'm sure he doesn't want me around.

He turns his gaze back to the sea.

She produces a flask from her dress and takes a swig.

ANNE

He brought you here didn't he?

Anne offers George the flask. He takes a sip, scrunches his face and coughs.

She laughs. Embarrassed, he takes a bigger gulp.

GEORGE

I studied law at Harvard because it's what he wanted, but that wasn't good enough unless I was top of the class.

ANNE

Sounds frustrating.

George rants to himself, stealing sips from the flask.

GEORGE

But my little brother John gets himself expelled for protesting, and father gives him a job!

Anne takes her flask back, disappointed to find it empty.

ANNE

My family had nothing, so they expected nothing. I learned nothing. Couldn't even read or write my own name.

She absentmindedly twists the wedding band on her finger.

ANNE (CONT'D)

But then I met a wealthy revolutionary with the biggest library I had ever seen. And that man insisted I read every single book in that library.

She gestures to the magnificent ship and the beautiful sea and sky around them.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Now look where I am. On an adventure to the story of a lifetime.

GEORGE

You're saying I should appreciate my father pushing me.

ANNE

I'm saying, now my husband's gone, I don't think about how frustrated he made me. I just miss him.

George takes in her words and looks back to the sea. He squints at a growing SPECK in the distance.

GEORGE

What is...?

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Quincy, Symmes, Alexandre and Marie sit around a table examining a large map. Corsaire stands aside, arms folded.

MARIE

What would possess you to explore the Arctic Circle?

SYMMES

Beneath, the Hollow --

Quincy coughs over and nudges Symmes.

QUINCY

Scientific curiosity. No one's traveled this far.

Quincy and Symmes grin. Suspicious, she eyes them, shrugs.

MARIE

It's your money. And we made a deal.

ALEXANDRE

Doesn't it excite you, *mon amour*? The call of adventure!

Alexandre squeezes her shoulders. Corsaire scoffs.

ALEXANDRE (CONT'D)
Is our crew prepared for the
journey, Monsieur Corsaire?

CORSAIRE
My crew is ready for anything.

Corsaire stares down Alexandre.

George bursts into the room.

GEORGE
Father!

QUINCY
George, whatever it is --

GEORGE
Cannot wait!

Corsaire looks out the back window, wide-eyed and runs out.

CORSAIRE
Merde!

Everyone looks to George.

GEORGE
Pirates.

EXT. CELTIC SEA - NIGHT

The *Méchante*, colors flying, advances on the *Brise-glace*.

BRISE-GLACE - MAIN DECK

Quincy and George emerge from the ship to see the Crew run to their duties. Ahead, Alexandre and Marie direct the chaos. A bell rings from the crow's nest.

MARIE
All hands on deck!

ALEXANDRE
Hoist the sails!

Symmes wanders out, cautious.

SYMMES
What is going on out here?

Symmes loses his balance as the ship picks up speed.

QUARTERDECK

Marie steers the helm. Quincy watches the *Méchante* shrink into the distance.

QUINCY
So much trouble for one ship.

MARIE
She's a fine ship.

Marie grins. Quincy eyes her, suspicious.

MAIN DECK

George and the Crew gather around Alexandre.

WORRIED CREWMAN
They're not going to stop!

GEORGE
Can we out run them?

ALEXANDRE
To maintain top speeds, we'll have to work around the clock. Longer shifts, shorter rests.

Groans around the Crew.

ALEXANDRE (CONT'D)
Enough bellyaching. To your stations!

GEORGE
You heard the Captain!

Alexandre smiles at George as the Crew reluctantly goes back to work.

CELTIC SEA - NIGHT

The *Brise-glance* races away from the *Méchante* far behind.

INT. BRISE-GLACE - CREW QUARTERS - DAY

In the cramped space, the CREW sleeps in hammocks, rocked by the ship. A WORKING CREWMAN wakes a SLEEPING CREWMAN, who begrudgingly swaps spots.

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - SYMMES'S CABIN - NIGHT

Anne approaches with her notebook in hand and knocks on the doorframe. Pouring over his notes, Symmes jumps.

SYMMES
Mrs. Royall!

ANNE
Didn't mean to scare you. And just
"Anne" is fine.

Symmes cleans up his work.

SYMMES
What can I do for you, Anne?

ANNE
You're working very late, Symmes.

SYMMES
Day and night. It's my life's work.

ANNE
That's what I'd like to talk to you
about.

She searches for a place to sit and settles on a sturdy-looking stack of atlases, notebook open.

ANNE (CONT'D)
How exactly did you come about your
Hollow Earth theory?

He winces at her stare, her open notebook. She closes it.

SYMMES
I've been treated very unfairly by
the press in the past.

ANNE
I'm just here to tell the story.
Your story.

Relaxed, he smiles and opens his book to an illustration of Saturn and its rings. He holds a small telescope.

SYMMES
I was a Captain stationed in Canada
when I first saw the rings of
Saturn. Concentric circles make up
all of nature - trees, bone, entire
planets. A beautiful symmetry
throughout the universe.

He excitedly flips through illustrations and hands her his Hollow globe.

SYMMES (CONT'D)

I theorized, our own circular world
must be the same.

Anne sets the globe on his open text.

ANNE

You fought in 1812?

SYMMES

(proud)

I wanted to serve my country. I
even named my first born son
Americus Symmes.

Anne snickers but catches herself and puts on a serious face.

ANNE

Patriotic. Symmes, I had no idea
you had a wife. Or kids.

He shrugs and retreats into his book.

SYMMES

My family remains unconvinced of my
theories.

ANNE

You must make time for them?

SYMMES

It's my life's work. Day or night.
I should get back to it.

He turns away from her. She leaves him alone with his books.

MONTAGE:

EXT. *BRISE-GLACE* - MAIN DECK - DAY

George helps Quincy reel in a man-sized wolf fish. George jumps back as it snaps at him with its rows of sharp teeth.

Quincy calmly punches the fish, and it stops moving. He slings it over his shoulder and walks away.

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT

The *Brise-glace* skirts around a pile-up of steamships. In pursuit, the *Méchante's* banners fly above the smog.

EXT. BRISE-GLACE - POOP DECK - DAY

George watches the beautiful sunset. Quincy walks up and puts a hand on his shoulder. George enjoys the father/son moment --
-- until Quincy puts a mop in George's hand.

He points George in the direction of Crewmen hard at work. George drags his feet to join them.

EXT. GREENLAND SEA - NIGHT

A pod of narwhals swim by the *Brise-glace*.

BRISE-GLACE - POOP DECK

Anne sketches the creatures in her notebook until -- the crow's nest bell rings. Shots from the advancing *Méchante* scare away the narwhals.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. *BRISE-GLACE* - FORECASTLE DECK - DAY

Near the ship's head, Alexandre practices with his two rapiers. He spots George watching nearby and waves him over.

ALEXANDRE

Your father asked me to keep you
busy cleaning, untangling rope.

He presents a rapier to George. He takes it, surprised.

ALEXANDRE (CONT'D)

Have you ever trained with a blade?

GEORGE

Fencing at university.

Alexandre crosses blades with George and bows. George mirrors his movements as Alexandre circles him.

ALEXANDRE

Form only goes so far in a real
fight.

In a flash, Alexandre is on George with unpredictable movement. His swing slows to allow George to block.

Quincy walks right up to the sparring session.

QUINCY

I thought you were working.

George loses focus; Alexandre disarms him. He presents Quincy his rapiers. George stands back and observes.

ALEXANDRE

He was learning.

Quincy takes one blade. They repeat the cross and bow. They spar, each meeting the other's slowed strike.

QUINCY

I taught my sons diplomacy over violence.

CLANG! Alexandre notices George's nervous gaze.

ALEXANDRE

What should he do when words fail?

CLANG! Faster, more intense.

QUINCY

He's an Adams. He'll do what he must.

CLANG! CLANG! Quincy swings too hard. He clips Alexandre's arm, ripping his shirt sleeve and exposing:

Alexandre's tattoo. It matches the *Méchante's* banner, arms breaking chains.

GEORGE

Father! How could you -- ?

ALEXANDRE

It's fine, George. Just an accident.

Alexandre covers the tattoo quickly, glancing at the others to be sure no one noticed. Quincy leaves, embarrassed.

QUINCY

I'm sorry, Captain.

George takes the sword again. He and Alexandre turn, hearing Corsair laughing from the ratlines above.

