

NINJA ASSASSIN

Written by

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REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON a Horimono Tattoo as it is being drawn into flesh. The ink is needled into the surface of the skin, raw and bloody, the needled brush tapped with the precision of ritual.

The tattoo is in the style of a Kuniyoshi print: Miyamoto Musashi thrusting his spear into the writhing dragon. The image has beauty but retains the violence required to saturate flesh with art.

The skin canvas shifts uncomfortably with the needle-work.

HOLLYWOOD

Fuck! Fucking-shit-fuck-fucking-fuck!

PULL BACK to reveal that we're in...

1 INT. TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

1

A place of designer furniture, beautiful girls carrying towels, tea and cigarettes. Dozens of Yakuza look on as the process continues, sleeves rolled up or shirts off to expose the lavish tattoos that cover their torsos.

HOLLYWOOD, the young Yakuza member, is getting his first tattoo, a relatively small one on his back.

He grabs a bottle of sake and suckles it like a baby.

HOLLYWOOD

Watch it, old man!

The old tattoo artist continues tapping his brush. Maybe
a little harder.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

What the fuck? You're doing it
wrong.

TATTOO ARTIST

The needle is doing what the
needle does.

HOLLYWOOD

What's that supposed to mean?

(CONTINUED)

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2.

1 **CONTINUED:**

1

TATTOO MASTER

The irezumi does not hide the
skin, the tattoo reveals the
nature of the man and illuminates
the four noble professions in the
Book of Five Rings: the Warrior,
the Artist, the Merchant, and the
farmer. If there is a conflict
between the needle and the skin,
between the mark and the man, then
perhaps the path you have chosen
is not the path for which you are
suited.

HOLLYWOOD

What did you just say, old man?

Hollywood whips his gun out and jams it under the old
man's jaw.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

I know you didn't just disrespect
me, did you? You that fucking
stupid? You disrespect me, and
I'll tattoo this ceiling with your
fucking brains!

The old man speaks with a kind of deference honed through

years of service to men like Hollywood.

TATTOO MASTER

No disrespect.

Hollywood smiles.

HOLLYWOOD

You're lucky. I can't kill you
'til you finish this thing. Gimme
that mirror! How's it looking?

Goons and girls all cluck their tongues in chorus.
Hollywood peers at the new tat through the mirror.
whistles approval as Yakuza One enters carrying an
origami envelope.

He

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

Not bad. Not bad. For an old fuck.

YAKUZA ONE

Hey, boss. This just came for you.

HOLLYWOOD

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

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3.

1 **CONTINUED: (2)**

1

YAKUZA ONE

A letter.

HOLLYWOOD

So open it, dumb ass.

He opens the origami envelope, then hesitates at what he
sees.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

What? What is it?

He pours the contents out into his hand.

YAKUZA ONE

Looks like sand.

He tastes it.

YAKUZA ONE (CONT'D)

Yup. Sand. Black Sand.

The tattoo master drops his brush. It clatters to the floor.

TATTOO MASTER

No...

HOLLYWOOD

You know what this is?

The artist barely nods.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

Wanna let us in on the joke?

TATTOO MASTER

Years ago, I watched a man open an envelope like that one.

His eyes pool with fury at the memory.

TATTOO MASTER (CONT'D)

There were many with him and they laughed like you laugh now. Then it came from the shadows and their laughter was drowned in blood. You cannot bargain with what is coming. You cannot reason with it. Because it is not a human being. It is a demon sent straight from hell that will never stop until you are dead.

(CONTINUED)

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1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

HOLLYWOOD

What came out of the shadows?

TATTOO MASTER

I cannot say the word.

HOLLYWOOD

What word?

He pulls open his robe, revealing a hauntingly beautiful tattoo of a Shinobi demon thrusting its blade into a lump of scar tissue at the center of his heart.

TATTOO ARTIST

That night, one of their blades struck here. I should have died, but for an accident of birth. My heart is here, on the other side.

Hollywood peers closer at the dark figure of the demon.

HOLLYWOOD

What the fuck is that?

YAKUZA ONE

Looks like a Ninja, boss.

HOLLYWOOD

A ninja? Are you kidding me? That's the word you're afraid to say? Ninja?

As he starts to laugh.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

Ninja-Ninja-Ninja!

His laughter is infectious.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

You old fuck! You had me going! Ninja. That's some good shit.

His Lieutenant laughs hard with him until the top of his head disappears, sliced off from his jaw up, leaving his tongue wagging in space.

Lights shatter around the room.

Chaos ensues. The panicked screams of the fleeing entourage co-mingle in chorus with gruesome death rattles of Hollywood's foot soldiers as one by one, they are eviscerated.

(CONTINUED)

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1 CONTINUED: (4)

1

There's a RUSH of movement, more felt than seen. The whistle of swords through the air. Cries and screams. Guns that fire suddenly and are just as suddenly stilled.

STAY on the face of the Tattoo Master, barely visible in the thin trace of moonlight from a nearby window. Frozen. Immobile. As the killing continues around him.

Then: silence, broken by the sound of heavy, desperate BREATHING, and a MATCH being struck by Hollywood who looks up --

-- and sees a dark figures standing before him. Everyone else is dead. Only he and the Tattoo Master remain. The figure regards him with still silence. For perhaps the first time in his life, Hollywood is terrified.

HOLLYWOOD (CONT'D)

Listen... you don't have to do this! Whatever you're getting paid, I'll triple it! You hear me! I'll pay you whatever you want! Just name your price!

Their answer is silence. Hollywood sees his guns nearby. With a desperate scream, he THROWS the match in the air as he DIVES for his guns, grabbing one in each hand.

There is a whistle of metal and suddenly his severed hands are tumbling gracefully through the air.

The blade swings again, slicing through his body as if it were barely there, coming out the other side as --

-- Hollywood's body erupts as it falls in two pieces, splattering the artist with blood.

The match touches the floor and goes out.

The Tattoo Master does not move, has not moved. Frozen.

TATTOO ARTIST

But you are real, aren't you?

After a moment, the ninja emerges into the moonlight, the way a shadow coalesces into a panther gliding from the dark to inspect its kill.

The artist doesn't move, but his eyes widen, his heart pounding in his ears.

TATTOO ARTIST (CONT'D)

For fifty-seven-years, I've told your story...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 6.

No one ever believed
me.

The ninja walks towards him, his steps soundless. He
crouches down, his eyes taking in the old man's tattoo.

TATTOO ARTIST (CONT'D)

But you are real, aren't you?

There's the shing of a sword being unsheathed. The
artist closes his eyes, anticipating death.

Silence. He waits for the death blow. It does not come.
He finally forces himself to open his eyes.

The ninja is gone, having departed as silently as he
came, leaving death and blood in his wake.

CUT TO:

2 INT. ISTANBUL SUPERMARKET AISLE - DAY

2

A roll of toilet paper drops into a cart. PULL BACK to
REVEAL RAIZO, 20s, slim and sinewy, his expression
distant, almost haunted. He considers the toothpaste
options for a moment, then drops in one of those too.
Moves on to food.

Turkish Muzak plays in the background, a Beatles song,
"Helter Skelter" by way of Turkish musicians. Other
SHOPPERS cruise past in their own private quests.

Raizo gets quick, easy bachelor food: six eggs, a single
stick of butter, several handfuls of noodle packages.

3 INT. ISTANBUL SUPERMARKET - CHECK-OUT - MOMENTS LATER

3

Raizo waits while the CHECKER - a pretty young woman -
tallies up his groceries.

CHECKER

That's a lot of noodles.

(beat)

Are you a student? Tourist? Here
on business?

Raizo shakes his head to all three.

CHECKER (CONT'D)

When was the last time someone

cooked you a real meal?
(beat)
I get off at seven.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
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3 CONTINUED:

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3

CHECKER (CONT'D)

You could come by, let me make you
a proper dinner!

She winks at him. Very cute.

RAIZO

I don't think so. Sorry.

No smile. No emotion in Raizo's face. He pays in cash.
He picks up the bag and starts away when --

CHECKER

So if you're not a student, and
you're not a tourist, and you're
not here to work... what are you
doing?

RAIZO

Waiting.

CHECKER

For what?

RAIZO

For the wheel to turn.

And he exits.

4 EXT. ISTANBUL, STREET - DAY

4

Ancient gateway between Asia and Europe. Minarets thrust
up from the tangled streets into the bright Aegean sky.

The street is crowded with bicycles, cars and motorcycles
as Raizo makes his way down a narrow sidewalk.

OZUNU (V.O.)

Wherever you are, wherever you may
go....

5 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE - NIGHT

5

We're in a heavily shadowed room, lit with flickering candles as an older man, OZUNU -- hard-edged and unforgiving -- talks to his clan.

OZUNU

...you must never, ever forget who you are, how you came to be. You are Ozunu. You are a part of me as I am a part of you.

(CONTINUED)

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5 CONTINUED:

5

Beside him is a ten-year-old boy. His expression has the weight of stone.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

This is the truth of your lives and it will remain true after death.

He pushes the boy forward.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

This is my new son. I have given him the name Raizo. Welcome him as your brother.

The clan mummurs "welcome Raizo", bowing their heads.

One head remains upright, looking him in the eye. A girl roughly his own age. Her name is Kiriko.

5A INT. EUROPOL OFFICE - DAY

5A

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MIKA CORETTI, 30's, high-energy, a force of nature in human form. She enters EUROPOL AGENT RYAN MASLOW's office carrying an armful of reports.

*

*

*

MASLOW

*

What's all this for the Delgata case?

*

*

MIKA

*

No. This is Delgata-

*

Sets her pile down and she hands him one folder from the
ton.

*

*

MASLOW

*

And the rest?

*

MIKA

*

...evidence.

*

MASLOW

*

For?

*

Her eyes tell him.

*

MASLOW (CONT'D)

*

Oh no. Not again.

*

MIKA

*

You said you'd take it serious
when I had serious evidence.

*

*

(CONTINUED)

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6/4/08 8A.

5A CONTINUED:

5A

MASLOW

*

Does that evidence include photos
of the Loch Ness monster as well?

*

*

He chuckles. She's not laughing.

*

MIKA

*

You've trusted my research before,
what's the problem now Ryan?

*

*

MASLOW

*

What's the problem? Come on Mika,
it's like one of those questions
on an IQ test, which of these
doesn't belong; laptops, space
shuttles, nanotechnology, ninjas.

*

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*

MIKA

*

All I'm asking for is an hour.
That's all. Give me an hour and
if you still think I'm chasing
UFO's, I'll walk out and you'll
never hear another thing about
them.

*

*

*

*

*

*

He eyes her.

*

MASLOW

*

Why do I think I'm going to regret
this?

*

*

ON A DOOR LOCK as he inserts his key and HEARS:

LANDLADY (O.S.)

Oh, Mr. Nan, good, you're back.

Raizo turns to his LANDLADY, an older woman who looks up at him from the top of the stairwell.

LANDLADY (CONT'D)

We had a heating problem, and I had to go into your apartment.

Raizo nods, his expression not betraying the sudden tightness in his chest at this information.

RAIZO

Is everything all right?

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 8B.

6 CONTINUED:

6

LANDLADY

Yes, fine, it's all fixed. You keep it very dark and spare in there.

RAIZO

Ms. Ali, my privacy is very important to me. If you enter my apartment again without my permission, I will leave your building.

LANDLADY

I just --

(CONTINUED)

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6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

RAIZO

Good day.

He closes the door behind him.

He stands on the other side of the door, surveying the room for a moment with severe, unforgiving eyes. The place is monastic, nothing decorative, or comfortable.

Then, in a quick series of cuts, he checks all of the secret places he hides things.

A drawer is flipped over and a hidden bottom opens revealing weapons. A panel in the oven reveals his chain and blade. A hidden compartment in his suitcase exposes inky folds of fabric. He sifts through them as we hear-

OZUNU (V.O.)

You should have died.

Raizo, breathing hard, stands over another young boy that he has just defeated in a fight. Both are sweaty, dirty, scarred. The other children are lined up in perfect rows, watching silently. Most are boys, but a few are girls. One of them is KIRIKO, lithe and supple, a child's eyes haunted by an adult's sorrows and knowledge.

Ozunu circles Raizo as he regards his fallen opponent.

OZUNU

On the street. Abandoned by your parents. Without a home. Without people to care for you. You should have done as most children do, and gone quietly from this world, to the next.

(beat)

But, instead you fought. As you did here today. You fought. And you won.

As we TRACK with Ozunu, we see that Raizo's body is covered in scars.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Scars are the calligraphy of violence, Raizo. They inscribe the story of one's life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You survived because you are different. You are special. That is why you are here. That is why the Great Current, which flows beneath all life, carried you to me.

BACK TO:

9 EXT. BERLIN - DAY 9

Mid-day traffic, tourists strolling down wide avenues past war monuments and street art.

10 EXT. EUROPOL - DAY 10

Just long enough to ESTABLISH UNDER:

MIKA (V.O.)

It's a pattern, like the currents of the ocean.

11 INT. EUROPOL OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY 11

Close on a mound of bank records; rivers of numbers cascading neatly down perforated spread sheets.

*

MIKA

Some people see money as the root of all evil, but to me it looks like a fingerprint. Whether we're talking about 19th century Korea, or 21st century Iraq, the game is the same. If you want to understand why certain things are happening, you have to understand the flow of money.

MASLOW

You're excited, Mika. You know I get nervous when you're excited.

He would never admit it, but he enjoys watching her work, almost as much as he likes poking her about it.

MIKA

You remember the Eulmi incident?

*

11 CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

(CONTINUED)
6/4/08 11.
11

MASLOW

Korean queen, late eighteen-

*

hundred's. According to you, she was off'd by one of these ninja clans.