CORSAIRE

You're better off with the old man.

ALEXANDRE

Corsaire, I believe there is some rope that needs untangling.

Corsaire climbs down, grumbling while Alexandre directs George's stance.

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - CARGO HOLD - DAY

Corsaire pulls a coil of rope free from the mess of crates. The rocking ship knocks him off his feet. He grabs a crate lid for balance. It pulls free, and he falls back.

CORSAIRE

Merde!

Corsaire pulls himself up by the crate and peers inside.

CORSAIRE (CONT'D)

Fils de pute!

Inside, he finds a crumpled up red banner with a blue silhouette of two crossed arms breaking free from chains.

The same image as Alexandre's tattoo.

EXT. *BRISE-GLACE* - MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Shouting, the Crew crowds around the Captain's Quarters. Quincy and George run up and break apart the mob.

QUINCY

What's going on here?

They clear a path and see Corsaire and a couple Crewmen drag Alexandre out, battered and bruised.

GEORGE

Get off him!

George tries to pull Alexandre free, but the men shove him back into the Quarters.

Corsaire holds up Alexandre's forearm, showing Quincy his tattoo of crossed blue arms breaking free from chains on a red banner.

CORSAIRE

Haven't you wondered why those
pirates would pursue us to the ends
of the earth?

Marie runs down from the helm, followed by Symmes. Anne
emerges, following the chaos.

MARIE

Get your damned hands off my
husband!

George runs out of the Quarters wielding Alexandre's rapiers.
He tosses one to Marie. Corsaire keeps them at bay with a
knife to Alexandre's throat.

CORSAIRE

(re:Alexandre, Marie)

He's a pirate. He - they tricked us
into stealing this ship from their
own crew.

QUINCY

(to Marie)

Is this true?

Keeping her eyes on Alexandre, Marie rolls up her sleeve to
reveal a matching tattoo. The Crew circles her.

CREW

Lock her up! Throw them overboard!

QUINCY

Wait!

(to Corsaire)

Let him go.

Corsaire hesitates, but Quincy's steely gaze presses him to
toss the weak Alexandre at Marie's feet. She drops to him,
keeping the rapier raised.

MARIE

(to Alexandre)

I'm here. I'm here.

CORSAIRE

Pirates are chasing them, not us.

Corsaire points his knife at Alexandre and Marie, glaring.
The crow's nest bell rings.

Anne points Quincy to the *Méchante* on the horizon, advancing
on the idle ship.

ANNE

We gotta go.

SYMMES

(to Quincy)

Perhaps the pirates would give us safe passage in exchange for the Sambins?

MARIE

They'll kill every single one of you and take back this ship!

CORSAIRE

Let's leave their corpses floating for their crew to find.

George keeps Corsaire at bay with his rapier. Only George stands between the Sambins and the Mob.

GEORGE

Just try it!

QUINCY

Stand aside, George!

GEORGE

I won't let anyone hurt them.

Symmes watches the *Méchante's* quick approach.

SYMMES

Quincy...

QUINCY

Throw the Sambins in the brig!
(to Corsaire, Symmes)
Get us out of here.

Symmes nods and runs to the helm. Corsaire glares at Quincy, then Marie before following.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

George --

Quincy approaches calmly, but George keeps the rapier drawn. He's shocked his son holds a weapon against him. He looks around at the angry Crew surrounding him.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Stand aside. Or join them in the brig.

Alexandre reaches up to George and Marie to pull him up. He leans against them for support.

He takes the rapiers from them, one in each hand and takes a labored step towards Quincy.

Alexandre surrenders the weapons to Quincy. The two nod in understanding.

Marie comes to Alexandre's side and scowls at Quincy.

She and her husband are escorted below deck by Crewmen. The rest return to duty.

As the ship picks up speed, only Quincy and George remain still, staring each other down with fury.

EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - DAY

The *Brise-glace* sails through waters decorated with frost flowers. The raised bow breaks through thin ice.

BRISE-GLACE - DECK

Quincy and Anne watch the freezing Crew, hard at work.

BRISE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Corsaire steers the ship. Symmes looks over his charts and instruments. His compass spins wildly.

CORSAIRE

I need a course, Symmes.

SYMMES

I'm working on it!

CORSAIRE

Work faster!

SYMMES

I don't understand it! It's as if there are multiple magnetic points.

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - BRIG - DAY

Sitting in a wooden cell, Marie tends to Alexandre's injuries.

ALEXANDRE
Mwen regrèt, renmen mwen.
 (subtitled:)
 I'm sorry, my love.

MARIE
Non, non --

ALEXANDRE
Mwen mennen ou nan lavi sa a.
 (subtitled:)
 I brought you into this life.

She squeezes his hand.

MARIE
Sa a se kote mwen vle di ke yo dwe.
 (subtitled:)
 This is where I am meant to be.

She turns hearing movement on the stairs.

MARIE (CONT'D)
 Stay back!

George walks down, blankets in hand.

GEORGE
 It's just me. I didn't know if you
 were warm enough.

He offers the blankets through the bars. Marie remains guarded. Alexandre accepts them.

ALEXANDRE
Mèsi, George.

Alexandre wraps a blanket around Marie. She relaxes.

GEORGE
 I'm sorry.

ALEXANDRE
 This is not your fault. Piracy
 allowed the only opportunity for a
 better life.

MARIE
 But once we were in, there was no
 getting out.

GEORGE
 You didn't give up.

ALEXANDRE

We'd have sooner died. That was no
life for us.

George sits against the cell bars.

GEORGE

You pulled yourself out.

He looks at Marie and takes her hand.

ALEXANDRE

We did it together.

EXT. *BRISE-GLACE* - QUARTERDECK - DAY

The Crew surround the quarterdeck, restless and freezing.
Corsaire turns on a frantic Symmes.

CORSAIRE

I think, the men and I should take
this tub somewhere warm.

SYMMES

You can't! We're so close!

CORSAIRE

Look around! We're not close to
anything!

Symmes flips through his notes.

SYMMES

It'll be warm in the Hollow. I can
find it.

CORSAIRE

Throw him overboard if he wants to
stay.

Symmes cracks, stand up to him.

SYMMES

You work for me!

CORSAIRE

Freezing to death was not a part of
the deal!

BRISE-GLACE - MAIN DECK

Quincy watches the floating frost flowers.

QUINCY
Louisa would love this.

Anne turns him to the chaos on the Quarterdeck.

ANNE
Quincy, you might want to step in.

Quincy pulls himself away and follows her up the stairs. He misses a LARGE SILHOUETTE in the water below.

BRISE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Quincy pulls Corsaire and Symmes apart.

QUINCY
Enough! Whatever we do, we can't sit still on the ice. Symmes, do you have anything?

Quincy looks over Symmes's work. He points to a detailed illustration of a massive opening at the North Pole.

SYMMES
It should be here.

Everyone grows silent as the ship is rocked hard.

QUINCY
What was that?

They all run to the nearest side to look into the water.

The crow's nest bell rings. In the distance, the *Méchante* advances on them.

ANNE
(from below)
We've got nowhere else to run!

Gaining, the *Méchante* fires shot after shot. A cannonball skirts the side of the ship. One lands in the water above a murky silhouette.

The silhouette moves through the water towards the *Méchante*, growing larger.

SYMMES
There!

It grows bigger and bigger until disappearing underneath the *Méchante*. A massive *Machimosaurus*, a giant prehistoric alligator, emerges and rips the *Méchante* in half.

QUINCY
 (terrified)
 It's real.

CORSAIRE
 Fire! Bring it down!

The Crew shoots every gun they have at the beast to no affect. The monster bellows and dives beneath the surface.

QUINCY
 (to Corsaire)
 Get us out of here!

Corsaire begins to turn the ship around, but the beast emerges behind them and snaps at the ship.

The *Brise-glace* sails further north with the big creature swimming behind.

INT. *BRISE-GLACE* - BRIG - DAY

Quincy runs down to find George with Marie and Alexandre.

GEORGE
 What is going on out there?

Quincy opens the cell and reaches a hand out to Marie.

QUINCY
 We need you to steer us out of here.

MARIE
 You expect me to help any of you?

She clutches Alexandre.

QUINCY
 If you don't, we'll all die.

MARIE
 Good.

ALEXANDRE
 What's out there?

QUINCY
 You'll have to see it to believe.