MIKA

Ozunu. I think. I've been going through some of the original transcripts of the trial of Kunitomo Shigeaki. The prosecutor questioned him about a payment of 100 pounds of gold. Shigeaki answered that he didn't know what the prosecutor was talking about. The question was never brought up again. But what pinged for me was the amount- the exact same amount rumored to be paid to the Hattori Clan for the assassination of Lord Sanda.

MASLOW

So you start to wonder, in this ever changing world, if the cost of a man's life has remained constant.

MIKA

Exactly. I figure these clans are like a thousand years old. They probably don't change a lot.

She begins flipping through huge reams of bank records.

MIKA (CONT'D)

I started looking at international wire transfers, targeting banks in the regions of several high-profile assassinations and bingo-

The proverbial needle in a haystack; a single wire transfer circled in red.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Minister Zhang. The day before the assassination \$1,555,999.90 was transferred from the bank of Shanghai. The exact market value of one hundred pounds of gold.

MASLOW

Highly circumstantial.

*

(CONTINUED)

11 **CONTINUED: (2)** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 12. 11

MIKA

I thought you might say that so I checked how often this particular bank transferred that market equivalent to a hundred pounds of gold in the last three years.

MASLOW

Let me guess.

MIKA

Not once.

He sifts through the report.

*

MASLOW

Okay you got me. This is interesting.

*

*

MIKA

The clans are real, Ryan. They steal children and turn them into assassins. They've been doing it for years and nobody's doing a damn thing to stop them.

*

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*

*

*

MASLOW

Look, no one's denying the historical record, Mika. But the whole idea just doesn't fit in with a modern world. It's like one of those questions on an IQ test: which of these doesn't belong in this sentence: laptops, space shuttles, nanotechnology, ninjas.

MIKA

They're real Ryan. You can call them spooks, or assassins, or whatever you want if it makes you feel better, but they're out there. They're killing people and nobody is doing a damn thing to stop them.

CUT TO:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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13.

12 INT. ISTANBUL LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

12

Close on tokens being rammed down the mechanical throat of a washing machine. Overhead, the fluorescent lights STROBE unevenly, the fixtures old and in need of new bulbs.

Raizo steps back as the washer begins to cycle loudly, a wheezbox instrument that rattles, gurgles and groans.

As he looks at the machine we hear:

OZUNU

Our enemies are everywhere.

12A FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

12A

Ozunu strides among his children who are bathing, scrubbing themselves with evergreens.

OZUNU

You must move without trace or footprint.

*

Young Raizo pours water through evergreens onto clothes he is scrubbing.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You must become shadow; Your scent
nothing but wind through trees.

*
*

BACK TO:

12B INT. ISTANBUL LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

12B

A pretty young Japanese woman, the only other customer,
calls to Raizo as she stands beside one of the dryers.

PRETTY WOMAN

Hi... excuse me...?
(catches his eye)
Would you mind?

RAIZO

...sorry?

She hands him one end of a freshly dried sheet.

PRETTY WOMAN

If it's not too much trouble,
could you help me with this?

He smiles and nods.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 13A.

12B CONTINUED:

12B

They begin to fold, corner to corner, end to end.
Silently. The fluorescent strobing above them.

We sense a strange tension between them as we realize
they are alone in the midnight cleaners. He looks at
her. She smiles. The uneven strobing on either side of
the Laundromat casts uneven shadows on her face... almost
as though she had two faces. One light, one shadow. We
EXTEND the silence for a long BEAT until he looks down at
the sheet and says:

RAIZO

What clan are you from?

She glances up sharply.

PRETTY WOMAN

I... don't understand...

RAIZO

You came alone. The Ozunu clan
would never make such a mistake.

Her eyes REACT as suddenly a blade flashes from beneath
the sheet, reaching for Raizo's throat.

(CONTINUED)

12B CONTINUED: (2) GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 14. 12B

He catches the blade in the sheet, twisting it in her
grip. She fights for control.

A fury of slashes and the sheet is shredded.

13 INT. ISTANBUL LAUNDROMAT OFFICE - NIGHT. 13

The night manager is half-asleep, watching a Korean soap
on Empress Min. When he hears a series of crashes, he
gets up.

14 INT. ISTANBUL LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT 14

He throws open the office door, wielding a fire iron.

MANAGER

What is going on-

The space is empty, glowing with fluorescent glare.

One machine is thumping loudly. He crosses to it.

As he nears it, bloody water begins bubbling up, flowing
over the top.

15 EXT. CURRY-WURST STAND BERLIN - DAY 15

Ketchup splatters the chopped meat.

MASLOW

And two cokes, please.

MIKA

How long have you been here? And
you can't say "zwei cola bitte"?

MASLOW

Denied. It was a long shot at best.

MIKA

But you said you found something.

MASLOW

A report. A friend of mine in Moscow, tipped me to it.

He slips an envelope from his briefcase and gives it to her.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

It was written during the height of the Cold War by a high ranking KGB agent named Aleksei Sabatin. In it, he raises the possibility that several political assassinations were conducted by an ancient but very sophisticated network he calls the Nine Clans.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Mind you, he doesn't call them ninjas.

MIKA

What happened to him?

MASLOW

Same thing that's going to happen to me, if I keep hanging around with you- booted out of the service for mental instability.

MIKA

Is he still alive? We need to find him.

MASLOW

Working on it.

MIKA

You believe it now, don't you?

He scoffs.

MASLOW

Ninjas? Are you kidding?

MIKA

Then why are you doing this?

MASLOW

No idea-

He finishes his soda and takes his garbage to the can.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

But I can guarantee you that it has nothing to do with the fact that you're the most attractive researcher that I've ever worked with.

He smiles and turns before she flushes a bright shade of red.

16 INT. ISTANBUL RAIZO'S APARTMENT - DAY

16

A teapot begins to sing.

Raizo pours the boiling water into a plastic bowl of noodles. He covers the bowl and waits a moment for the soup to cook.

As he stares, we hear.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 17.

16 CONTINUED:

16

OZUNU (V.O.)

The body must obey the will.

*

17 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

17

Several of the younger members of the clan are sitting at the table, about to eat.

Ozunu stands before them. He removes a small blade from inside his robe. Places the blade against his palm.

OZUNU

Hunger and thirst, your bowels and

*

* breath, even the blood in your
* veins, are the body's weaknesses.

The knife slices down along his palm, opening a split;
the flesh parts, yet no blood flows.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Master them, and you master the
self.

He closes his fist.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

This is the power of the Ozunu
clan.

He concentrates, squeezing his hand tightly until he
opens it revealing that the wound has closed.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

This is the way of the ninja.

The children look at each other, except for Raizo who
stares at Ozunu.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

* Eat tonight and you work twice as
hard tomorrow.

Ozunu leaves.

The children look at the soup, their mouths watering.
All around, the older Ozunu clan members eat noisily.
One of the children can't resist any longer and begins
scooping up the noodles. In short order, others do the
same.

(CONTINUED)

17 **CONTINUED:** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 18. **17**

All except for Raizo, who sets down his chopsticks.
Willing himself not to be hungry.

17A **BACK TO SCENE** **17A**

The grown Raizo looks at his soup. We cannot tell if he is going to eat or not.

OZUNU

The world feeds on the weak.

18 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE - NIGHTINGALE FLOOR - NIGHT 18

Young Raizo stands in the central chamber of the compound. The floor beneath his bare feet is made of thousands of carefully mitred pieces of gleaming wood laid down in an intricate pattern. They are not, however, glued down to the floor. The slightest wrong move will make them shift noisily.

This is our first look at the Nightingale Floor.

OZUNU

Suffering exists only because

*

weakness exists.

Ozunu watches from the far side of the room as Raizo takes his first step. Carefully. Graceful as any dancer.

He makes no sound.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You must hate all weakness. Hate

*

it in others, but most of hate it

*

in yourself.

He takes another step, and another. Each soft as a falling feather.

He is a third of the way across the floor - his body gleaming with sweat - when he steps wrong and the floor sings beneath him.

Raizo stops, a flash of panic in his eyes. Then he subdues the emotion and obediently lifts the offending foot, holds it out as Ozunu rises and approaches.

Ozunu lays open Raizo's foot with a bamboo rod. Slashing blows that leave deep cuts.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 18A.

18 CONTINUED:

18

Raizo's expression hardly changes. Ozunu returns to his place, and Raizo starts walking again, making no noise, and leaving no trace of his passage...

...except for a trail of small, bloody footprints.

19 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DORMITORY - NIGHT

19

The same evening. Most of the children in this place sleep on mats in the same room. They are exhausted, silent, motionless.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 19.

19 CONTINUED:

19

We FIND Raizo and though he makes no sound, his eyes show silent tears of pain, his feet still bleeding and bruised.

Kiriko looks on from her mat for a long, silent BEAT, knowing the agony he is in. Then, as if coming to an inner decision, she reaches under her mat for a leaf into which a thick salve has been folded. She crosses the few feet to Raizo's mat and, as he watches in silent agony, she puts her finger to her lips, then kneels down --

-- and begins applying the salve to his feet. Within moments, we can see the pain leaving his eyes. Finishing quickly, she folds the remaining salve back into the leaf, exchanges a quick, furtive glance with Raizo, then heads back for her mat.

He lays there for a BEAT, confused as to whether his diminishing pain is a good thing. Then he turns to look at Kiriko, but she lays with her back to him, apparently asleep.

He regards her silently for a moment, then rolls over himself to sleep as we come around to --

-- the other side of Kiriko, and see that she is very much awake, almost smiling. She closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

20 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 20

The apartment is dark as Mika ENTERS and turns on the lights. She looks the place over, then goes room to room, turning on every light in the place. The practiced way she does it makes it clear she does this every night.

Satisfied she's alone, she goes into the bedroom to change.

21 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 21

Mika is curled up in a chair and with KGB report.

She turns a page and sees a photocopied drawing of a very intricate floor that we now recognize as the Nightingale Floor. She reads the caption beneath it.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 20. 21

SABATIN (V.O.)

(Russian accent)

Historical evidence suggests that Ibn-Battuta's journey through the far east brought him into contact with what might be one of the oldest of the Nine Clans. He travels with a group of orphans that are being taken from a city devastated by war to the Shido of the Ozunu clan. The people of the surrounding province refer to the Shido as "The Orphanage."

22 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DOJO 22

We see Battuta, the 14th century Muslim explorer sitting among the original leaders of the Ozunu clan, watching two children fight.

SABATIN (V.O.)

Battuta describes a ceremonial dinner followed by a display of martial skill. The combatants were children neither beyond the age of ten.

Battuta masks his revulsion as the battle continues until one child beats the other to death. Small fists gleam with blood as one boy pummels the other.

SABATIN (CONT'D)

His host explains that a man's life must be made meaningless compared to the life of the Clan. Own the meaning of a man's life and you own his heart.

22A BACK TO SCENE

22A

Slowly the light in the bedroom hallway goes OUT.

She freezes, and the world seems to freeze with her. She doesn't move, doesn't breathe.

She forces herself to sit slowly up, reaching under her bed for a cricket bat. A car drives by outside. Could be nothing. Could be everything.

Despite her fear, she edges toward the door. Slowly peers around it. The darkened hall is empty.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 21.

22A CONTINUED:

22A

There is a ticking sound, like someone tapping at a window. Could be a tree in the wind. Could be something else.

She moves slowly through her apartment. Every shadow could conceal unseen eyes.

She comes to the end of the hall, where the overhead light is out. She flicks the switch on and off. Nothing. She reaches carefully toward the light bulb. Taps it. The bulb rattles, it's just burned out. She breathes a sigh of relief. Then she notices --

-- that the living room window is open, the blinds gently swaying from the wind, tapping against the sash.

She closes it and locks it. Looks to her desk, concerned. Did she leave the window open? Or is something going on.

She goes to her desk, anxious, to check on something. She opens a drawer, revealing a box of tampax. Pulls out the tampax to reveal a key... a place no guy would think to check.

She unlocks a drawer and takes out an unmarked DVD in a slim plastic case. Relieved, she starts to put it away...then stops. Is it the same DVD? She moves OS.

MOMENTS LATER... the TV is switched on, and an image begins to play, revealing a time coded security camera, recording an urban street corner in Japan. The tape is riddled with digital noise and artifacting.

Then, slowly, the digital noise seems to coalesce, to grow shapes. The shadows come to life.

Then with incredible speed two dark figures start battling it out, their blades striking sparks that are still descending after they've slipped back into the shadows.

They emerge over and over, brief flashes of clarity like the perfect arc of a calligrapher's brush describing the wing of a bird. Fight. Retreat. Silence. Shadows. Sparks.

Mika hits the pause button and moves closer to the screen, examining the figures.

One of the figures is wearing a mask, but the face of the other combatant is revealed, albeit somewhat obscured by the dim light and digital noise.

(CONTINUED)

22A

CONTINUED: (2)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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22.

22A

As we PUSH IN, we see that it's Raizo. But she doesn't know that name yet.

MIKA

...who are you?

She stares at the fierce beauty of his face and touches the screen gently.

22Aa INT. ISTANBUL RAIZO'S APARTMENT - DAY 22Aa

CLOSE on a bed of nails; sixteen penny nails arranged in perfect rows pointing up, the sharp tips catching the light.

As we REVEAL Raizo his breathing is rhythmic and deep, but this is really the first time we have heard him sound like he is straining.

As we continue to WIDEN, we discover the reason for this: he is doing handstand push-ups. On the nails. Over and over, with little apparent effort.

The hard edges and lines of his body catch the light, like the tips of the nails, as we HEAR:

OZUNU (V.O.)

Strength is the only virtue that nature respects.

22Ab FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY 22Ab

Children are sharpening their weapons. Ozunu walks above them.