Quincy squeezes George's shoulder, sighs, pulls him in for a hug. George pushes Quincy back. Quincy nods, exits.

Alexandre looks at Marie and the open cell door. She sighs and hugs him tight.

EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - DAY

The *Brise-glance* runs aground a mass of ice.

The monster swims beneath the surface underneath the ship. It emerges in front, breaking apart the ice.

BRISE-GLACE - MAIN DECK

Quincy runs out and takes in the size of the bellowing beast. His focus moves to the frozen mass breaking apart and in the near distance, a massive wall of ice --

-- floats above the ocean.

The *Machimosaurus* dives beneath the surface.

Marie emerges and pulls Quincy toward the Quarterdeck.

MARIE

Come on!

BRISE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Corsaire moves to block Marie, but Quincy pushes him away.

QUINCY

There's no time!

Marie takes the helm and maneuvers the ship through the maze of icy rocks. The Monster follows, too big for sharp turns. Quincy points in the direction of the floating ice.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

There!

ARCTIC OCEAN

The *Brise-glance* navigates the chaos towards a ring of ice around a massive hole miles wide. At the edges, water flows up and out, filling the ocean.

The ship turns sharply at the wall of ice, pushed away by the outward flow of water.

The *Machimosaurus* barrels straight for the hole and is lifted clear of the water into the air with the ice.

Floating above the water, it bellows and flails. It's tail hits the *Brise-glace*, flipping it into the floating circle.

BRICE-GLACE - QUARTERDECK

Everyone holds onto whatever they can as the ship flips forward out of the floating circle into the dark abyss.

INT. THE HOLLOW

The *Brise-glace* careens down the dark chasm and breaks apart as it crashes through a tunnel into --

INT. UNDERGROUND OASIS

Broken bits of the *Brise-glace* float in a very deep pond, lit by the burnt red glow of otherworldly bioluminescent plant life around its edge.

A waterfall runs upward from the pond through the cavern ceiling to the surface high above.

Quincy emerges from the water, gasping for air. He's followed by George, Anne and Symmes. As everyone swims for the bank, Corsaire and his Crew emerge and follow.

ANNE

What was that thing?

GEORGE

Where are we?

QUINCY

Is everyone alright?

On the shore, the party tries to catch their breath - until Marie hits land. All eyes turn to her, most unfriendly.

She grabs a sword off a Crewman with one hand and the hair of the sputtering Symmes with the other. She puts the sword to Symmes's throat as other Crewmen draw theirs on her.

SYMMES

P-please. Don't.

Quincy puts out his hands to Marie.

QUINCY

Stay calm. Captain Sambin, you don't have to do this.

Marie looks at the wreckage of her ship and the surroundings.

MARIE

I don't have anything left.

CORSAIRE

That's not quite true.

At Corsaire's feet lies Alexandre, cut up and badly bruised. He struggles to lift himself, but Corsaire keeps him down with a boot to the throat.

Marie eyes Corsaire's hand resting on the hilt of his sword.

CORSAIRE (CONT'D)

Let him go.

ALEXANDRE

Marie...

Corsaire increases pressure on Alexandre and his voice fades.

Marie stares him down. She moves the blade right against Symmes's skin.

Corsaire doesn't blink. Alexandre closes his eyes.

Marie sighs and hands the sword to Quincy. Symmes drops to the ground and crawls away behind the armed Crewmen.

CORSAIRE

Kill them both.

The Crew lunge towards Marie. She puts her fist up to fight.

GEORGE

Father!

QUINCY

Wait!

Quincy steps between Marie and the Crewmen.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

There's no time for this. We need to find a way out of here.

SYMMESES

But what if these pirates stab us in the back?

Quincy looks over his shoulder at Marie, fearless and ready to fight them all. She softens at his kind look.

QUINCY
 Restrain her.
 (pointing to Alexandre)
 He'll need medical attention.

Marie holds up her wrist and allows two Crewmen to tie them.

CORSAIRE
 (incensed)
 Medical?!

QUINCY
 (to Corsaire)
 But first. You men must recover
 everything you can from the
 wreckage and set up camp. We don't
 know how long we'll be stuck here.

They look around at the black and red cavern, the serene-looking pond and the glowing red plants bearing green and blue fruit.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
 Wherever here is.

Marie crouches beside Alexandre. He smiles up at her. A few Crewmen lead them away to the cavern wall. Others start pulling supplies from the water.

Anne catches Symmes, seemingly delighted despite everything.

ANNE
 Symmes. Your theory --

QUINCY
 Won't do us much good if we die
 down here.

Quincy walks away from the pond towards the opening of a tunnel across the cavern.

Symmes talks quickly and quietly aside with Corsaire.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
 Symmes! With me.

Symmes nods to Corsaire and follows.

Anne looks from Quincy to George with concern, and the two catch up to Symmes.

INT. GLOWING TUNNEL

Quincy leads George, Anne and Symmes by the light of a single lantern. They can barely see the path in front of them.

George reaches to touch the cave wall. When his hand touches the darkness, it disappears beneath it with a SQUISH.

Horrified, George pulls his hand back into the light, covered with wriggling worms. He YELPS, echoing in the tunnel.

Anne grabs his wrist and bats the worms off.

GEORGE

Thank you.

Quincy shines the lantern to the wall, covered with hundreds of worms that retreat from the light.

SYMMES

Extinguish the lantern.

QUINCY

We'll be completely blind.

SYMMES

I don't think so.

Quincy slowly diminishes the light until only he is illuminated. Then, he disappears in total darkness.

QUINCY

(in darkness)

Now what, Symmes?

He's cut off by a light that spreads throughout the entire tunnel. The hundreds of worms on the walls and ceiling glow a brilliant soft blue. It's like looking up at the night sky on an alien planet.

GEORGE

It's beautiful.

While the others marvel at the sight, Quincy presses forward. George furrows his brow.

FORK

The four reach a diversion in the tunnel's path. One route continues the light of the glowworms. The other seems to reflect a bright white light from somewhere.

QUINCY

We should split up, cover more ground. Meet back here in an hour.

Anne grabs Symmes and the lantern, continuing down the glowworm path.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

ANNE

You two need to have a talk.

George scowls at his father's grimace.

QUINCY

Is now really the right time for--?

Anne leads Symmes out of sight.

ANNE (O.S.)

(calling back)

It's the perfect time!

INT. FIRE CHAMBER

Symmes walks side-by-side with Anne by the light of the glowworms. She carries the unlit lantern and tries to read his face.

SYMMES

What?

ANNE

It's all true. Your theories.

The glowworm light fades as they walk deeper into the tunnel. Symmes remains quiet and avoids her gaze.

ANNE (CONT'D)

My future readers will want to know your first thoughts of your discovery.

He shrugs.

SYMMES

It was always real for me.

ANNE

But your life's work --

SYMMES

Means nothing until my former
colleagues, my family, everyone who
doubted me knows the truth.

The light is down to a dim glow. Anne takes a knee and
struggles to light a long thin match against sandpaper from
her bag.

Symmes walks forward out of the glow into the dark.

He hears a faint hiss, growing louder with each step forward.

SYMMES (CONT'D)

Do you hear that?

Anne strikes the match and lights the lantern.

ANNE

Hear what?

She throws the bright burning match against the cave wall.

WHOOSH! The flame ignites natural gas coming from the walls
and burns up a cluster of worms. Anne ducks down.

Symmes HOWLS and pulls back, his arm BURNED.

The lit gas blows above them in two perfectly straight thin
lines on either side of the tunnel roof - like the stream
created by an aerosol can and a lighter.

Symmes wraps his wound with a handkerchief from his pack. He
continues forward, unfazed.

Anne finds his lack of response eerie. She speaks over the
roar of the two fire streams, catching up to Symmes.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Symmes, you must have more to say
about all of this?

He walks ahead of her and points to his ear.

SYMMES

(shouting)
DIDN'T CATCH THAT.

She fumes and marches after him.

ANNE

(shouting louder than
necessary)
HOW ABOUT NOW!

INT. ICE CHAMBER

Bright white light reflects around the massive cavern filled with frozen crystals. Everything feels still and preserved --

Until Quincy and George stomp over the frozen ground. Taking in the sight, Quincy catches George staring at him.

QUINCY

George, this isn't the time.

GEORGE

I was just wondering if you're as freaked out by all of this as I am.

Quincy holds a strong expression, pushing ahead.

QUINCY

I'm terrified.

They continue over the bright frozen terrain.

GEORGE

You don't look it.

QUINCY

My father taught me to channel fear into survival.

GEORGE

Right now, I'm channeling fear into more fear.

QUINCY

Well, I was never as good a teacher as him.

They reach a short, jagged cliff. George uses the protrusions to climb ahead. Quincy follows.

GEORGE

Please. We both know I've always been the worst student.

QUINCY

I've been hard on you, but no less than my father was on me. You'll understand when you have a child.

George freezes. This hits him like a gut punch. He sighs and pulls himself over the top of the cliff.

GEORGE (O.S.)
(amazed)
Unbelievable.

Quincy climbs up to where George stares forward.

QUINCY
I don't understand ...

Quincy reaches the top and follows George's gaze.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
...what I'm looking at.

In the massive open cavern below, they see a towering *Platybelodon*, an ice age era elephant with an alligator-like snout under its long trunk.

It fights off a pack of six oversized saber-toothed *Hyaenodons*, prehistoric hyenas.

Quincy slowly backs up the way he came.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
We should get out of here.

George stares at the creatures, stunned.

Quincy swings over the edge and begins the climb down.

GEORGE
Where do you suppose all these
monsters come from?

Quincy points before climbing from sight.

QUINCY
I know where they're going!

George turns to see the *Hyaenodons* staring back. They run towards him.

George scrambles over the cliff's edge after Quincy.

INT. UNDERGROUND OASIS

Tied up back-to-back and gagged, Alexandre and Marie sit against a curved alcove in the cave wall.

Unconscious, he begins to stir. Marie tries to speak, but the gag muffles her.

When his eyes open, Alexandre panics until Marie manages to link her fingers with his.

He looks around, trying to get his bearings. He sees Crewmen dragging supplies from the water. Others clean and fix swords, muskets and cannons lining the shore.

CORSAIRE (O.S.)
(whispered)
Soon.

The voice gives Marie chills, her back to the water.

MARIE
Hmph?

Alexandre shakes his head. Marie turns her ear toward the curved alcove, and the whisper grows louder.

CORSAIRE (O.S.)
(whispered)
Be ready to strike at a moment's
notice.

Marie has a look of recognition and looks around the cavern.

On the opposite end against a similar alcove, Corsaire speaks with a Worried Crewman.

Despite being so far, their voices sound like whispers near Marie's ear, carried by strange acoustics.

WORRIED CREWMAN
Shouldn't we set up camp like he
said?

CORSAIRE
The old man won't be in charge for
long.

Marie's eyes bug out. She nudges Alexandre. He nods.

INT. FIRE CHAMBER

Symmes and Anne walk up an incline in the tunnel, lit above by the two parallel fire streams. They shout over its roar.

ANNE
How about a name?

SYMMES
A name for what?

ANNE
 For this new land you've
 discovered!

He avoids her gaze.

SYMMES
 I was thinking...
 (sheepishly)
 Symzonia.

Anne snickers.

SYMMES (CONT'D)
 What?

She chokes it back and puts on a serious face.

ANNE
 Nothing. Americus will love it.

She walks ahead to hide her grin. The fire's roar fades as they reach the top.

They overlook a large hollow area with ancient saucer-shaped ruins. The area is lit by torches from the natural gas.

They follow the path down to --

INT. RUINS ENTRANCE

Anne eyes Symmes's wrapped, burned arm.

ANNE
 Symmes, we can slow down if you --

SYMMES
 (snapping)
 No! We're getting close!

She stops, taken aback.

They stroll right up to the saucer-shaped structure. Anne marvels at its size and detailed etchings.

Symmes quickly checks the saucer's surface, pounding his fist in frustration.

SYMMES (CONT'D)
 Nothing here.

Anne runs her hand over a deeper etching, resembling:

ANNE

Concentric circles. Like your
hollow --

Symmes smashes the hollow globe from his pack against the side of the structure.

The wood fractures, but the metal concentric circles inside remain connected.

Symmes bends the metal to fit the deeper etching, outlining the shape of a left-facing sauwastika.

The shape fits, and Symmes turns it to open a sort of hatch in the structure.

They squint as bright light from within streams out. She looks at Symmes with a grin.

ANNE (CONT'D)

A way out of here?!

Symmes stops opening the hatch.

SYMMES

You should get the rest of the crew. Bring them here.

Anne rushes back the way they came, stopping above.

ANNE

What about you?

Symmes takes a seat and raises his injured arm.

SYMMES

I think, I'll take your advice.
Take a break.

ANNE

I'll be right back.

She nods and heads off. He listens for her echo to fade down the Fire Chamber.

Symmes runs to and opens the hatch, bathing himself in light.

INT. ICE CHAMBER

Quincy runs on frozen ground. George trails behind.

The pack of *Hyaenodons* splits off to surround them.

The biggest pounces on George and bites his leg. He screams.

QUINCY

George!

Quincy turns and tackles the creature, knocking it back.

When it lands, the ice beneath it cracks. The other *Hyaenodons* converge but stop short of the breaking ice.

GEORGE

We have to move!

Quincy helps George to his feet and runs as best he can with his arm around his neck.

The biggest *Hyaenodon* steps gently on the cracked ice. It HOWLS. It runs right for the men, followed by its pack.

George looks over his shoulder at the pack gaining right behind them.

The icy ground cracks beneath the big running paws.

Just as the *Hyaenodons* reach them, the ground breaks beneath.

A wide chasm forms as the frozen ground falls away.

One by one, the YELPING *Hyaenodons* slip and fall down the growing hole.

Quincy slips as the ground beneath him gives way.

He loses his grip on George.

The frozen earth breaks apart and swallows George.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Father!

Quincy scrambles to grab his hand but misses. George falls into the ice chasm.

QUINCY

George! No!

INT. UNDERGROUND OASIS

Anne walks past Crewmen milling about. Unnoticed by her, they turn and watch as she passes.

A water pot boils over funky colored fire made from bioluminescent plants.

She scoops some water, grabs a piece of fruit and walks over to the Sambins.

ANNE

This isn't right. When Quincy gets
back --

Marie and Alexandre try to speak through their gags. She sets the water and fruit down and pulls Marie's gag off.

MARIE

Look out!

Anne snaps around and catches the arm of a Crewman sneaking up on her. She surprises him with a punch to the throat.

Two more Crewmen run at her. She kicks one in the knee. The other grabs her wrists, and she struggles to break free.

ANNE

What are you doing?!

Anne breaks his nose with her forehead.

In the confusion, Corsaire walks right up to her, grabs her face and pushes her. She falls back and hits her head on the cave wall. Lights out.

INT. CHASM BASIN

George lies severely injured and dazed in a pool of multicolored fluid.

His vision is fuzzy with the multicolors around the peripheral.

A bright light overtakes his vision.

He focuses a bit to see a head-shaped silhouette at its center.

GEORGE

Are you an angel?

The silhouette moves closer. The multicolors overtake George's vision.

INT. ICE CHAMBER

Quincy paces the frozen ground and looks at the chasm below. Ice leads to various openings in the earth.

Across the chasm, a single *Hyaenodon* snarls at him.

He GROWLS back at the beast. It looks confused and runs away.

Quincy takes a step onto the slick rocky incline leading down the chasm. He kicks forward and slides down, in control.

INT. CHASM BASIN

Quincy reaches the bottom of the slide, steadying himself. He stands above the pool of multicolored liquid.

He kicks in a rock. It melts on contact.

Opposite the small pool is a massive wall of rock and ice. Near the cave roof, there's a wide opening.

At the base of the wall, there's a pond of icy water with a similar sized opening leading to the other side.

Quincy jumps clear of the multicolored liquid. He nearly stumbles back into the stuff before catching his balance.

He walks to the edge of the pond and looks up. The upper opening is too high.

He takes a deep breath and dives into the pond.

POND - CONTINUOUS

Quincy cuts through the water, swimming under the bottom opening into an underground aqueduct.

EXT. VRIL-YA CITY SQUARE - NIGHT

Quincy emerges shivering and gasping from an opening to a water canal in the middle of the impressive city.

The square is lit by natural light in so many colors it resembles modern day Times Square with Venetian canals and ancient Egyptian architecture.

EXT. VRIL-YA CITY - NIGHT

It's a massive, circular ancient metropolis built in layers.