OZUNU

Hone your body. Sharpen your mind.
Become the weapon you will need to survive.

Young Raizo looks up and sees young Kiriko looking at him. She smiles. He looks back to his weapon.

22B EXT. ISTANBUL - STREET - DAY 22B

Raizo walks down a street where repair work is being done. To keep cars from falling into the hole, they've covered the street with big steel plates. As the cars and trucks pass over the plates, they make a bump-thump sound. Bump-thump, bump-thump, bump-thump. We PUSH IN on Raizo under that sound.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 22A.

23 FLASHBACK - EXT. ORPHANAGE BONSAI GARDEN - DAY 23

Kiriko is working in the bonsai garden. Raizo watches her silently for a moment noticing that she is secretly loosening the wires, letting the branches ease back into their natural shape.

He whispers.

RAIZO

You shouldn't do that. It's against the rules. If they catch you --

KIRIKO

Then they catch me.

RAIZO

They'll put you in the box.

KIRIKO

Yes, they will.

She finishes releasing the branch.

KIRIKO (CONT'D)

I believe the heart of the tree knows which way it needs to grow.

RAIZO

Trees don't have hearts.

KIRIKO

Everything has a heart.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 23.

23 CONTINUED:

23

RAIZO

I don't.

There's sadness and bitterness in his eyes. He's closing off to the world, becoming what they want. She won't let that happen.

KIRIKO

Really? Let me see.

He hesitates, then approaches. Kneels down beside her. She reaches toward him. He flinches...a sword he can

Mika is at her computer doing what she does best: intuitively sifting through interconnected threads of information.

Searching through what is known about Ibu-Battuta, she discovers information concerning the lost chapters of the "Rihla," supposedly destroyed sometime in the 15th century.

She remains immersed until a sound grows louder and louder.

A vacuum cleaner. She checks the time. Very late. She looks up and finds two eyes watching her through the crack in her open door.

Startled she gets up while the eyes quickly disappear.

In the hallway, an older Asian man is pushing the vacuum cleaner.

MIKA

Excuse me? Excuse me?

He shuts it off, turns to her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Where's Jona?

He seems not to understand her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Jona. The usual cleaner. Jona.

ASIAN MAN

Ahh, Jona. Jona sick.

MIKA

Oh. Well, tell him I hope he feels better

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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24

ASIAN MAN

Take care. You should take care.

MIKA

...What?

ASIAN MAN

Work so late. Not good for you.

She smiles sheepishly.

MIKA

True...Thanks.

25 EXT. BERLIN STREET - NIGHT.

25

Mika walks down the empty street, the sound of her heels slap against the stone buildings.

The shadows seem to stalk her.

She hears a faint sound like metal claws against glass.

She stops and listens trying to see into the dark.

MIKA

...is someone there?

26 INT. ISTANBUL RAIZO'S APARTMENT - DAY

26

Raizo is practicing his chain form.

We begin to hear the sounds of another fight.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 26.

27 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DOJO - NIGHT

27

Raizo, is fighting with TAKESHI, a few years older, in a room lit by hundreds of hanging torches. Armed with katanas, the boys duck, dodge and weave around the burning obstacles as they fight.

They are both extremely agile, their bodies moving with the impossible flexibility of youth.

Kiriko watches along with the other members of the clan. If she feels anything as she watches the fight, we cannot tell.

They perform a vicious series of combinations, then Takeshi's sword cracks against Raizo's head, opening a huge gash.

Raizo hits the ground hard, blood speckling the mats.

Takeshi backs away as Ozunu steps in.

As blood flows down the side of his face, Raizo looks like the young boy that he is. Pain throbs from the wound, and he begins to cry.

OZUNU

Did Takeshi's blow hurt you? You
think this is pain? You are
mistaken.

*
*
*

He gouges three fingers into the boy's stomach and twists something inside of him.

Raizo screams.

His screams smear into uncontrollable sobbing.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

That is true pain. You must learn
to live with it.

*

He steps back, leaving Raizo writhing in agony.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 27.

27 CONTINUED:

27

OZUNU (CONT'D)

This is your first test. Survive
the night.

*

He signals to the rest of the clan and they all begin to leave.

Kiriko is the last to turn away.

TIME CUT:

Later. Night.

Raizo is still where we left him, a twisted knot of pain, his face stained with tears and crusted with snot.

He is trying to control his breath, at first without success. Then slowly, finally, it begins to ease. His hand, twisted into a kind of rigor mortis, slowly begins to relax, opening like a lotus flower.

TIME CUT:

Dawn breaks over the wall, as Ozunu returns to the dojo to find Raizo is sitting in a full lotus, completely calm, the wound already beginning to heal.

Ozunu shows a hint of a smile.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Very good, Raizo. Very good.

28 **OMITTED** 28

29 **EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY** 29

They are walking. Maslow is nervous.

(CONTINUED)

29 **CONTINUED:** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 28. 29

MASLOW

Last night I'm working late and I get a visit. Guy named Zabranski. Works upstairs for Internal Affairs. Just drops by. In the neighborhood- cup a sugar- how ya doin- kinda thing. Asks what I'm working on. Oh, this and that, usual blibbity blab, I tell him. Then he smiles and says-

30 **FLASHBACK - INT. MASLOW'S OFFICE - NIGHT** 30

Zabranski is leaning against the door jam.

ZABRANSKI

...Very Good.

His faint smile reminds us of Ozunu.

31 **EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY** 31

MASLOW

I don't understand what is really

going on, but I'm smart enough to recognize a warning when I see one.

MIKA

But why?

MASLOW

Why? It's obvious. If your little fantasy has even slightest chance of being real, then these Nine Clans would have some pretty major juice protecting them.

MIKA

What are you going to do?

MASLOW

We are going to tip-toe, very carefully from here on out. You understand? You don't do anything else without checking with me. Got it?

She nods.

MIKA

Did you find Sabatin yet?

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 29.

31 CONTINUED:

31

Maslow isn't sure he wants to answer her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

You did.

MASLOW

Yeah...he's dead.

MIKA

How?

MASLOW

Heart attack.

MIKA

They killed him.

MASLOW

People die of heart attacks, Mika.

MIKA

Was he married? Did he have a family?

MASLOW

God, you are relentless, aren't you.

MIKA

I know you Ryan, you would have checked.

MASLOW

A wife.

MIKA

Still in Russia?

MASLOW

Relocated.

MIKA

Where?

He pulls a folded piece of paper from his jacket.

MASLOW

Explain something to me first. Where is this obsession coming from? What started this whole thing?

She thinks.

FLASH CUT.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

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30.

31

We see Mika reaching out to touch Raizo's face.

CUT BACK.

She shrugs.

MIKA

Like your father said...It's a consequence of consciousness often interpreted as desire.

MASLOW

Desire for what?

MIKA

For the truth.

He shakes his head, handing her the paper.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Potsdam. She's in Berlin.

Mika shoots off as Maslow calls-

MASLOW

Mika! Tip-toe!

She takes several exaggerated tip-toe steps.

CUT TO:

32 INT. ISTANBUL RAIZO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

32

A shuriken blade grinds against a whetstone as Raizo sharpens the weapon with practiced grace...despite being blindfolded.

Sunlight is held back by vertical blinds.

When he finishes, he stands, a Rodin sculpted out of midnight.

We realize there are wooden blocks placed around the room.

In his palm, a single shuriken abruptly fans into many like a deck of cards.

Suddenly his arm whips around as the shurikens crack and split the thick wooden targets.

He stands alone, still blindfolded.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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32 CONTINUED:

32

OZUNU (V.O.)

These next five years will be the most important of your training.

33 FLASHBACK - INT/EXT. ORPHANAGE DOJO/VERANDA - NIGHT

33

One of the OLDER NINJAS is wrapping Raizo's eyes with a sticky gauze, like the tape used to wrap horse's legs.

MR. OZUNU

For an entire year, you shall live
without one of your senses,
beginning with the sense you rely
on the most: your sight.

34 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DOJO - NIGHT

34

Takeshi's sword slides from one position to another as Ozunu looks on.

Raizo, blindfolded, reacts to the sound, matching his posture a fraction of a second later.

OZUNU

A true Shinobi lives in darkness.
The night is his weapon.

*

Takeshi attacks again. While Raizo eludes or blocks several blows, for every two he manages to block, another connects.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You must see with more than your
eyes.

*

*

Raizo gets up, slowly releasing the tension in his jaw.

He takes his position again, and this time the stance is easy, his expression softer. This time, as Takeshi comes at him, everything becomes clear.

The whistle of the blade.

The zip of the leg sweep against the tatami mat.

The sound of his robe.

Combined with Takeshi's unmistakable body odor Raizo has everything he needs to dodge, slip and counter.

34 CONTINUED:

34

His chain strikes, wrapping an ankle, throwing a stunned Takeshi to the wall.

Kiriko tries to hide her smile.

Ozunu nods in appreciation.

Raizo nods back, as if he can see without eyes.

35 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DORMITORY - NIGHT

35

Young Raizo, still blindfolded is in bed. Trying to sleep, but it's impossible. Takeshi's snoring doesn't help.

He turns slightly towards Kiriko, as her chest rises and falls, her breath as rhythmic as and gentle as the lap of sea-water in a tidal pool. He begins to breathe in sync with her, perhaps in hopes it will relax him.

Slowly, all the other sounds in the room go away, until only her breathing, and his, remains. There is the slight murmur of their hearts.

Then she opens her eyes...and smiles at him because he cannot see her. But he hears her heart begin to beat faster and that brings a faint smile to his lips.

They listen to each other's breathing growing heavier, the sound of their hearts beating faster and faster.

Her lips part as she makes the tiniest movement...tilting her pelvis up, rubbing her hips ever so slightly against the blanket-

It's like tectonic plates shifting for Raizo.

Bump-thump, bump-thump, bump-thump their hearts growing louder and louder as they become-

36 EXT. POTSDAM - SABATIN HOME - DAY

36

Mika knocks. The cold war widow opens the door.

MIKA

Mrs. Sabatin?

MRS. SABATIN

Ja.

MIKA

I'm with Europol. We spoke on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 33.

36 CONTINUED:

36

She nods.

MRS. SABATIN

(stepping aside)

Ah, sehr gut. Bitte...please.

MIKA

Shoen.

Mika enters.

37 INT. SABATIN HOME - DAY

37

Sabatin and Mika sit across from each other. The house has the chill of loneliness. Tea has been set out between them.

MRS. SABATIN

You said you read my husband's report, yes? What did you think?

MIKA

I found it...illuminating. Especially the references to the Rihla. Your husband quotes passages not found in Battuta's present manuscript.

MRS. SABATIN

My husband journeyed all over the world researching that report, but when he was home, he never spoke about it. He said it was safer that way.

MIKA

I understand the report caused some problems for him inside the **KGB.**

MRS. SABATIN

The report caused "problems" for Alexei's career the way Moses caused problems for the Pharaoh, you see? Very unpleasant. Terrible people saying terrible things.

She pours tea, the harsh memories still fresh.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED :

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 34.

37

MRS. SABATIN (CONT'D)

After he retired...was asked to retire...we moved, first to Byelorussia and then here to Berlin when the wall came down. He said this will be a good place to grow old together. And it was, for a time.

MIKA

What happened?

She looks off, shakes her head.

MRS. SABATIN

About two years ago...two? Yes, after the assassination of Zhukov, the report drew attention. After that, everything was different.

38 FLASHBACK - EXT. SABATIN HOME - DAY

38

As Alexei supervises, workmen install locks, put in fencing material, hang lights and video cameras on the outside of the house.

MRS. SABATIN (V.O.)

Alexei hired men to change all the locks, and put in more of them. Locks on the windows, locks on the doors, locks on the locks. He put in cameras and motion sensors and lights...everywhere, lights.

The lights SNAP on, illuminating the back of the house with brilliant klieg lights.

MRS. SABATIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"There can be no shadows," he said. "No shadows."

38A BACK TO SCENE

38A

CLOSER on Mrs. Sabatin as she looks down at her tea.

MRS. SABATIN

I will tell you a true thing, and a hard thing. My husband was a soldier. A member of Russian intelligence. He had seen many terrible things....

(beat)

He was not a man to frighten easily.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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38A CONTINUED:

38A

MRS. SABATIN (CONT'D)

But from that day on, when the sun went down behind the hills...in his eyes, I saw the fear a child has of the dark.

(beat)

Then, one day, a man came to the door.

39 FLASHBACK - INT/EXT. SABATIN HOUSE - DAY

39

We are over the shoulder of someone who could be Raizo or Takeshi as the door opens revealing Alexei.

After a moment Alexi invites the man in. A security camera watches them enter the house.

MRS. SABATIN (V.O.)

They talked in Alexei's study for sometime. Then the young man left.

Mrs. Sabatin watches the young man leave then hurries toward the study door.

MRS. SABATIN (CONT'D)

It was unlike Alexei not to see him out. I remember being very scared. But when I opened the door, he was just sitting there. For a moment, he didn't even notice me. Then he stood up and kissed me and told me that he loved me very much. He said I should always remember that.

We see Alexei looking shell-shocked, eyes hollowed, as he stands and kisses his wife. His eyes begin to shimmer with tears but before he cries, he leaves.

39A BACK TO SCENE

39A

MIKA

Do you know what they talked about?

MRS. SABATIN

No. Alexei never spoke about it. But two months later, he was dead.

MIKA

Can I ask how he died?

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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36.

40 FLASHBACK - EXT. SABATIN HOUSE - NIGHT

40

The lights have come on outside his house. Alexei comes out, a gun in hand, shielding his eyes. Searching for whatever set off the automatic lights.

Then, suddenly: darkness.

And sudden MOVEMENT in the shadows that LUNGES toward Alexei.