Hundreds of feet above a lake of magma, it remains cool, closer to the frozen "sky" above reflecting what appears to be moonlight.

The air above the city is filled with hot-air "balloons" with baskets made from moon rock-like stone. The balloons open and close to catch or release hot air to rise and descend.

Flying these contraptions are the VRIL-YA, small, waif-like and white to the point of translucence.

Hundreds of these humanoids populate the city, wearing bright clothing made from glowworm silk. The females are bigger and stronger than the males.

CITY SQUARE

Quincy pulls himself from the water.

VRIL-YA passerbys gasp and stare. A few move towards Quincy, but he backs away, afraid.

He runs off down an alley.

CITY STREETS

Quincy runs out to the shock of more VRIL-YA. He's disoriented by his surrounding.

A balloon flies in close overhead. Quincy ducks to dodge it.

Quincy's at the center of looks and whispers of the beings on the street. Most Vril-ya steer clear of him

On opposite sides, two groups of strong-looking Vril-ya converge towards Quincy.

CHASING VRIL-YA

Stäwö!

Quincy surveys the nearest alley and spots an open window above. He slips out of sight.

The two groups converge and search the alley. Quincy is gone.

INT. VRIL-YA SILK FARM - NIGHT

Quincy pulls himself in just as the search parties pass below. He looks up.

He's alone in this place that resembles Louisa's sericulture shack where Vril-ya must harvest silk from the glowworms.

Quincy pulls on a cloak and hood, dimly glowing soft blue.

QUINCY
What is this place?

He slips out.

INT. RUINS TUNNEL

Corsaire follows Symmes down the narrow corridor bathed in moonlight from deeper within.

CORSAIRE
(to Symmes)
Where are you leading us?

SYMMES
(wistful)
To the promised land.

A step behind, the armed Crewmen and the captive Sambins marvel at the strange structure, decorated with expansive stone mosaics.

Symmes looks ahead, indifferent.

The first mosaic depicts a vessel like the saucer shaped ruins surrounded by the Taurus constellation.

The second depicts a female Vrill-ya, floating in a multicolored pool.

The third depicts massive flood waters overtaking the vessel.

Marie locks eyes with Alexandre and looks to the knife of a distracted, scared Crewman.

Alexandre shakes his head and nods to a large Crewman carrying the unconscious Anne over his shoulder.

Marie's eyes flash, ready to fight.

Alexandre calms her with a look. They both look around the group, taking stock of weapons and opportunities.

CORSAIRE
Your coin isn't any good if we die
down here, Symmes.

Symmes reaches an opening in the structure's floor with a stone staircase leading down through an opening of the cave.

SYMMES
Trust me.

EXT. VRIL-YA MARKET - NIGHT

In a hustling and bustling shopping square, VRIL-YA citizens trade strange metals and crops.

Even cloaked and crouched, Quincy sticks out as the tallest in the crowd.

An ARMORED Vril-ya looks in his direction. He pushes through the citizens towards Quincy.

Quincy ducks into --

INT. VRIL-YA GREEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Quincy presses himself low amongst the otherworldly vegetation of the Vril-ya.

Through a window above, Quincy hears the Armored Vril-ya reach his previous spot.

ARMORED VRIL-YA
(through window)
Jodhei altós mánnusos?

When he hears the Vril-ya leave, Quincy slinks away --

Right into MAQA, a female Armored Vril-ya. She grabs Quincy by the wrists.

MAQA
Juwe mudstos seqai!

Quincy puts all his strength into a kick to her gut. Surprised, she releases him.

MAQA (CONT'D)
Stäwö.

He takes a swing. She blocks his fist with little effort.

MAQA (CONT'D)
(frustrated)
Stäwö!

Quincy's face: *oh shit.*

He pulls a shelf down on Maqa. Plant-filled terrariums drop on and around her.

Quincy escapes outside --

EXT. VRIL-YA MARKET - NIGHT

Looking over his shoulder to the Green House, Quincy crashes right into six Armored VRIL-YA.

The six mobilize on Quincy as he scrambles to his feet.

Quincy fights as best he can, but his strikes barely register. The stronger creatures quickly overpower him.

QUINCY

Unhand me!

INT. VRIL-YA GREEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Maqa pulls herself from the mess and tosses vegetation from her shoulder. She stops at the door, seeing Quincy detained.

QUINCY

(through the open door)

Let me go! I have to find my son!

She hides from the sight of the other Armored Vril-ya.

INT. VRIL-YA COUNCIL - NIGHT

Quincy stands confined by shackles around his wrists and ankles, chaining him to the floor in the center of a courtroom, intricately designed with stone mosaics.

Observing VRIL-YA watch above him in colosseum seating.

Raised in front of him sit the five LEADERS. The center one wears a head piece indicating she is the CHIEF. She quiets the room's CHATTER.

CHIEF

Samis!

(to Quincy)

Kak vy nashli eto mesto?

Quincy shakes his head, bewildered by the sights around him.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Pochemu ty prishel syuda? Kto ty?

The Chief slows her speech, and he recognizes:

QUINCY

"Kto ty?" Russian?

CHIEF

Otkuda ty?

QUINCY

Menya... zovut... John Quincy Adams, President of the United States of America.

CHIEF

Why have you come to the Vrilya city, Mr. President?

Quincy's taken aback by her fluent English.

QUINCY

You know my language.

CHIEF

More importantly, I know of your people. Where are the rest of your crew?

Quincy glances around, feeling all eyes on him.

QUINCY

I assure you we come in peace.

A MURMUR rumbles through the assembly.

CHIEF

Offering peace while bringing death. We've heard it before.

Quincy's eyes go wide. He looks around at the mosaics decorating the chamber:

An saucer shaped vessel submerged with mountains and trees,

A diagram of the Hollow Earth similar to Symmes's globe with ornate designs near the poles,

The city with the magma below, sitting on a large pool of multicolored liquid.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Your people never learn.

INT. MAGMA LAKE

Symmes leads Corsaire, followed by the Crewmen with the Sambins and Anne shortly behind.

They exit the tunnel to a stone dock in the magma.

The Crew hesitates, but Symmes walks right across to one of a few floating stone boats.

Corsaire bends down and feels the dock and the boat. Both stones are the same moon rock-like material.

He pulls his hand back from the intensity.

WORRIED CREWMAN

Is it hot?

CORSAIRE

No, it's cold. Damn cold!

Symmes pulls from his pack the rock he presented Quincy in D.C. It is the same material as the dock and boat, plus the hot air balloon baskets high above the city.

Symmes gets into the boat and tosses the rock to Corsaire.

SYMMES

You haven't seen anything yet.

Corsaire tosses the rock into the magma and jumps in the boat. The Crew follows behind.

With stone oars, the Crew rows away from the dock towards the base of the rock formation on which the Vrilya City sits high above.

CHIEF (V.O.)

You are not the first human to discover a hidden Vrilya city.

INT. VRIL-YA COUNCIL - NIGHT

The Chief stacks book after book in front of her. Quincy glances around at the hostile looking beings.

CHIEF

An Explorer found us near the South Pole, bringing knowledge of your world. We learned the languages of your divided peoples, the histories of your wars.

QUINCY

Please! We are not warriors. We are explorers, scientists.

CHIEF

We showed the Explorer something far beyond your science.

INT. VRIL CHAMBER

Symmes disembarks from the stone boat and enters the hollow center of the rock formation beneath the city.

Corsaire follows with the nervous Crew and resistant prisoners behind.

Within the cave, they find a massive and seemingly bottomless pool of the multicolored liquid.

SYMMES

The Vril.

CORSAIRE

This is it?

Symmes nods and lowers his injured arm into the pool.

CHIEF (V.O.)

We showed him kindness and healed his injuries.

Symmes withdraws his arm from the pool. The multicolors fall off and reveal it to be completely healed.

CHIEF (V.O.)

But he misunderstood its power.

The Crewmen marvel at the unblemished arms. It even looks stronger than before.

CORSAIRE

Some sort of fountain of youth.

SYMMES

It's so much more than that.

INT. VRIL-YA COUNCIL - NIGHT

Quincy pleads with the Chief.

QUINCY

Surely, you recognize humanity's progress.

CHIEF

Your "science"? You invent new ways to kill. You explore new worlds only to conquer.

Quincy sighs and hangs his head.

QUINCY
What you say is true.

He looks the Chief in the eyes.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
But I believe in people. Our own
scientist sought you for --

The Chief cuts him off, tossing book after book at his feet.

CHIEF
Meaningless words. We too once
believed in humanity's potential.

Quincy spots a notebook with "Symzonia" scribbled on the cover. He picks it up and opens it.

Quincy's shocked by the first page: "Property of Captain John Cleves Symmes, Jr."

"Symmes"

QUINCY
Aw hell.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. ANTARCTICA COAST - DAY

The *Seaborn*, a sealing ship, sails as fast as it can through a crumbling opening in the cliff face.

Behind it, a wooly mammoth charges through the shallow water.

CHIEF (V.O.)
The explorer Symmes promised peace
but met us with weapons. We had to
hide any trace of our civilization.

First the animal is crushed by the falling rocks. Then, the ship goes down just before it breaks free.

The Blood Falls flow from the collapsed cliff side.

A single lifeboat floats into the ocean. In it lies Symmes, ten years younger. Bundled up, he rocks back and forth.

SYMMEs
(muttering)
Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

A group of Maori SAILORS in a "waka" canoe bump into Symmes's lifeboat. They pull him on board their craft.

He fumes in their waka as they row away.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. VRIL-YA COUNCIL - NIGHT

Quincy throws the book on the ground.

QUINCY
You're all in danger.

The Chief nods with the other Leaders.

CHIEF
A confession.

QUINCY
Not from me. The explorer, Symmes.
He's here.

The spectating Vril-ya chatter rapidly. The Chief quiets them down, banging on her podium.

CHIEF
You brought him to our hidden city?

QUINCY
Technically he brought me, but --

CHIEF
Prkska id kdptos!!

Quincy knows this has gone poorly.

QUINCY
(worried)
That's not Russian.

A door opens beneath the leaders. Two STRONG VRIL-YA emerge and detach Quincy's chain from the floor. They drag him away from the jeering spectators.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Where are you taking me?!

CHIEF
Somewhere you cannot hurt anyone
else.

INT. VRIL-YA JAIL

Carved out of the mountain, the chamber's only light comes from slits above.

Two Vril-ya GUARDS drag Quincy, resisting. They toss him in a cell secured with metal bars.

QUINCY
You're making a mistake!

They walk away, ignoring him. He slides down the cell bars to the ground.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
(sighing)
I come in peace.

Quincy barely believes it himself. He settles in like he belongs here, until from the darkness --

GEORGE (O.S.)
Father?

George steps into the light, disoriented. Quincy scrambles to his son.

QUINCY
George. You're alive. I've been searching. George?

George stands expressionless, arms at his sides. Quincy let's go, worried.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
We need to get out of here.

GEORGE
I've tried.

Quincy shakes the bars, but they don't budge.

QUINCY
You can't give up. Adams men don't quit...

Quincy trails off seeing George sit against the cell wall, knees against his chest. Quincy sits beside George.

GEORGE
I'm sorry I couldn't live up to --

QUINCY

You were right about me. All I thought about was how the people remembered me. My legacy.

Quincy's head hangs low.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

My hubris brought us down here.

GEORGE

You demand a lot from people. It's what made you a great President.

Some weight drops from Quincy's shoulders.

QUINCY

I'm sorry my Presidential duty took me away from my fatherly duty.

George shakes his head, ashamed.

GEORGE

You gave me so much. I've failed as your son. And as a father.

Quincy head snaps to George, stunned.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Eliza, Dr. Welch's aide. She and I--

He's surprised to be interrupted by Quincy's giddy laughter.

QUINCY

I'm a grandfather. Boy or girl?

GEORGE

Girl. But Eliza, I let her down, I couldn't be what she needed --

George withdraws. Quincy embraces him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I couldn't be like you.

The jail is rocked. Quincy tries to see through the slits, but they're too high. Flame light reflects on his face.

QUINCY

I'm getting you home to your family.

Quincy runs to the bars.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

Guard!

EXT. VRIL-YA CITY - NIGHT

Anne opens her eyes to see --

Buildings burn. Vril-ya CITIZENS scatter.

Corsaire leads his Crew in a raid.

Two VRIL-YA DEFENDERS grab a Crewmen and toss him like a rag doll yards away.

The Crewmen turn their canons and riffles on the rushing Defenders and blow them away.

Crewmen drag Anne, Marie and Alexandre, bound and gagged behind the offensive.

They fight against the tight bonds.

CREWMAN

Let's just kill 'em.

CORSAIRE

Boss says no one dies. Not yet.

Corsaire touches the flat end of a knife to each's face.

ANNE

(muffled, pissed)

Boss?!

She looks around, immediately she knows.

ANNE (CONT'D)

(muffled, even more
pissed)

Symmes!

INT. VRIL CHAMBER

Symmes frantically scoops samples of the Vril into glass tubes from his satchel.

SYMMEs

(muttering)

Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril. Vril.

INT. VRIL-YA JAIL

Outside firelight illuminates the cell. Sitting, George watches Quincy pull on the bars.

Vril-ya GUARDS rush past as the structure shakes.

QUINCY

Let us out!

The Guards ignore him and disappear from sight.

Desperate, Quincy looks to George. Still sitting, George seems defeated.

Quincy turns back, hearing a banging on the bars.

Maqa, in her Guard armor, jams a metal rod into the bars, using it as leverage.

MAQA

Stami awou. Stand back.

QUINCY

It's you!

GEORGE

It's you!

They turn to each other and back to her surprised.

QUINCY

You know this ... woman?

George joins Quincy and the Vril-ya, trying to pull the cell bars free of their hinges.

GEORGE

She saved me.

MAQA

We were healers on the surface in the time before the Flood.

She pulls the cell bars free. Quincy helps George up and out of the cell.

MAQA (CONT'D)

Men lived hundreds of years when the Vril was plentiful --

Quincy cuts off the history lesson.

QUINCY

(to George)

Time to go.

GEORGE
We have to help these people.

QUINCY
It's too dangerous. I won't lose
you again.

GEORGE
Father, we brought this danger. And
Adams men don't quit.

George stands tall next to Maqa. Quincy nods with a proud
look at his son.

QUINCY
(to Maqa)
This Vrill, where does it come from?

MAQA
The Vrill's source is the very Earth
herself.

QUINCY
And where would someone go to steal
it?

Maqa looks worried.

EXT. VRILL-YA CITY - NIGHT

Vrill-ya Citizens flee the Crew's assault on foot and above in
balloons. Buildings burn below them.

CITY STREETS

Following Corsaire, three Crewmen drag Anne, Marie and
Alexandre behind.

The three Prisoners each share a look and nod.

Anne and Marie shoulder tackle the nearest Crewman.

As he falls, Alexandre snatches the prone Crewman's sword.

In a single smooth move, he cuts his own bonds and blocks a
blow from another Crewman.

Anne and Marie hide behind Alexandre. He pulls his gag free
and points to a Vrill-ya home.

ALEXANDRE
In there!

Alexandre holds off the Crewman and Corsaire.

The third Crewman blocks Anne and Marie's run for the door. He swings his sword toward Marie.

She sidesteps the blow and extends her arms so the blade cuts her bonds.

As the Crewman looks like he knows he messed up, Marie punches him in the throat.

She takes Anne by the arm and pulls her into the home.

Overwhelmed by Corsaire and two Crewmen, Alexandre disengages and runs for the door.

He manages to cut down the Crewman winded by Marie.

INT. VRIL-YA HOME - NIGHT

Alexandre clears the threshold.

Ready, Anne and Marie slam the door and pull down a heavy shelf to block it.

He cuts Anne's bonds as everyone catches their breath.

There's a banging at the door.

MARIE

We have to get out of here!

ANNE

Where is "here" exactly?

Anne gazes at the weird burning city out a small window.

In the distance, tunnels are blown open by small explosions in the rock. The ground tremors with each one. VRIL-YA escape in balloon through those holes.

Alexandre looks to the window, a tight exit, then to Marie.

MARIE

No. No. No. We're not leaving you.

ALEXANDRE

You two can fit through there. I'll hold them off.

The door and shelf budge forward.

ALEXANDRE (CONT'D)

As long as I can.

Anne can't find the words, just squeezing Alexandre's hand. She climbs up to the window.

Marie embraces him, tearfully.

MARIE

We were almost free.

ALEXANDRE

We are free.

They kiss. He helps her up to Anne in the window.