40A As Mrs. Sabatin shakes her head, looks away.

Shrugs.

40A

MRS. SABATIN

The lights went out.

She looks to Mika. That says it all. She rises.

MRS. SABATIN (CONT'D)

You are the first person who has taken my husband's work seriously. It would be good to know that he did not die without cause. Come

with me.

Mika follows her into --

-- an adjoining room, where Mrs. Sabatin pulls the bottom drawer of a bureau out and sets it on the floor. From the darkness she removes a metal box.

MRS. SABATIN (CONT'D)

He would want you to have this.

41 INT. ISTANBUL RAIZO'S APARTMENT - DAY

41

Raizo sits alone. Crossed-legged on the floor. Utterly still.

There's an ocean of sound swirling around him. The cacophony of Istanbul evening rush hour.

Raizo starts to build a dam; auricular sandbags laid one by one, walling off the outside world.

The traffic outside- horns, engines, squealing tires, rattling trucks chassis- all fade away.

People shouting, singing. A couple next door making love. A baby wailing. Jackhammers pounding...

Slowly, the world fades away, until there is only one sound. Faint, familiar, but almost too quiet to hear...

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 37.

41 CONTINUED:

41

Raizo's heartbeat.

He listens to it. Meditates on its simple rhythm...

Until a sound explodes in the room, it is a sound we haven't heard in his apartment-

A phone.

He rises slowly as the phone continues to ring. He answers it silently waiting for something-

The line clicks and goes dead.

42 EXT. ISTANBUL STREET SOUK - DAY

42

Raizo walks through the crowded market. Shoppers, salesmen and tourists fill the narrow aisles between the stalls.

FIVE CHILDREN- who we see only from the back- run past. Shouting laughing. The last one jostles against Raizo as he goes by.

Raizo keeps walking, but he is holding an envelope in his hand. He slips it into his pocket.

43 EXT. ISTANBUL STREET - DAY 43

Raizo opens the envelope as he crosses the street. There's a square of paper inside, and a photograph.

On the paper is a street address in Berlin. The photograph is a close-up of a woman's face...

Mika.

44 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY 44

Close on the box. It sits on her desk, calling as another box once called to Pandora.

She opens it.

Inside are a series of cataloged photographs taken in the style of 1970's archeologists (like those of the dead sea scrolls) of the lost chapter of Ibn-Battuta.

The scrolls contain his 14th century Islamic writing and several sketches.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 38.

44 CONTINUED: 44

There is also a very rough map that suggests the location of The Orphanage.

Images of the orphanage, of the children training and their ordeals, bloody combat, ritual bindings, beatings on the Nightingale floor.

There is a scroll that she unrolls revealing the lineage tree of the Nine Clans.

Also in the box is a single VHS tape.

She pushes the tape into the player.

It's a recording of a surveillance camera staring at the front of the Sabatin house.

A man walks up to the house and rings's the bell. We cannot see his face. Sabatin opens the door. They exchange words. Sabatin seems wary but invites the man in.

Mika doesn't understand why this is significant.

She hits fast forward until she sees a flash as the man exits. She stops, rewinds and plays it again. *

As he steps out of the shadow of the house, she sees his face-

It is Raizo.

She is startled when someone pounds on the door. It seems like it might rattle off its hinges as she hurries to open it revealing-

Maslow and he's not happy.

MASLOW (O.S.)

You lied to me.

He pushes into the room and slams the door behind him.

MIKA

What're you --

MASLOW

I told you to stop using my confirmation code.

MIKA

I did --

MASLOW

Dammit, Mika -- *

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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MIKA

* ...I'm sorry, it was the only way
* I could get the evidence.

MASLOW

Shit....

MIKA

What happened?

MASLOW

What happened? Everything's
fucking happened.

He tries to dial it down, succeeds, but only a little.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

When you were slapping my code all
over town like some phone number
in a bathroom, did you happen to
notice the classification code on
the cases you were digging
through?

She knows.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

What did it say?

MIKA

(quietly) DNP.

MASLOW

That's right. DNP. DO NOT
FUCKING PURSUE!

MIKA

(quietly)
Actually that would be DNFP --

45 FLASH-IMAGE - INT. MASLOW'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

45

We SEE men and women in dark suits, their expressions
deadly serious, tossing through everything he has in the
place.

45A BACK TO SCENE

45A

MASLOW

Right now there are people from

internal affairs, CIA, Homeland Security and for all I know the Martian Fucking Military in my office tearing the place apart.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45A CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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45A

MASLOW (CONT'D)

I don't know what they're looking for but I think you do.

She shifts nervously, no poker face. She turns and leads him into her home office.

With the key from the tampax box she opens the drawer.

Maslow watches as she pulls out the contents of Sabatin's box as well as the illegally requisitioned evidence.

MIKA

Most of this is from Sabatin. Copies of what I think are the lost chapters of the Rihle. I think it describes the original location of the Ozunu Clan but my 14th century Arabic is a little rusty.

MASLOW

And this?

Meaning the DVD.

MIKA

That's how it started. I made a mistake, mixed up the case code and they sent me that.

A moment later the DVD is playing, Raizo and the other ninja dancing through the shadows.

MASLOW

...Christ.

MIKA

Yeah. I know. I don't understand why they're fighting though. It could be a clan war.

Maslow starts to put it together.

MASLOW

So you requisitioned this by accident. You used my code which is why you didn't want to show me this. Which is also why they're tearing apart my office right now.

MIKA

I'm sorry Ryan. You have to know I didn't mean for you to get in trouble...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45A CONTINUED: (2)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 41.

45A

MIKA (CONT'D)

I just thought if this was real, if these clans were killing people, you know, it was our job to try to stop them.

He eyes her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Isn't that what your dad would do?

MASLOW

Okay, that's low.

MIKA

Look, I know I broke the rules. I'll explain what I did and accept the consequences.

MASLOW

Very noble of you but I've got the feeling this isn't a slap-on-the-wrist kinda consequence. Let me take this and try to make some sense of this shitstorm you started. In the meantime, you will not say anything to anybody. Capiche?

She nods.

46 INT. PASSPORT CONTROL AIRPORT - DAY

46

Close on Raizo's fake passport.

PASSPORT OFFICIAL

Are you coming to Berlin for
business or pleasure Mr. Han

Raizo smiles

RAIZO

Pleasure.

47 INT. MIKA'S OFFICE - DAY

47

She's at her computer, studying a topographical map of
Japan, trying to relate the Ibu-Battuta's drawing to it.

Suddenly she realizes she is not alone;

Zabranski is leaning against the door jam. He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

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47 CONTINUED:

47

ZABRANSKI

Boy you're like a dog with a bone
on that computer aren't you?

MIKA

Excuse me? Who are you?

He reaches across her desk.

ZABRANSKI

Agent Zabranski. Internal
affairs. Need to ask you a couple
of questions. You are Mika
Coretti, yeah?

She nods, her gut clenching. He pulls out a small
notebook.

ZABRANSKI (CONT'D)

Forensic researcher. You work a
lot with an Agent...Maslow. That
right?

MIKA

...A few cases.

ZABRANSKI

You have something of a social
relationship.

MIKA

What?

ZABRANSKI

You had lunch with him on the 13th
and again on the 18th.

MIKA

How do you know that?

ZABRANSKI

Is it not true?

MIKA

I...I'm not sure. We do have
lunch together sometimes, usually
when we're working-

ZABRANSKI

Are you working on something with
him right now?

A beat.

(CONTINUED)

47 **CONTINUED: (2)** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 43. **47**

MIKA

No...not right now.

ZABRANSKI

Has Agent Maslow seemed different
lately, in any way? Has he done
or said anything that struck you
as unusual?

MIKA

No why. Has Agent Maslow done
something?

He smiles in the way a piranha might smile if it could.

ZABRANSKI

Just routine. The agency cares
about its field operatives. We
monitor for signs of stress,
fatigue, mental exhaustion. Agent
Maslow has a serious case load.
That much work can wear on a man.

He leaves.

She gets up and closes her door. She grabs her phone and calls Maslow.

MASLOW (V.O.)

This is Ryan Maslow. Leave a number-

She disconnects then texts.

TEXT: 911. CALL ME. M

48 INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT
48

It is later. The garage is a gyre of shadows. Mika walks towards her car.

The fluorescent light flickers and goes out. She stands in the dark.

MIKA

Come on...you're kidding me.

It flickers back on. She continues to her car.

49 INT. PARKING GARAGE CAR - NIGHT
49

She gets in as a shadow leaps to life behind her. She starts to scream when she realizes it's-

(CONTINUED)

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49 CONTINUED:

49

Maslow.

MASLOW

Sssshhhhhh. Sorry, Mika.

MIKA

Fucking Christ, Ryan-

MASLOW

I couldn't talk earlier. They're watching me.

MIKA

Zabranski came to my office.
Asking about you.

He nods.

MASLOW

I know how Sabatin must have felt.

MIKA

What happened?

MASLOW

I showed Jamison the materials.

MIKA

What did he say?

50 INT. JAMISON'S OFFICE - DAY

50

A typical autocrat.

JAMISON

This agency is subject to the
International laws and agreements
that govern the jurisdiction of
our authority. If a case is
marked DNP we must respect the
jurisprudence of the regional
government and act accordingly.

MASLOW

I understand that sir but-

JAMISON

Let me be clear, Agent Maslow. In
the eyes of the law these
materials do not exist. If so,
than there is no case and if there
is no case there is no reason for
this conversation to continue.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 45.

51 INT. PARKING GARAGE CAR - NIGHT

51

MIKA

He took the materials?

MASLOW

Come on Mika, how could he take
something that didn't exist? He

couldn't. Which means that I
couldn't copy it either, and if I
couldn't copy it than I can't be
violating international laws and
agreements by still having it.

She likes this guy.

MIKA

What are we going to do?

MASLOW

Your going to go home. Pack your
bags and go on holiday.

MIKA

No way-

MASLOW

Don't fucking argue with me, Mika.
I trusted you. Now you've got to
trust me.

MIKA

Ryan, I can't let you lose your
job because of me-

MASLOW

I'm not talking about my job,
Mika.

He hands her a Glock and two spare clips.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Take this. It's clean, no serial
number. Untraceable.

MIKA

I've never even fired one of
these.

MASLOW

(pointing) This is the bad end.
This is the end you hold. Point,
shoot, run like hell.

He also gives her a phone.

(CONTINUED)

I'm going to try to find some help. Until then, I need you gone. Don't tell anyone where you're going, just go. Use this phone to text me when you get there, or if you have any problems.

MIKA

Ryan...

MASLOW

I know. It's unbelievable. I've investigated, world bank officials, drug cartels, arms dealers, and I've never faced this kind of heat. For ninjas. Fucking unbelievable!

He shakes his head and slips out the door.

52 EXT. MIKA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

52

Mika parks her car around the corner from the apartment building, gets out and starts down the street when she sees --

-- the apartment building and the one next door are dark. Candles and flashlights are visible in some of the apartment windows, a scattering of neighbors congregating outside. Mika approaches a NEIGHBOR.

MIKA

Hey....

NEIGHBOR

Hi.

MIKA

What happened?

NEIGHBOR

Power's out. Us, the building behind us, that one across the street. Seems like every few months, boom, the lights out. I call, I complain, they listen...nothing gets done. So I sit out here, at least it's cool.

Mika looks up at the building, scared but not ready to believe that ninjas are responsible for everything. She

pulls a tiny LED flashlight out of her bag and starts into the building.

(CONTINUED)

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52 CONTINUED:

52

NEIGHBOR (CONT'D)

Watch your step.

MIKA

You're not the first person to give me that advice today....

And she continues into --

53 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - NIGHT

53

-- where she climbs the steps, each creak adding to the possibility of attracting trouble. On the passing floors, we hear doors being opened and shut, footsteps, the distant murmur of voices. Could be nothing. Could be everything. She presses on.

54 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

54

She opens the door to her apartment, shining the tiny light ahead of her. Shadows chase each other across the room as she swings the light one way, then another. There seems to be no one else in the place. But as she hurries into her home office, we see --

A shadow move behind her.

As she packs she begins to hear something, a tapping. The same sound she heard before. She pulls the gun from her purse. With the flashlight spearing the darkness, she goes to her office.

Again the window is open, the blinds gently blowing against the sash.

She is certain the window had been locked.

Now every shadow is alive.

She rushes back to her bedroom aiming in every direction. Her flashlight finds her suitcase. On the top of her clothes she sees it: An envelope. Perfectly centered.

Setting the gun down, she picks up the oragami-folded

envelope. Opens it with a shaking finger.

Black sand spills out.

Terror steals her breath. Behind her, a shadow tilts and reveals the eyes of a ninja.

Before she can even move, a blade flashes from the darkness, heading for her neck-

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

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54 CONTINUED:

54

Another shadow blocks the blade, knocking Mika over the bed.

The sounds of a fight erupt all around her but the combatants are almost invisible in the surrounding darkness.

Her flashlight catches glimpses. Impossibly fast, lethal predators trying to kill each other.

She crawls towards the spilled contents of her suitcase, towards the gun. Another blow arcs for her and is again blocked.

Her hand finds the handle of the gun. She points into the dark, fires.

The gun flash strobos the room, freezing the two ninjas in the blink of a flashbulb.

They move towards her until a kick sends her gun flying.

She can feel them fighting very close to her and when she finds them with her flashlight, a blade is struck deep-

Blood erupts. One shadow falls to the ground.

The other turns towards her. Her flashlight shakes as the ninja reaches up and removes his mask.

It is Raizo.

He sees in her eyes that she knows him.

RAIZO

You know me?

She nods.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

How?

MIKA

...security camera in New York.

*

Recorded you fighting...one of

*

them.

*

She glances at the dead ninja.

*

RAIZO

*

You know about them?