As the two women disappear from sight, Corsaire bursts in with two Crewmen, all armed.

Alexandre brandishes his sword.

ALEXANDRE (CONT'D)

Come on, then!

He rushes the Crewmen, easily cutting down the first.

He defends himself against the duel attacks of Corsaire and the other Crewman.

The Crewman circles to flank Alexandre.

Alexandre turns and stabs the Crewman behind him.

Corsaire plunges his sword into Alexandre's side.

CORSAIRE

Filthy pirate.

ALEXANDRE

That's right.

Alexandre's other hand clutches a knife on Corsaire's belt.

He pulls it out and slices Corsaire's throat.

Corsaire's body falls.

Sword in his stomach, Alexandre drops. His breathing slows to stop. He dies smiling, satisfied.

EXT. VRIL-YA CHAMBER ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Maqa leads Quincy and George to an ornately decorated stone temple in the middle of a lush garden.

MAQA

The Vril is here.

QUINCY

Then Symmes will be too.

Quincy follows George's gaze. Above the city's burning skyline, VRIL-YA escape in balloons to various tunnels throughout the cavern.

Circling the city in her own larger craft, the Vril-ya Chief leads the evacuation.

Quincy stirs George out of his daze.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

We're not alone, son.

George and Maqa look to see an approaching BURLY CREWMAN.

GEORGE

Please, help us stop this madness!

Getting closer, the Crewman scoffs and cracks his knuckles.

Quincy rushes him, followed by George.

With speed and teamwork, father and son out fight the larger Crewman, swinging wildly.

Quincy goes left. George goes right. Quincy hits harder. George gives it his best. Both move in chaotic sync.

Behind them, four Crewmen descend on Maqa. She puts up her hands in peace, but two grab her.

She twists out of their grip and strikes each in the chest, knocking them back several feet.

She swipes the leg of the Third and grips his throat, slamming him to the ground.

In a flash, she uppercuts the final Crewman, sending him flying to a nearby roof.

Satisfied with their one knocked out guy, Quincy and George rejoin Maqa, totally missing her fight.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
(to Quincy, cheeky)
What about diplomacy over violence?

QUINCY
Adams do what we must.

Stirred, the Burly Crewman rushes from behind the Adams men. Maqa steps in front of them and tenses up.

The rushing Crewman hits and bounces off her like a brick wall. Frantic, he grabs at her.

He pulls a small egg-shaped device from her belt. It CLICKS in his hand.

Maqa throws Quincy and George towards through the entrance and dives after them.

She's just in time as the device EXPLODES in the Crewman's hand in a six foot radius.

BOOM!

INT. VRIL CHAMBER

Like a madman, Symmes scoops Vril into his last vial.

Maqa leads Quincy and George down a staircase.

QUINCY
Symmes!

SYMMES
Mr. President. What an amazing
discovery you've made!

Symmes gestures to the wondrous sights around them. Quincy approaches him cautiously.

QUINCY
I came looking for land,
opportunity...

SYMMES
We found it! Your legacy is
secured.

He rises a vial of Vril.

QUINCY
Not like this. Call off your men.
We can't hurt these people.

Maqa circles around to Symmes. She charges.

Symmes pulls Anne's pocket pistol from his satchel. BANG!

Maqa drops, shot in the arm.

SYMMES

They're not people.

Quincy freezes as Symmes waves the gun around, frantic.

SYMMES (CONT'D)

They're selfish! Hoarding all of
this for themselves!

George cautiously approaches Symmes, hands up.

GEORGE

(to Symmes)

Symmes, you don't look well.

SYMMES

I feel incredible. With this, I'll
never feel anything else.

Symmes pops the top off his tube and moves it to his lips.

MAQA

Stawo! You mustn't!

QUINCY

Symmes, don't!

Quincy rushes Symmes as he downs the vial. His skin glows as the multicolored energy pulses through Symmes.

With great strength, Symmes knocks Quincy back. George runs to his father.

Symmes approaches Maqa on the ground.

SYMMES

No more hiding these wonders. I
will bring them to the surface. And
I will be --

Symmes stops and holds his stomach in pain.

GEORGE

Something's wrong.

SYMMES

Please. It hurts! Make it stahaa --

Symmes vomits a beam of multicolored energy. He convulses as the colors spread through his body.

What used to be Symmes twists and grows into a giant monstrosity made of pure Vril.

The multicolored energy it emanates shakes the foundation with earthquake force.

Symmes grows and breaks through the cave ceiling above. Pieces fall to the ground.

Maqa is crushed by a stalactite.

George helps the injured Quincy run for the exit, narrowly missing the falling rock.

INT. VRIL-YA STORAGE - DAY

Anne searches through materials. Everything is strange, otherworldly.

Marie keeps watch. Through a window, she sees Vril-ya escaping on balloons through tunnels above.

Anne pulls back a tarp to reveal old balloons.

ANNE

I know how we're getting out of here.

Marie's hand rests on a table over an egg-shaped object. Curious, she lifts the egg and twists it.

It CLICKS. She throws it away.

MARIE

It's hot!

BOOM! The object explodes! It blows out the side wall.

Anne and Marie stare, amazed.

ANNE

Grab a handful of those things and help me with this.

EXT. VRIL-YA CITY - DAY

Giant Symmes bursts through the ground in his monstrous new form. Everything falls apart in the earthquake.

Tunnels collapse. Buildings crumble. The destruction kills scrambling Vrilya and Crewmen.

CITY STREETS

Quincy and George run out into the chaos. They look up at the Giant Symmes monster wrecking havoc.

ANNE (O.S.)

Up here!

Anne and Marie fly in low and erratic in a balloon.

Marie haphazardly maneuvers the balloon to the two Men.

George scrambles into the basket. He and Anne pull Quincy, running behind, up just as --

The balloon sharply rises.

ABOVE THE CITY

George looks around the balloon, tightly spaced with Marie, Anne and Quincy and a belt of explosive devices.

GEORGE

Where's Alexandre?

Marie focuses on steering.

ANNE

Symmes! Where is that traitor?

Quincy points her to Symmes's new monstrous form, destroying everything as it continues expanding.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Well shit.

The shaking earth collapses tunnel after tunnel as the last few VRIL-YA evacuees are too late.

One Vrilya balloon is crushed by rubble within the collapsing tunnel.

Another flies right into the closed stone wall and bounces off into the magma below.

Marie steers her balloon slowly under heavy weight towards the frozen "sky" above.

GEORGE
We'll crash!

MARIE
That's what these are for.

Marie kicks him the belt of explosives. Like everything, the sky shakes.

MAGMA LAKE

Below the city, the shifting earth disrupts the molten rock. This is a volcano. And it's about to fucking blow.

ABOVE THE CITY

Too heavy, the balloon floats near the flailing Symmes monster. Big and slow, it barely misses.

In her balloon, the Vrilya Chief circles Symmes and pelts him with egg-shaped explosives.

CLICK. BOOM!

CLICK. BOOM!

The Monster SHRIEKS. Each explosion leaves a dent in it.

Symmes swipes down at the Chief, sending her plummeting to the City below.

The party holds on to whatever they can in the basket, rocked side to side by the gust of wind.

QUINCY
Symmes is going to bring us down!

Over the side, George sees the rising magma. He looks at the terrified faces around him and clutches the belt of explosives.

Everyone shouts over the sounds of destruction and eruption.

GEORGE
Father! Tell mother - and Eliza - I didn't quit.

QUINCY
George?

Quincy moves for him, but George leaps out of the basket wearing the belt of explosives.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

George!

Anne stops Quincy, desperate, from jumping after him.

George falls right into the heart of the Symmes-Vril monster. He explodes on contact.

The energy is sucked inward like an imploding star.

The pressure ignites the volcano to full eruption. Magma overtakes the city.

Everyone crouches inside the stone basket. The outside cools to ice as the magma hits the balloon, propelling it up.

The magma melts the frozen sky into mist.

INT. VOLCANO VENT - DAY

The ERUPTION pushes the stone basket carrying Quincy, Anne and Marie higher and faster.

EXT. KLYUCHEVSKAYA SOPKA - DAY

The sun is just beginning to rise over the ocean to the east.

Lava flows up and out of the Russian volcano. Lightning flashes in the ash cloud.

The erupting force pushes the basket through the crater.

It soars through the air before splashing down in the nearby ocean waters.

EXT. KAMCHATKA VILLAGE - DAY

The volcano slows its eruption in the distance.

A fishing boat tows the basket with Quincy, Anne and Marie inside to the oceanside town.

The Russian and indigenous Koryak FISHERMEN and ONLOOKERS on the docks gawk at the strange foursome.

FISHING DOCK

The Russian FISHING CAPTAIN pulls Quincy up, the last out of the basket.

QUINCY
Spasibo. Thank you.

A KORYAK MAN points to Quincy, then the volcano.

KORYAK MAN
Vy prishli iz tsentra tvoreniya.

FISHING CAPTAIN
 The volcano is Klyuchevskaya Sopka.
 That is where his people believe
 the Earth was created.

Quincy watches as the eruption slows to a stop. Stoic, he tries to mask deep pain.

EXT. BERING SEA SHORE - NIGHT

On the beach outside the town, Quincy, Anne and Marie sit around a warm fire.

Anne raises a bottle of Russia vodka.

ANNE
 To the greatest story I'll never
 get to write.

Anne downs the vodka.

MARIE
Non! After everything -- ?

Anne's still drinking.

QUINCY
 Yes. This is a secret too dangerous
 for the world to know.

Anne stops drinking and hands Marie the half empty bottle.

Marie pours some vodka out on the sand and raises the bottle.

MARIE
 To my love. *Mon amour. Renmen mwen.*

She takes a swig and passes it to Quincy.

QUINCY
 George, I ... I failed him. I
 should have --

Anne puts a hand on his shoulder.

ANNE

No. He protected his family. He learned that from you.

Quincy raises the bottle.

QUINCY

To my son.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOLPH HOUSE - DAY

Quincy KNOCKS on the front door.

It's quickly opened by Eliza, surprised to see him.

ELIZA

Mr. President?

QUINCY

Not anymore. Besides, I understand we're family now. Just "Quincy."

She leads him inside.

INT. DOLPH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Quincy follows Eliza to the crib and sees her happy, healthy BABY GIRL.

QUINCY

She looks just him.

ELIZA

Where is George?

Quincy sighs and sits on a nearby chair.

Eliza's eyes start to water.

EXT. PEACEFIELD - NIGHT

Quincy leads Eliza with her Baby to the front door. Louisa greets them. She and Quincy kiss.

INT. PEACEFIELD - PARLOR - NIGHT

Quincy, Louisa, Eliza and the Baby enter to find John II, Mary Catherine and Charles, waiting expectantly.

Portraits of John Adams, Abigail and George hang around them.
Eliza smiles up at George's portrait, then to Quincy.

ELIZA

Thank you for bringing us here.

QUINCY

George would want his family
together.

EXT. LUDLOW PARK - DAY

On a crisp Ohio morning, AMERICUS SYMMES, 18, the spiting
image of his father, installs a stone replica of Symmes's
Hollow globe on a pedestal.

He touches the inscription and walks away.

The inscription reads: "Cap. John Cleves Symmes as a
Philosopher contended that the Earth is hollow and habitable
within. Died 1829."

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. 5 PLACE DU BOUFFAY - DAY

A child sketches an image resembling the Hollow globe. In
back of the Nantes classroom, JULES VERNE, 7, doodles this.

SCHOOL BOYS his age roughhouse.

A BULLY snatches the drawing from Jules.

CLAP CLAP! The Boys settle in their seats. At the head of the
room, cleaned up and proper, Marie gets their attention.

MARIE

(in French)

Enough! Boys, always in trouble.

JULES VERNE

(in French)

Do you have children of your own,
Madam Sambin?

BULLY

(in French)

Teacher isn't married, idiot.

Marie curtly takes the drawing from the Bully and returns it
to Jules.

She smiles, noticing the design. It's signed: "J.V."

MARIE

(in French, playful)

No children, Jules. But I did have a husband. A ship captain, lost on a daring adventure.

Jules's eyes light up.

JULES

(in French)

Do you think he will return? Like Robinson Crusoe?

She smiles at the excited boy.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURT - DAY

Anne stands trial before a surly old JUDGE.

JUDGE

Anne Royall, you have been found guilty of being a public nuisance, a common brawler and a scold.

ANNE

I call it journalistic integrity.

JUDGE

There is no integrity in slandering the names of elected officials.

ANNE

It's not slander if it's true!

The Judge bangs his gavel to silence her.

JUDGE

The traditional punishment for a woman of your ilk would be a proper ducking.

Through the window, they see:

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURT - DAY

An excited DUCKER tests the rig, a chair attached to a pulley system over the river.

He drops the chair in and pulls it out, dripping wet.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. COURT - DAY

Anne moves towards the Judge, but stops herself.

ANNE

Permission to approach the bench,
your honor?

JUDGE

No.

ANNE

Charges aside, this punishment is
obsolete and degrading to women --

He BANGS his gavel, but she talks just talks louder.

JUDGE

Enough! You're sentenced to pay a
ten dollar fine. Happy?

Anne shrugs, meh.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Just keep me out of your papers.
Court dismissed.

He bangs the gavel once again, rises and leaves.

Anne walks to the seating area where Quincy waits.

QUINCY

Tomorrow's headline?

ANNE

Definitely.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. STREETS - DAY

Quincy and Anne walk through the changing, bustling city.

QUINCY

I tried to pay your fine, but the
court clerk said journalists from
the *Journal* and the *Gazette* beat me
to it.

ANNE

Well don't I feel like the belle of
the ball.

They laugh.

QUINCY

You've clearly gained the respect
of your colleagues.

ANNE

The upside to being a common scold.

QUINCY

There's nothing common about you,
Anne Royall.

ANNE

Nor you, John Quincy Adams.

She smiles and links arms with him.

EXT. ANNE'S HOME - DAY

Quincy and Anne reach the front steps of the house near the
fire station. Anne walks up and looks around at D.C.

ANNE

I think, it's time for me to go
back to the South.

QUINCY

There's rumbling of secession.

ANNE

Exactly. Time to bring common sense
south of the Mason-Dixon.

QUINCY

If anyone can.

He smiles. She squints at him.

ANNE

You weren't going to say anything
were you?

QUINCY

Anne, I don't --

ANNE

Are the rumors true? You have to
give me the scoop.

She pulls out a pen and notepad. He grins and nods.

QUINCY

There's talk in the National
Republican party to run me as a
Representative for Massachusetts.

ANNE

You just don't know how to retire,
do you?

QUINCY

I've got a lot of work to do.

DISSOLVE TO:

SUPER: "19 Years Later..."

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - HOUSE CHAMBER - DAY (CIRCA 1848)

Old Quincy, 80, argues before the House of REPRESENTATIVES.

QUINCY

I have over two hundred accumulated
petitions which I intend to
present.

He talks over the groans of some younger Representatives.

QUINCY (CONT'D)

My constituents will not be
ignored! The people's voice must be
heard!

His voice cracks and fades. He clutches his chest and loses
his balance. Everything goes dark for Quincy.

SAME - LATER

Quincy opens his eyes as he's carried out. The
Representatives around the room stand and applaud him.

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - SPEAKER'S ROOM - NIGHT

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 39, leads in Louisa, now 73. Quincy lies on
a sofa, overseen by Dr. Welch.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

We've made him comfortable in here,
Mrs. Adams.

Dr. Welch squeezes Louisa's hand and shakes his head.

LOUISA
Thank you both. I'd like to be
alone with him.

The Men nod and exit. Louisa goes to Quincy's side.

 LOUISA (CONT'D)
Quincy, it's me. I'm here.

 QUINCY
Louisa...

He smiles at her. He looks around.

 QUINCY (CONT'D)
My sons. Where are my sons?

 LOUISA
Charles is on his way from a
campaign event. He'll be the next
Vice President, another Adams in
the White House.

Quincy looks confused and shakes his head, weak.

 QUINCY
George?

 LOUISA
Quincy... George passed some time
ago. John too.

Quincy's eyes water. His voice strains.

 QUINCY
George...

Louisa pulls an envelope from her bag.

Inside, she finds a photograph and hands it to Quincy.

The photo is of Eliza, in her 40s, with a 19-year-old GIRL,
who strongly resembles her father George.

 LOUISA
Eliza just sent this. There's your
granddaughter.

Quincy holds the photo preciously.

He smiles and cries happy tears.

QUINCY

This is the last of Earth. I am
content.

He holds the photo to his heart, closes his eyes and dies.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.