*

MIKA

A little.

*

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08

48A.

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

He waits.

*

MIKA (CONT'D)

*

Uhh-- Well, there are these
clans...we're not sure how many.

*

*

RAIZO

*

Nine.

*

MIKA

*

Okay. Nine. Nine clans. And
they apparently have been
supplying assassins to governments
or anyone who happens to have one
hundred pounds of gold lying
around for the last thousand
years. Give or take.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

He nods faintly. Then turns to his dead "Brother".

*

RAIZO

*

His name was Jin.

*

MIKA

*

You knew him?

*

RAIZO

He was not born an "Assassin".

She looks at the dead body.

MIKA

...you're from his clan ?

His nod is almost imperceptible.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Then...why did you stop him?

RAIZO

The clans have three kinds of people! People with power. People with money. Or people hunting them.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 49.

54 CONTINUED: (3)

54

He hears something she can't. She starts to speak, and he stops her with a gesture.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

They're coming.

MIKA

Who?

RAIZO

The Hanta-Kirra.

MIKA

Does that mean what I think it means?

RAIZO

They won't stop until you are dead.

MIKA

Oh god.

She looks for her gun.

RAIZO

The gun won't help you.

MIKA

I don't have a lot of options okay. I once took a Tae Bo class, but that's the extent of my Kung Fu abilities.

RAIZO

I can help but you must tell me something first. *

MIKA

What?

RAIZO

You saw Ms. Sabatin. *

MIKA *

How did you know that? *

RAIZO *

I've been watching you, waiting for them. *

She tries to compute the idea that he's been following her. *

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 50.

54 CONTINUED: (4)

54

RAIZO (CONT'D) *

Did she give you something? *

She nods, Raizo's eyes lite up.

RAIZO (CONT'D) *

You have them?

Shakes her head "no."

MIKA

But I can get them.

He hears something else.

RAIZO

We need something black. Hurry! *

She runs with the flashlight to a bureau. Inside is a black tablecloth. He pulls her shoes off.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Follow me. Step where I step.

55 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - NIGHT 55

He leads her down through the stairwell of the large walk up. She follows him step by step.

Suddenly he pulls her into the corner of a doorway. Wrapping the tablecloth around them, they melt into darkness.

Beneath the wrap, he puts his hand over her mouth and nose stopping her breath.

Outside after a long beat a ninja's foot silently glides past, climbing the stairs.

Inside he releases her nose. Before she can finish taking a breath he yanks her up and they quickly descend the remaining stairs.

56 INT. MIKA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 56

The dead ninja lies in a pool of blood.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 51.

56 CONTINUED: 56

The shadows come alive and four dark figures emerge, born from the black-

The Hanta Kirra.

Their leader drifts forward surveying the apartment, his dark eyes flashing that we recognize.

Like snap-focus flashes taking in the myriad signs of the fight: the bullets in the wall, footprints, and shattered lights. One of the killers uses his sword to trace the line of a slashing cut in wall. Braille from the blow that Raizo used to cut the ninja.

He removes his mask and we see it's Takeshi.

TAKESHI

Raizo.

Another Ninja leans forward and tastes the air with his nose. Eyes closed. Like a dog getting the scent, his inhalation a long, low whisper in the silent room.

DOG NINJA

He's taken the girl.

Takeshi nods turning to the windows. He smiles; A hunter who knows the hunt is almost over.

OZUNU (V.O.)

Weakness compels strength.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 57

A figure is running wildly through the thrashing branches.

58 INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE ASSEMBLY ROOM - NIGHT 58

Ozunu addresses the clan, his eyes like those of an executioner.

OZUNU

Betrayal begets blood.

BACK TO:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 52.

59 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 59

We are gaining on the figure who continues to bolt like a panicked horse.

BACK TO:

60 INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE ASSEMBLY - NIGHT 60

OZUNU

This is the law of the Nine Clans.
This is the way of the ninja.

BACK TO:

61 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 61

We rush up behind the figure who glances back. It is
Kiriko and she screams as we attack-

The sound of the assault becomes-

62 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 62

Mika's car rushing past us.

63 INT. CAR - NIGHT 63

Raizo is silent. Mika is driving.

MIKA

I'm going to have to make a phone
call in order to get the
manuscript.

RAIZO

Not now. Just drive.

MIKA

Where?

RAIZO

Does not matter. Just get as far
away from here as fast as you can
without drawing attention.

MIKA

You think they're following us?

RAIZO

I know they're following us.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 53. **63**

She watches in the mirror for a moment.

MIKA

I don't see anything back there.

RAIZO

They have our scent.

MIKA

Following our scent? Like dogs?

RAIZO

No. Like Wolves.

She swallows.

MIKA

How do you know so much about them?

RAIZO

I was one of them.

MIKA

You flunked out of ninja school or something?

RAIZO

...something.

64 FLASHBACK - INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

64

Raizo is dressed in normal clothes his hair starting to grow back from the close shave he had in the Orphanage. He wears a silk blindfold.

Ozunu sits in the leather gloom of the stuffed upholstery.

OZUNU

You may remove the blindfold.

Raizo does so. Looking around at the lights of Osaka, a city he has never seen before.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Your entire life has brought you to this moment. Do not fail yourself. Do not fail your family.

Raizo nods faintly.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:
64

MR. OZUNU

He is wearing a black and gold watch. Bring it to me.

Raizo nods again, then opens the door and steps out.

65 INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT
65

CLOSE ON the fat wrist of a large man as he strides across the lobby.

He turns to his entourage which includes several bodyguards and a few arm pieces.

KINGPIN

Wait here. Gotta piss.

BODYGUARD

Want me to come with you, boss?

KINGPIN

Why? So you can shake it for me?
You some kind of secret faggot?

He laughs and the arm pieces cluck on cue.

He heads into the bathroom.

66 INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT
66

Kingpin enters there is only one person in the bathroom-

Raizo washing his hands. His eyes flash in the mirror, watching the Kingpin only after he has turned away.

The enormous man steps into a stall. After a moment he begins to piss, moaning slightly as he does.

Raizo hits the air dryer button. The sound fills the room.

A thin razor sharp blade flashes from his sleeve.

The Kingpin continues to enjoy his piss but as we look at him we see the door behind him silently swing open,

revealing Raizo.

Raizo stares at the back of the man's head. He can almost see his jugular beating beneath the thick folds of his neck-

But something prevents him from striking.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 55.

66 CONTINUED:

66

The dryer stops, the sound of the piss dribbling when the Kingpin suddenly looks back over his shoulder-

KINGPIN

The fuck-?

Raizo strikes but the kingpin is able to deflect the blow which sinks into his enormous body.

He laughs.

KINGPIN (CONT'D)

That kinda tickled...

He smashes a fist into Raizo that slams him backwards.

KINGPIN (CONT'D)

Gonna take more than a knitting needle to fuck me up, boy.

Raizo attacks and it is immediately apparent that this is not going to be easy.

Several ferocious blows that would have broken the neck of a smaller man, only seem to make the Kingpin madder.

Soon both are covered in blood, and gore.

But it is not until Raizo slams the man's head against the lip of the urinal-

The first time a font blood splashing up--

The second time the porcelain shatters as the Kingpin's head opens, spilling black blood across the floor.

67 EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

67

It is raining.

Raizo, still wearing his bloody clothes, climbs up onto the roof, his clothes spattered with gore.

He waits as the shadows around him come to life: Ozunu, Takeshi, and several other clan members surround him. All but Ozunu wear their masks.

Raizo extends his hand, revealing the black and gold watch, smeared with fresh blood. He offers it to Mr. Ozunu.

67 CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

(CONTINUED)

6/4/08

56.

67

OZUNU

Keep it. It will remind you that every minute of your life is a gift that I have given you.

Ozunu smiles.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You have made me proud tonight, Raizo. There are some who believed you would fail, but I knew you would not.

His eyes narrow.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You have a strength inside you Raizo. You must use that strength, now to show me that you are truly Ozunu.

Several of the other ninjas step back. Revealing Takeshi. He pushes a small hooded figure forward.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Weakness compels strength.
Betrayal begets blood.

Takeshi yanks the hood off revealing a young girl. is bloody, bound and gagged and for a flash-

She

Raizo sees her as Kiriko.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

A daughter that turned her back on
her family. She tried to run.
Takeshi hunted her down.

He unsheathes his blade, offering the hilt to Raizo.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

It is the law of the Nine Clans.

Raizo looks at the girl, her tears lost in the rain.

We cannot tell if Raizo is crying as he takes the blade-

He CRIES OUT, the light of madness in his eyes.

He STRIKES, lashing out with the fury of a wild animal,
at Ozunu --

-- who bends back with impossible grace. But not far
enough.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 57.

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

The point of Raizo's sword slashes across his face,
opening an ugly wound that spills blood over his eye and
mouth...

He hasn't tasted his own blood in years, and the anger
boils up in his eyes.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Kill him!

Raizo meets their attack. Throwing himself into the fray
as only a man who is no longer interested in living can.

But the ninjas are everywhere. They hurl shuriken at him
by the handful, a storm of jagged steel racing for
Raizo's flesh.

Raizo blocks some of the shuriken, misses many more. The
shuriken strike muscles, tendons, flesh. He SWINGS
around, still trying to attack, there are too many of
them.

He stumbles back towards the edge of the roof as Takeshi
SWINGS what he believes will be the death blow as --

-- Raizo half-falls, half-leaps backward, falling from

the rooftop, tumbling through space, until he --
-- Splashes into the canal below-
Bubbles dancing between the ribbons of blood.

68 INT. CAR - NIGHT

68

Mika speeds along the autobahn.

MIKA

Okay, if you're not going to say anything, do you mind if I talk? When I get nervous, it helps if I talk.

He says nothing.

MIKA (CONT'D)

My name is Mika by the way.

RAIZO

I know.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 58.

68 CONTINUED:

68

MIKA

Yeah, well usually if someone introduces themselves it is a convention that the other person does likewise.

He considers her.

RAIZO

Raizo...is the name I was given.

MIKA

So, you were an orphan?

His head nods slightly.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Interesting nature verses nurture case study I imagine.

He cocks an eyebrow.

MIKA (CONT'D)

If it's okay with you, I'll try to fill in some of the blanks. You must have been taken by the Ozunu clan, trained to be an assassin, but something happened and you decided to opt out of the program. I don't imagine this went over so well and since they're after me for just peeking through the keyhole, they must be after you in a major way. But you are also after them or you wouldn't have bothered going to Sabatin. Which I figure means you're searching for the location of The Orphanage because that's obviously the only information Battatu's book would have that you wouldn't already know.

He looks at her impressed.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I got some moves too. I'm pretty lethal with the research thing.

He almost smiles.

(CONTINUED)

68 **CONTINUED: (2)** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 59. **68**

MIKA (CONT'D)

But here's a question I can't answer: since you didn't know I went to Sabatin's, why did you save me?

RAIZO

Ninja only kill two kinds of people. The first kind has power and money. The other kind is trying to stop them.

He nods, noticing shops out beyond the exit.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Exit here.

CUT TO:

69 EXT. SHOPPING MALL - NIGHT

69

The shops are all closed, Mika's car crawls to a stop in the empty parking lot.

70 INT. CAR - NIGHT

70

Raizo looks her over.

MIKA

I understand retail therapy as well as any girl but I think it's a little late.

RAIZO

You are a size 36?

MIKA

What? No! Size 34...`cept certain times of the month.

He starts to leave then stops-

RAIZO

If you leave while I am gone they will catch you and kill you.

He looks her in the eye.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Do you understand that?

She nods. He opens his door and slips out.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08

60.

70

She watches as he heads for the doors. He passes into the shadow of the building and disappears.

She digs into her bag for the phone Maslow gave her.

She TEXTS: 911. But situ stable. Guardian angel all in

black. Need Battuta book soon. Will call. M

She hits send. Looks out to the darkness surrounding her. After a moment one of the shadows comes to life. The door opens and Raizo gets in, his arm full of clothes.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

We need a hotel.

71 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL - NIGHT

71

The car is parked around several others.

72 INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT

72

Raizo goes into the bathroom, and turns on the shower.

RAIZO

Get undressed. Shower. Do not use the hotel soap. Or any towel. Do you smoke?

MIKA

No.

He nods.

RAIZO

Put your clothes in here.

He pulls the garbage bag from the wastepaper basket. Then leaves as she begins getting undressed.

73 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL - NIGHT

73

Outside the hotel, Raizo finds a pine tree. several branches from it.

He cuts

74 INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT

74

Back in the room, he enters the bathroom. in the shower.

She is still

MIKA

Hey-

RAIZO

What?

MIKA

Don't you know how to knock?

RAIZO

I'm trying to save your life.

MIKA

...okay right.

He hands her the tree branch.

RAIZO

Dry yourself with this.

He starts taking off his clothes. He does it quickly without any sense of awkwardness; the world where he came from makes little distinction between male and female. She's not from the same world, keeping herself as covered as possible with a tree branch.

He jumps in the shower while she tries to dry herself off.

MIKA

...I'm just a researcher. I'm really not equipped to deal with this...

He steps out and quickly wipes the dripping water off his body with the branch.

RAIZO

Get dressed.

In the bedroom, Raizo is dressed in new clothes. He lights a cigarette as Mika come out struggling with the tightness of her new jeans.

MIKA

These are a little tight.

RAIZO

You said 34.

MIKA

European sizes...run a little
small I guess.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 62.

74 CONTINUED: (2)

74

Raizo takes the cigarette and begins waving it all around her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

This is for my "scent"?

He nods.

RAIZO

Let's go.

75 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

75

CLOSE as he picks the lock of a different car trunk.

MIKA

Wow. They teach you that at ninja
school?

RAIZO

Most locks are not worth the metal
they're made of.

The trunk pops open. Raizo tosses their bag of clothes under the lid of the tire compartment. Then closes the door.

He leads her down the parking lot sizing up the cars, until he finds one he likes.

MIKA

You're going to steal a car?

RAIZO

Just borrow it.

The door opens.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Get in.

She sighs.

MIKA

In for a penny, in for a pounding.

75A INT. CAR - NIGHT

75A

Raizo takes out a small electrical device. He aims it at the dash and hits a button. The device finds the right frequency to start the car.

She is impressed.

(CONTINUED)

75A CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 62A.

75A

RAIZO

At ninja school I minored in electrical engineering.

His smile makes her smile.

76 EXT. AUTOBAHN - NIGHT

76

A moment later the car flies back towards Berlin.

RAIZO

Now we have some time.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 63.

76

MIKA

How much time?

RAIZO

A day. Maybe less.

MIKA

Jesus.

RAIZO

Make your call.

She nods, digs through her purse for the phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

77 **INT. MASLOW'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

77

MIKA

Ryan, it's me.

MASLOW

Mika! For Christ sake I've been calling for hours!

MIKA

I know. I'm in a bit of trouble-

MASLOW

Trouble? You miss jury duty you're in trouble. You're in some kind of bottomless pit of deep shit.

MIKA

Yeah. Least I'm not down here by myself...

She looks at Raizo.

MASLOW

Your guardian angel? Is it him? The one from the tape?

MIKA

He's on our side, Ryan. I trust him.

MASLOW

Careful, Mika.

MIKA

I promised him the Battuta pages. Do you still have them?

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 64.

77 **CONTINUED:**

77

MASLOW

...yeah, I got them.

MIKA

Can you meet us? In three hours?

MASLOW

Where?

MIKA

How bout the usual?

78 EXT. BERLIN WALL - NIGHT

78

Maslow waits, the red-tip of his cigarette glowing in the middle of his silhouette.

Mika is leading.

MIKA

There he is.

Raizo hesitates; an animal sensing danger.

MIKA (CONT'D)

He's a good man. It's all right.

They approach Maslow.

MASLOW

Mika!

He embraces her.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

You're all right?

MIKA

Thanks to him.

RAIZO

Why have you done this?

MIKA

Done what?

MASLOW

Step back Mika.

MIKA

What?

RAIZO

People will die.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:
78

Maslow takes hold of Mika as he shouts-

MASLOW

NOW!

An explosion of light; A firing line of kliegs all aimed at Raizo, each as bright as a slice of the sun.

MIKA

No!

Twenty heavily armed men emerge from the wall of light.

MILITARY MAN

Hands on your head! On your knees! Do it now!

MIKA

Raizo! No! This is wrong!

RAIZO

The clans have people everywhere.

Raizo raises his hands slowly, a glance thrown like a shuriken at Maslow.

MIKA

What are you doing?

MASLOW

Following orders.

The men swarm over him, binding him with brutal efficiency, hauling him away.

CUT

TO:

78A FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DOJO - DAY
78A

Ozunu watches. A faint look of disgust dangling from his lips.

OZUNU

Cut him.

Kiriko is panting, covered in sweat and blood, standing

over a bloody, beaten Takeshi.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

All failure must be sown into the
flesh.

Kiriko is handed a razor sharp blade.

(CONTINUED)

78A CONTINUED:

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 65A.

78A

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Cut him!

Takeshi prepares for the blow, but--

Kiriko drops the blade.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

What?

He marches up to her.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You know the law!

Her silence remains defiant, while he boils with
suppressed rage, picking up the blade.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You will wear this disgrace for
the rest of your life!

He slashes her, slicing across her face.

TIME CUT:

79 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DORMITORY - NIGHT

79

Raizo wakes up.

There's a commotion on the other side of the shoji
screens that comprise the inner wall of the dorm.
Silhouettes limned against the paper.

Raizo moves to the screens. Pulls them a half inch aside
as the other children watch...

Through the tiny gap, he sees ninjas dragging Kiriko down
the hall. Gagged, arms twisted with shiburi, blood

streaking her pale and terrified face.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 66.

80 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT

80

Raizo is chained to the walls of a vault. Spread-eagled, double-locked, and lit from all sides so there are no shadows anywhere in the room.

Raizo's head sags. Eyes closed.

Cameras stare at him.

81 INT. SAFE-HOUSE GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

81

Classic Berlin aesthetic. A modern office shoe-horned into an abandoned building: cubicles, computers and Aeron chairs amidst crumbling walls.

Maslow's team are hanging out there, thirty agents, a fairly competent and well-armed bunch. Maslow is inside the control room which is like a small construction trailer. Several different monitors have images of Raizo.

SECURITY GOON

Prisoner is secure sir.

For a moment it appears that Raizo looks up as Maslow looks at him, as if somehow Raizo could see through the lens watching him. Then his head drops again.

MASLOW

Right.

He scans the different monitors.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Something's wrong with the infrared cam.

SECURITY GOON

No sir, we checked it.

MASLOW

Then why isn't he showing up?

SECURITY GOON

We think he's able to lower the temperature of his body to remain

neutral.

MASLOW

Or maybe he's just cold-blooded.

SECURITY GOON #2

Sir!

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 66A.

81 CONTINUED:

81

The goon struggles to stop Mika as she storms inside.

MIKA

Ryan, you know this is wrong! It
can't be legal! What is this
place? Your own private
Guantanamo?

MASLOW

It's an old GDR safehouse.
Jamison wants this off the grid.

MIKA

Ryan you're making a huge mistake!

MASLOW

I don't think so. We got reports
from Washington, London, Osaka all
tagging your boy. Only problem we
have is where to extradite him
first.

MIKA

So two weeks ago, there's no such
thing as a ninja and now every
city in the world has a warrant
for one?

MASLOW

We must respect the jurisprudence
of the regional government and
corresponding law enforcement
agencies.

MIKA

He's not the enemy.

MASLOW

No? You ever heard of Stockholm
Syndrome I'm getting the feeling
I'm looking at a pretty serious

case of it.

MIKA

I'm not crazy. This is!

(CONTINUED)

81 **CONTINUED: (2)** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 67. 81

MASLOW

He's a killer, Mika. Weren't you the one telling me it was our job to stop him.

MIKA

You're not listening to me!

MASLOW

You're not saying anything worth hearing. Look, if want to do the insubordination tango, let's go, but not in front of the kids okay? Boys, give us a minute.

The security goons clear out, closing the door behind them.

82 **INT. SAFE-HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS** 82

She wheels on him to let him have it.

MIKA

Damn it, Ryan, I --

-- but he holds a finger to his lips, indicating be quiet.

MASLOW

Listen to me, we don't have much time. Look, I don't know what you've stumbled into, but somebody is pulling some major strings inside.

MIKA

They want him dead. He's been fighting them for years.

MASLOW

I believe you.

(softer)

I believe you. I've been in this business too long not to smell a set-up. But we have to be careful how we handle this. And I can't risk you going AWOL on me again, because --

(beat)

-- because I don't want anything to happen to you.

He glances up at her, and it's clear: he has affection for her.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 68.

82 CONTINUED:

82

He presses a tracking device into her hands.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

If trouble comes, turn this on, no matter where, and I'll find you.

83 INT. SAFE HOUSE VAULT - NIGHT

83

Raizo remains motionless, his eyes open when he hears someone coming.

RAIZO (V.O.)

You shouldn't do that they'll catch you.

KIRIKO (V.O.)

Then they'll catch me.

RAIZO (V.O.)

They'll put you in the box.

KIRIKO (V.O.)

Yes. They will.

84 FLASHBACK - INT. ORPHANAGE DORMITORY - NIGHT

84

It is the middle of the night. Raizo lies on a floor mat, unable to sleep. He looks over at Kiriko's empty mat. Quietly he gets up and makes his way outside.

He moves to an upright bamboo box about the size of a coffin. Looking at --

-- Kiriko, in the box. Dehydration has left Kiriko with barely the strength to breathe. Her lips are swollen and cracked, she sags against the tight walls of the box.

He pulls a bamboo straw from his dark robe, then fills his mouth with water from a flask.

Sticking the straw through the bamboo poles near her lips, he feeds her drop by drop, and in this way, separated by a cage they share a kind of kiss.

Her eyes part, ever so slightly, and she manages a smile.

RAIZO

I told you. I tried to warn you.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 69.

85 CONTINUED:

85

KIRIKO

...yes, you did...

RAIZO

But you did it anyway. Why?

KIRIKO

Why am I in here for watering my tree...or why are you out there... watering me?

She meets his eyes.

86 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT

86

Mika is standing behind the bars which slide open.

She has a bottle of water, she looks at the two armed guards following her.

MIKA

Could you give us a moment?

GUARD

Negative. Not safe ma'am.

MIKA

If he wanted to hurt me he could have done that a while ago.

GUARD

Sorry ma'am. Maslow okayed the water. That's it.

They stand near the door as Mika crosses to Raizo.

MIKA

Hi...you looked thirsty.

She holds the water bottle to his lips, whispering.

MIKA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...I didn't know about this.

RAIZO

I know.

MIKA

You do?

He nod's, swallowing another sip.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 70.

86 CONTINUED:

86

RAIZO

The only time you lied to me was when you told me your size.

MIKA

How did you know that?

RAIZO

Your heart. It is special.

MIKA

You know about my heart?

RAIZO

Hearts speak truer than tongues.

He is unlike anyone she has ever met.

MIKA

Listen, Maslow is on our side.
He's going to try to help you.

RAIZO

It's too late. All that matters
is the Rihla. Get the manuscript
before they get here.

MIKA

The Hanta Kirra?

RAIZO

Hurry.

87 INT. SAFE-HOUSE GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

87

Mika rushes up to Maslow who is talking to the group of
Europols.

MIKA

Ryan, can I talk to you?

MASLOW

We have to do this again, Coretti?

MIKA

No sir. I just...I have reason to
believe that a group of ninja may
be on their way here.

The men chuckle.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 71.

87 CONTINUED:

87

MASLOW

I think these gentlemen can handle
a few whack-jobs wearing pajamas.
Am I right?

They ad-lib responses: Fucking' A sir... Locked, cocked
and ready to rock.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

See?

MIKA

But the situation we discussed-

MASLOW

I'm working on that. You have to give me a little time.

MIKA

We don't have time.

MASLOW

They're not here now.

MIKA

They'll be here soon.

MASLOW

How soon-

88 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT 88

Raizo looks up. His eyes narrow: they're here.

89 INT. SAFE-HOUSE GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT 89

The lights go out.

Mika's eyes dart into the pitch, red emergency lights suddenly glowing ominously.

MIKA

Raizo--

Maslow spins as she sprints for the stairs.

MASLOW

Mika!

Maslow draws his firearm and hisses at one of the Special Ops.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED: GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 71A. 89

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Go with her! Secure the prisoner!

Instantly, tiny LED flashlights and laser targeting systems light up on automatic weapons. Night vision

goggles go up. Rather than panicking, the police are instantly in stealth-mode, communicating with quick, urgent hand gestures.

A handful of men splinter off for the vault while the rest separate into teams with practiced precision, moving through the safe-house, ready for whatever comes.

89A INT. SAFE-HOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT

89A

Mika charges into the holding area, the detail of men right at her heels.

EUROPOL WATER GUARD

Hold your fire--

Raizo's guards release their aim.

EUROPOL GUARD

Christ--

EUROPOL WATER GUARD

Good way to get yourself killed,
Agent Coretti.

EUROPOL #2

What the fuck's with the lights?

EUROPOL GUARD

We got some guys in pajamas comin'
to play spin the bottle.

One of them lifts a shotgun.

EUROPOL #2

Huh huh. I got something they can
wrap their lips around.

MIKA

I don't have time for this shit.
We have to move the prisoner.

In the back of his cell, Raizo's head lifts at the sound of Mika's voice.

RAIZO

Mika!

(CONTINUED)

89A CONTINUED:

89A

EUROPOL WATER GUARD

No ma'am. Those aren't our orders.

Raizo calls from behind the reinforced door.

RAIZO

You've got to get out of here!

She calls to his cell.

MIKA

Not without you.

Raizo's voice hangs in the gloom.

RAIZO

Then we all die together.

89B INT. SAFE-HOUSE - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

89B

One of the teams edges through the decay of the dilapidated industrial cavern.

Straining through the eyepiece of his goggles one of them mutters.

EUROPOL AGENT 2

Don't see shit--

Ahead the point man motions and the men take up defensive positions.

The point man creeps forward, a flicker of heat fluttering in his IR-Optic.

POINT MAN

Is that..?

Through the darkness we see that his infrared is actually picking up the slow exhale of a ninja poised like a cobra inches away just above him.

His blades flash--

And the detail of men recoil as their infrared sensors light up, the point man cleft open in hot volcanic gore.

A cloud of shuriken spit out of the darkness and punch into necks, faces, eyes. Ten of them fall like wheat

before a scythe. The rest fire hitting nothing.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 71C.

90 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - VAULT - NIGHT

90

The screams of dying men and gunfire shudder down the gullet of the old concrete building.

MIKA

Fuck me...

She watches as the men position themselves, pressing into the black of the corridor. Thumbs flick safeties to hot.

A shriek pierces the silence, one of the agents suddenly jerked from his feet like a puppet on a string.

They watch in IR as the agent falls to the ground in several pieces.

EUROPOL #2

What the fu--

#2's exclamation gets caught in the oozing slit that opens in his throat.

The man guarding Raizo's cell door screams.

EUROPOL GUARD

They're not showing up on IR!

He clicks his flashlight the beam glinting against a hail of shuriken that pound into him, wounds flowering in ribbons of red.

Mika watches as he lands wetly at her feet.

More screams and gunfire shake the shock from her.

She dives for the guard, frantic fingers clawing at the key-chain clipped to his belt.

The remaining Europol Agents cluster together, flashlights strobing spastically, while Mika slams through Raizo's cell door.

She instantly goes to work on his leg irons.

MIKA

Come on--come on--

Raizo's eyes narrow, the last of the Europol Agents
butchered by shadows.

RAIZO

Mika?

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 71D.

90 **CONTINUED:**

90

MIKA

Shh!

RAIZO

I don't want to sound critical--

He can feel the rush of darkness.

MIKA

Got it!

The leg irons click open and Raizo springs forward the
chain of his handcuffs catching a falling blade. He
twists and the ring of metal on metal is followed by the
dry snap of bone as Raizo breaks the ninja's neck.

She releases his handcuffs and they move quickly through
the glistening remains of the bodies, Raizo shielding her
from the darkness.

90A **INT. SAFE-HOUSE - SUBLEVEL - NIGHT**

90A

The two sprint from a stairwell into a concourse, Raizo
stopping suddenly, sensing the presence of the Hanta-
Kirra.

He pushes her toward another set of stairs.

RAIZO

Go. Find Maslow.

He turns to facing the dark.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Go quick.

She lurches up the stairs as the Hanta-Kirra descend on
him like a murder of crows.

Mika flies up the stairs taking the steps two at a time rounding the next flight--

A beam of light flashing weapons rattling suddenly trained on her.

MASLOW

Mika!

Her stomach finds its way into her throat.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 71E.

90B CONTINUED:

90B

MIKA

Jesus Ryan--

Maslow rushes down to her, another agent scanning the stairs above them.

MASLOW

I thought you were--

Mika's eyes widen as the agent on the flight above them is ripped into the air replaced by a squall of red.

Maslow whirls as a blade suddenly pierces his side--

But before it can continue its deadly cut, Maslow catches it in a bloody fist and fires into the shadows.

One of the Hanta-Kirra falls tumbling past them down the stairs.

Maslow grunts as he rips the chain blade from his side.

MIKA

Are you ok?

He nods, a bit woozy.

MASLOW

I hope that wasn't my liver. Gonna need that soon.

MIKA

Come on.

91 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - GROUND FLOOR

91

Sparks dance along the singing ringing blades, the melee escalating in the darkness.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 72-73.

91 CONTINUED:

91

Raizo meets the Hanta-Kirra in the air. Vaults from one wall and door to another, spinning in and out of view as he moves through the shadows.

The ninjas move with him, matching his speed and ferocity and ability to disappear within the darkness.

Swords clash against chains and sword and walls. Sparks fly and blood falls.

This is the first time we've seen Raizo turned loose. But it's three on one...and Takeshi isn't a pushover.

Mika and Maslow slam through the exit into--

92 INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

92

The building carpark. Mika suddenly stops.

MIKA

Fuck!

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 74.

92 CONTINUED:

92

MASLOW

What?

MIKA

The manuscript--

MASLOW

No Mika--

He is about to argue but wilts at her resolve.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Right...

He stuffs his car keys in her hand, trying not to let his voice crack.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Two minutes. Keep it in gear.

MIKA

Maslow--

He turns.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Tip-toe.

He opens the door retracing their steps into the dark.

Mika suddenly very alone manages a slow nervous pirouette in the crypt-like garage, before skittering for Maslow's sedan.

She slides in pulling the door shut behind her as quietly as she can--

And waits.

93 INT. SAFE-HOUSE - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

93

Maslow moves cautiously through the folds of midnight. He hears the fighting before he can see it.

Raizo blocks a sword-thrust from Takeshi. Dodges around a hail of shuriken. Uses his chain to drive another Ninja back.

Takeshi rips free his left arm. Draws a short, angled blade and brings it slashing down at Raizo's neck...

Raizo blocks the knife with his elbow, twists, throws Takeshi twenty feet through the air. He recovers mid-flight like a cat and regains his balance.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 75.

93 CONTINUED:

93

From the darkness a ninja fires a dozen shuriken at him, and at least three of the spinning blades find their mark.

Raizo grunts at the impact, but vaults up and over a counter and LEAPS through a window, crashing out to -

94 INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

94

The surrounding shadows seem to press in on the car.

MIKA

Come on, Ryan...

A figure darts in her periphery and her head whips around craning all directions.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Hurry the fuck up!

Ka-chunk-- she punches the lock.

Click-- the headlights flash on--

Ka-chick-- she chambers the Glock.

MIKA (CONT'D)

Motherfuckfuckfuck--

She twists the ignition and as the motor turns over--

The car's headlights explode, shattered by projectiles that seem to materialize from the void.

Mika screams throwing the car into gear--

Peeling out toward the down ramp.

The car fishtails down level after level through the oscillating light/dark of the dimly lit exit ramp.

Her eyes twitch from mirror to mirror when she sees up ahead--

A shadow hanging in the corner of the tunnel like a spider.

She ducks just as the front of the sedan is shredded by a squall of stars.

The sedan rebounds into the light. Its hood and

windscreen looking as though it was gnawed on by a Great White.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 76.

94 CONTINUED:

94

Mika cranks the wheel tearing around a dark bend as--

Toom! Something lands on the roof of the car.

Above her she sees the distinct tips of the tiger claws that have punctured the metal exterior of the car just as--

She passes under a light--

Revealing a crouching ninja staring right at her, through the sun roof.

His blade whips from its sheath but before he can strike--

She jams the barrel of the Glock between the two tips of one set of claws, right where his foot should be--

And fires.

A scream is followed by a gout of blood that washes over the sunroof--

The ninja's body tumbling off the back of the car.

Maslow's gnarled sedan bottoms out in a starburst of sparks as it corners into traffic.

Mika breathing heavy digs into her bag for her cell phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

95 INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

95

The lights are still dead. Maslow is with a team of Europol's moving through the stairwell. He talks quietly.

MIKA

Ryan- I had to leave!

MASLOW

Good, stay clear.

MIKA

Do you have the map?

MASLOW

Not yet. We're heading upstairs
now.

MIKA

Where's Raizo

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 77.

95 CONTINUED:

95

MASLOW

He took off. We think they went
after him.

He looks into the surrounding shadows unsure.

96 EXT. ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

96

Raizo parkours across the roofs, the Hanta Kirra close
behind.

Shuriken sizzle past; some missing, some lashing open
whip cuts across his flesh.

97 EXT. WINGED VICTORY ROUNDABOUT - NIGHT

97

Raizo pulls free the shuriken in his side. Drops them to
the ground where they clatter back and forth like so much
tossed change. He looks up at winged victory silhouetted
against the moonlight.

And suddenly the ninja are on him.

Raizo blocks and parries. Counterattacks with a reverse
cut - and throws himself sideways as a truck comes
roaring down at him.

The truck fills the screen with lights and horns and
three tons of death.

Raizo cartwheels over the hood, forcing the Scarred Ninja
to leap the other way, and as he turns --

-- Raizo comes down on him, slashing his shoulder.

The fight is now two one against one, and one of them is Takeshi. Their swords crash back and forth, sending sparks flying.

Raizo is tired, already wounded by the shuriken...

With a cry, he hurls a second Ninja back and spins to face Takeshi...

Too late. Takeshi's blade gets under his guard. Opens up Raizo's side.

His sword is ripped free from his hand, rebounds off a speeding sedan and clatters to the ground thirty feet away.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 78.

98 CONTINUED:

98

Raizo stumbles backward. Life's blood dripping down and splattering on the concrete.

Takeshi raises his sword high. Smiles.

TAKESHI

This is the end for you, brother.

Mika's car slashes across the width of the street screeching to a stop next to Raizo. The door snaps open.

MIKA

Raizo!

Raizo gets into the car. Collapses into the seat, arms wrapped tight around the ugly wound in his side. She peels away before the others can stop her.

Mika carves a path through the traffic, driving as fast as she can. Eager to get more miles between them and the ninjas.

Raizo lets out a gasp as the car goes over a bump. His shirt is drenched with his own blood.

MIKA (CONT'D)

What were you doing in the street?!

RAIZO

...waiting for you...

MIKA

You have to go to a hospital.

RAIZO

No. Not a hospital. Another
place.

The car speeds into the night.

99 EXT. HERBALIST - NIGHT

99

The sort of store where the owner lives above the shop.
Mika pounds on the door as a LIGHT comes on in the floor
above. A moment later, the door opens.

HERBALIST

What is it? What --

He steps out of the way as Mika helps Raizo in, bloody
and half-dead.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 79.

100 INT. HERBALIST - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

100

Herbalist places herbs into a hand-grinder as Raizo
staggers through the rows of bowls, grabbing what he
needs and handing it to her.

RAIZO

...dong-xia leaves...three of the
lo-chan...dragon root...

HERBALIST

You should not mix these. Very
dangerous.

Raizo ignores him. Gives her some more dried bits and
pieces. The herbalist shakes his head.

HERBALIST (CONT'D)

If you are in pain...if you wish
to die...there are other ways,
this will be agony --

RAIZO

No...it will save me....

HERBALIST

It will? You're sure?
(beat)
Let me write this down.

He goes to find a pen and paper as Mika grinds away.

RAIZO

Hot water.

She goes to a tea kettle, pours water into the bowl. He reaches for it, and nearly collapses.

She helps him raise the cup to his lips. Tilts it and watches him drink. Takes the empty cup away from him.

Raizo shudders as the drugs course through him.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

I have to sleep now...a day at least.

His eyelids flutter. She's holding him up now - muscles already loosening.

MIKA

A day?!? What should I do?

RAIZO

...keep moving...

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08

80.

100 **CONTINUED:**
100

He slumps over the counter like a child dropping into deepest sleep as --

-- the herbalist comes back, pen and paper in hand. He pauses as he sees Mika standing over Raizo. She looks from him to Raizo and back again, then:

MIKA

I'll have him to go.
(beat)
Can you...help me to the car?

CUT

TO:

101 **EXT. AUTOBAHN - NIGHT**
101

Mika is the proverbial bat outta hell.

Her phone is at her ear.

INTERCUT WITH:

102 **INT. SAFE-HOUSE - NIGHT**
102

The lights are back on but the place is trashed.

MASLOW

Mika, where are you?

MIKA

Moving. He told me to keep moving.

MASLOW

He's still alive?

She glances at his slumped body.

MIKA

After a fashion.

MASLOW

Let us bring you in.

MIKA

Not this time.

MASLOW

Mika, the situation's a little different. Jurisprudence goes out the fucking window when my men get attacked.

(CONTINUED)

102 **CONTINUED:** GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 81.
102

MIKA

Do you have the manuscript?

He takes a breath.

MASLOW

...negative. They got to my office. Everything's gone.

The news crushes her.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Mika, it's gonna be all right.
We'll find them.

MIKA

...but I promised...

MASLOW

We'll keep your promise. They're
too many people involved now.
It's just a matter of time.

MIKA

I don't think we have much time...

MASLOW

Just tell me where you are.

She hangs up.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

Mika? Mika? Dammit.

103 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT 103

The car is parked outside the same hotel that he took her
too.

104 INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT 104

She steps out of the shower and dries herself with an
evergreen branch.

105 INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 105

In the bedroom, Raizo is sprawled out on the bed.

She is wearing new clothes. She takes a drag on a
cigarette then passes the smoke over her body.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 82.
105

MIKA

I know you can't hear me, so I'm sure this doesn't matter, but I'm going to say it anyway.

She looks at him.

MIKA (CONT'D)

I'm a forensic researcher, okay? That's like a fancy way of saying I'm a librarian. By myself I can't do anything to help you.

She opens her fist; inside is the tracking device Maslow gave her.

MIKA (CONT'D)

I wanted to thank you for saving my life.

Bending over him, she kisses him gently.

MIKA (CONT'D)

And I hope you can forgive me for this.

106 INT. MASLOW'S OFFICE - NIGHT

106

There's a crowd of other OFFICIALS there, having turned the place into a makeshift command and control center. An AIDE rushes in from an adjoining room, goes to Maslow.

AIDE

Agent Maslow, the tracking device--

MASLOW

You've got a lock?

AIDE

Triangulating her position now.

107 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ACROSS PARKING LOT - NIGHT

107

Mika watches from the trees as a shadow comes to life on the balcony outside their room. It pauses as if sensing something.

108 INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

108

Raizo lies alone. The heavy shadows begin to undulate as

the Hanta-Kirra emerge.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT

6/4/08 83.

108 CONTINUED:

108

Takeshi's eyes gleam the way a blade gleams.

109 EXT. HIGHWAY MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAWN

109

Police and Europol cars scream up to the hotel.

110 EXT/INT. HIGHWAY MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

110

A moment later the door bursts open; Maslow and his men pour into the bedroom.

The bed is empty. Raizo is gone.

Mika is sitting in the chair.

MIKA

They took him. Ten minutes ago.
He's gone.

Maslow embraces her.

111 FLASHBACK - INT ORPHANAGE DORMITORY - NIGHT

111

There is a furious storm raging outside the thin screened walls.

Raizo is watching Kiriko who seems to be sleeping.

In a flash of lightning, her eyes open and she stares at him and he feels in hi heart what she is saying goodbye.

The flashing ends and as the thunder booms, she is gone, melting quietly into the shadows.

RAIZO

...no!

112 EXT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD/WALL - NIGHT

112

Two shadows race through sheets of rain, visible in flashes of lightning.

He catches her near the base of the wall.

RAIZO

Kiriko! You can't leave!

KIRIKO

I have to.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 84.

112 CONTINUED:

112

RAIZO

Why?

KIRIKO

Because my heart is telling me too.

RAIZO

The Hanta Kirra will come for you.

KIRIKO

Then they will come.

RAIZO

You know the law. He will cut your heart from your chest.

She smiles.

KIRIKO

No...He can never touch my heart.

She puts his hand on her chest, then leans in and kisses him.

KIRIKO (CONT'D)

Come with me.

RAIZO

Where? What is out there?

KIRIKO

Life.

He cannot imagine what that life might be.

RAIZO

...My life is here.

She bows her head and turns.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this?

KIRIKO

Because I can't watch you become
something you are not.

She races for the wall.

He watches her climb...And disappear.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 84A.

113 INT. METAL BOX - NIGHT 113

Raizo drifts on the edge of consciousness. He can sense
some light filtering through the edges and air holes.

The air begins to smell familiar.

OZUNU (V.O.)

We have been betrayed.

114 FLASHBACK - EXT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD - DAY 114

The clan is gathered outside, the sun beats down on the
Spartan courtyard.

Kiriko's body is twisted, bound to a pole like one of the
Bonsai trees.

Ozunu delivers his eulogy.

OZUNU

A child of mine, my daughter,
betrayed us. She refused these
gifts. Rejected our clan.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 85.

Raizo stands among the clan; his face a mask.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Hers is a shame that can only be

purged with blood.

He unsheathes the ancient Wakizashi, then offers the hilt to Takeshi.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You who returned her shall have this honor.

Takeshi hides a smile as he takes the blade.

Kiriko looks out into the clan and finds Raizo. He can hear her heart pounding.

Takeshi knows where she is looking as he prepares to strike.

Blood pounds in Raizo's ears.

The sword plunges into her heart. Raizo hears it die-

And feels his own heart stop.

115 INT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD - NIGHT

115

A bucket of water slaps Raizo awake.

He's bound to a pole in the middle of the courtyard by thick rope that bites into his flesh.

Ozunu stands before him, as well as the rest of the clan, down to the youngest of them. Watching silently.

He looks the same as he has in the flashbacks - except that now an ugly scar runs diagonally across the length of his face. Trace of Raizo's blade from atop the building in Dubai.

When he speaks, Ozunu is speaking for the benefit of the rest of the clan as to Raizo.

OZUNU

You are Ozunu. Your life is meaningless compared to the survival of the Clan. This is our deepest truth. Because of it, we have endured for hundreds of years, and will endure for hundreds more.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:
115

He looks to the rest, pounding the message home. The
message that says hope and escape are futile.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Weakness compels strength.
Betrayal begets blood. This is
the way of the Nine Clans.

(beat)

This is the way of the Ninja.

He looks back at Raizo, approaching slowly. Taking his
time.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

I have waited many years for this
moment. I have dreamed it, many
times.

He hits Raizo. Hard.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You will suffer for seven days,
one day for each year you defied
me.

He takes a knife, and very carefully cuts out a very
small piece of Raizo's flesh, from the upper arm. Raizo
doesn't cry out.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

For seven days, we
will...take...from you, as I have
just done. Everyone here will
take from you. Piece by piece.
You will live through it all, you
will feel through it all. You
will watch as the birds fight over
the pieces.

He STRIKES Raizo as he did long ago, his hand jutting
deep inside gut, flicking switches of nerves that cause
instant agony. This time Raizo does cry out.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

You will know pain like no other
human being has ever known.

He twists something in Raizo's belly and violent spasms

wrack the young man's body. Blood burbles up through his mouth and flows down his chin.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: (2)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 87.

115

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Your death will be remembered for a thousand years as a testament to the will and strength of the Ozunu Clan.

One last gouge in Raizo's stomach sends a heaving shudder through him.

Confident, victorious, Ozunu turns and walks a few steps away as --

-- Raizo coughs up a bloody wad onto the clean floor.

Takeshi smiles at this, then looks more closely, seeing something amidst the bile...

TAKESHI

Father...

Ozunu looks down and sees a tiny steel cylinder. A single LED light blinking through the gore.

He nudges it with his foot...and TIME SLOWS DOWN as he realizes what he's looking at. He slowly raises his eyes --

-- and meets Raizo's gaze as suddenly --

-- EXPLOSIONS rock the orphanage's centuries-old gate.

A reinforced military Humvee crashes through the cloud of splintering timber with a roar and an explosion of blinding lights.

The Ozunu Clan scatters as the massive vehicle heaves into the courtyard, revealing behind it still more vehicles, all equipped with brilliant lights.

The ninjas take to the shadows, trying to melt away, but the shadows are gone. There's no place for the ninjas to hide anymore. We FIND Mika and Maslow in one of the lead

vehicles as --

-- Takeshi draws his blade in a smooth arc, raising it over Raizo's helpless form.

Maslow takes aim with his submachine gun and squeezes off a long burst.

Takeshi blocks some of the slugs with his sword and dodges the others. He slides into one of the few remaining shadows.

(CONTINUED)

115

CONTINUED: (3)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 88.

115

One of the soldiers sees him making a break for it and fires an incendiary grenade.

The explosion sends incandescent white phosphorous splashing through the courtyard, but Takeshi is gone. They prepare to fire another one when Maslow comes on the run.

MASLOW

No more grenades, not until we get
the children out!

But some parts of the orphanage are already on fire, the flames spreading through the ancient timbers.

The carnage continues.

Maslow fires at the fleeing ninjas as Mika rushes for Raizo, pistol in hand.

One of the MP's screams as a shuriken rips open his face as other Mps FIRE back at the ninja, tearing him apart with gunfire.

Mika makes it to Raizo's side.

He smiles at her as she saws through the rope with her knife.

RAIZO

What took you?

MIKA

You knew I'd come?

RAIZO

Just because I was asleep doesn't
mean I couldn't hear you.

Mika finishes with the rope. Raizo pulls free and
reaches for a fallen ninja's sword and chain.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

And I forgive you.

Mika looks back at the sound of GUNFIRE tearing apart
another ninja. When she looks back --

-- Raizo is gone.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 89.

116 INT. ORPHANAGE KITCHEN/DINING/DORMITORY/DOJO - NIGHT 116

The fires are ripping through the interior, leaping from
bamboo furniture to paper shoji screens to polished
wooden floors as --

-- Raizo kicks down the burning wall of the empty dorm,
the futons smoldering.

Raizo continues into the next hall to find --

-- Takeshi waiting for him. An apparition in the
wavering blaze of heat, silhouetted against a wall of
fire.

TAKESHI

Come, little brother, let us play
like old times

They spring at other. Meeting in the middle of the
hallway as the flames dance around them...recalling the
lanterns they used to fight through, in the days of their
training.

Their weapons ring out a frenzied drum roll of steel on
steel. Neither giving an inch. Evenly matched in skill
and ferocity. Locking together for a moment Takeshi
smiles.

TAKESHI (CONT'D)

No death tasted as sweet as hers.

Raizo's back glistens orange in the firelight, sweat
pouring as he strains, attacks, defends and attacks
again.

Takeshi jumps over them, twists mid-air and ducks low beneath Raizo's swinging chain as --

-- Raizo stumbles back on the polished floor, blocking Takeshi's attack, but --

-- Takeshi catches his wrist in an iron grip. As he brings his sword around, Raizo gets a loop of chain around the blade and locks it tight.

Both men spin in their sudden embrace. Faces inches from each other.

TAKESHI (CONT'D)

I watched you die when I pierced
her heart. You have always been
too weak to be Ozunu.

Takeshi's finger trips a hidden button on the sword.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 90.

116 CONTINUED:

116

The blade retracts back through the handle and a yard of steel jolts out from the hilt of Takeshi's sword.

He moves to slam it into Raizo's side...but Raizo FLIPS over him, holding onto the hilt and as he lands he --

-- DRIVES the steel into Takeshi's heart. He still stands for a BEAT, more by inertia than will, then slumps, dead, to the floor.

Raizo stalks down the hall. One last task ahead of him.

117 INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE NIGHTINGALE FLOOR/MASTERS ROOM/ASSEMBLY ROOM - NIGHT

117

Raizo walks across the Nightingale floor, his bloody footprints moving soundlessly.

From the shadows he hears Ozunu's voice

OZUNU

You have not forgotten your
training. You will always be
mine, child.

Raizo stops, considers this, then continues; his footsteps now bringing every sound possible.

Ozunu steps out of the darkness, as though shrugging off a cloak of midnight.

OZUNU (CONT'D)

Perhaps this is the best way for you to die.

His blade rises as like a Cobra's hood, while the chain blade begins to spin.

RAIZO

The breath I take after you are dead, will be the first of my life.

Raizo unleashes all his fury: The chain cutting with the power of an enormous buzz saw--

Hacking timbers in half--

Carving scars in the floors and walls--

Braziers are thrown, fumes begin to spread but--

Ozunu blocks or evades, absorbing the assault patiently

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 91.

117 CONTINUED:

117

Waiting for Raizo to tire, waiting for an opening.

118 EXT. ORPHANAGE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

118

A portion of the Orphanage's wall burns through. Mika spots Raizo through the flames.

She runs for him.

119 INT. ORPHANAGE OZUNU HOUSE ASSEMBLY ROOM - NIGHT

119

Raizo begins to weaken. An attack misses wrapping a beam and Ozunu has his opening-

His assault is ferocious.

Wounds begin opening like windows shears of blood

billowing out.

Raizo retreats, his chain just blocking, catching, or deflecting the whirlwind attack until--

One sound cuts through the furious fight.

Snap-zoom to Ozunu's ear as--

The hammer is cocked, a cylinder spinning into place.

MIKA

Die you fuck!

She fires and Ozunu twists enough so that the bullet grazes him.

OZUNU

Bitch!

A scatter shot of shurikens send her diving to the floor. But the distraction gives Raizo his chance.

The blade whistles, the chain snaps and blood arcs out of Ozunu.

Rage thunders the hall.

Mika gets back up and aims but--

Ozunu seems to pull the shadows and smoke around him as he disappears.

MIKA

Raizo

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 92.

119 CONTINUED:

119

She cannot see him.

Ozunu's attack hits Raizo with the force of a bomb burst, his blade shatters through Raizo's chain--

Hurling him back, petals of blood fluttering from his chest.

Raizo tries to recover, his chain now in two pieces.

RAIZO

Mika! Run!

MIKA

Where is he? I can't see him!

RAIZO

Get away!

Ozunu emerges from the smoke behind her, a wraith. His eyes are as black as the sockets of a skull.

She spins around but is too late.

The ancient blade runs straight through her chest just as--
-

Raizo finds them.

He sees Kiriko, the same blade taking her life and howls--

His pain a force of nature unleashed.

The chain blades crackle in the air--

Dual cyclones that batter Ozunu's parrying blade which--

Finally shatters against Raizo's fury.

And with a final scream, Raizo lunges at his master, the whistling blades lazering through his body until he separates, pieces hanging in mid-air, like an unstitched rag doll.

Raizo throws down the blood slick blades and--

--hurries to Mika's side. He picks Mika up and walks through the falling timbers and blazing shards to the door.

120 EXT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD - NIGHT

120

The fighting is over now. All the combatant ninjas dead or long gone.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 93.

120 CONTINUED:

120

Maslow sees Raizo emerge from the smoke and flames, carrying Mika in his arms.

MASLOW

Mika!

He runs to her side as Raizo lays her gently on the ground.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

What happened?

RAIZO

She saved my life.

Raizo puts his hand on her chest. Closes his eyes. We
can FEEL her heart-beat. Bump-thump. Bump-thump.

Raizo opens his eyes.

RAIZO (CONT'D)

She will be all right.

MASLOW

How can you be sure?

Raizo touches her face as she takes in a sudden breath.
He smiles distantly.

RAIZO

Her heart is special.

MIKA

Medic! Over here now!

Several medics rush to them, Raizo gently laying her on the stretcher.

As they immediately begin working on her, Raizo fades back.

Maslow remains at her side.

Her eyes flutter open.

MASLOW

Is she going to be okay?

MEDIC

I don't know...she's got a hole
right through the middle of her
heart...but shes not really
bleeding, that badly...

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (2)

120

MIKA

My heart...

She points to the right side of her chest.

MIKA (CONT'D)

...is over here.

MASLOW

...you gotta be fucking kidding me.

MIKA

...Raizo?

MASLOW

He said you saved his life.

She smiles.

MASLOW (CONT'D)

So you kept your promise. Can we go home now?

121 EXT. ORPHANAGE BONSAI GARDEN - DAY

121

Raizo stands among the bound trees.

RAIZO (V.O.)

You shouldn't do that.

122 FLASHBACK - EXT ORPHANAGE BONSAI GARDEN - DAY

122

Kiriko releases one of the trees.

KIRIKO

I believe the heart of a tree knows which way it needs to grow.

CUT TO:

122A Raizo releases a tree.

122A

(V.O.)

Trees don't have hearts.

KIRIKO (V.O.)

Everything has a heart.

RAIZO

I don't.

GOLDENROD REVISED 2nd DRAFT 6/4/08 **CUT TO:**
95.

123 FLASHBACK - EXT: ORPHANAGE BONSAI GARDEN - DAY 123

She listens to his heart.

KIRIKO

Hello...hello in there. It said it
was happy to meet me and that it
missed you.

TO: CUT

124 EXT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD/WALL - DAY 124

He stands and looks at the wall.

125 FLASHBACK - EXT ORPHANAGE COURTYARD/WALL - NIGHT 125

The storm lashes against them.

KIRIKO

Come with me!

TO: CUT

126 EXT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD/WALL - DAY 126

He begins to climb.

TO: CUT

127 FLASHBACK - EXT. ORPHANAGE WALL - NIGHT 127

She kisses him.

TO: CUT

We hear his heartbeat. Bump-thump Bump-thump.

As he stands on the edge of the wall.

In the next moment he is gone-

And finally, free.

FADE OUT.