

HUNGRY HIPPOS

by
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A PLATE HOLDING 15 WHITE MARBLES.

MARBLE POV: A mouth appears at the edge of the plate. The marbles roll towards it until swallowed.

EXT. LEESYLVANIA STATE PARK - BEACHFRONT

WADE, a bearded high school dropout, chews the marbles with delight while sitting on the bank of the Occoquan Bay. He sets the now-empty plate down next to an open case of OREOS.

He grabs an Oreo, unfolds a Swiss Army knife, and surgically removes the cream from the cookies. He rolls the cream into a marble and sets it upon the plate. He continues this procedure.

WADE

You sure you're not hungry, babe?

Out of the bay pops MISSY. She is the type of girl who would take pride in dating Wade. Her bikini top is at least a size too small.

MISSY

Would you stop eating and come swim with me?

WADE

I'm making another batch of cream balls, come get some of this!

MISSY

(seductively)

Why don't you come get some of this?

Wade keeps making cream balls, never even looks up.

WADE

I'm not gonna bang you in the river. That's asking for some disease. Or for a fish to bite my dick or something. No thanks.

MISSY

Keep this up, fish will be the only thing you can get near your dick.

Wade rolls his eyes and shoves another ball of frosting in his mouth. He looks up at her, suddenly shocked.

WADE

Babe, what's that behind you?

Missy turns around. Some distance away from her, a CREATURE floats on the surface of the water. Dark, grey, and unspeakably still.

MISSY

Oh my god, do you think it's a manatee? I love manatees!

WADE

It kind of looks like a hippo.

Missy squints. Sure as shit looks like a hippo.

MISSY

Do they have hippos in Virginia?

WADE

How the hell should I know? I thought they all lived in Europe or something.

MISSY

This is so exciting! Can you get a picture of me with it?

WADE

It's just going to look like some lump in the water. You won't get any Instagram likes.

MISSY

I'm in a bathing suit, it'll get likes. Please? Use my phone, it's in my bag.

Wade sets his plate of cream marbles on the ground and walks over to dig through Missy's bag.

He finds the phone and looks up. A puzzled look sweeps over his face.

WADE

It's gone!

Missy turns around. Sure enough, no hippo.

MISSY

What the hell? Where did it go?

WADE

How should I know?

MISSY

Hold on a second.

INT. OCCOQUAN BAY -- UNDERWATER

Missy swims in the direction of where the hippo was, eyes open, searching.

BUBBLES float up from beneath her. She swims down toward the floor of the river, where she finds...

MISSY'S POV: ...crabs as the source of the bubbles. Nothing more.

Suddenly, a LARGE DARK SHADOW swiftly passes behind her.

She turns around. Nothing.

EXT. LEESYLVANIA STATE PARK

Missy comes up for air, frustrated.

MISSY

I can't find--

Wade... is gone.

MISSY

Wade?

She swims toward the shore, looking for Wade. Nothing.

MISSY

Wade, this isn't funny! Wade?

She gets out of the water. Wade's Oreo cream balls sit on the ground in front of her.

MISSY

Wade?

She walks a bit farther from the shore, when she hears the rustling of leaves and branches ahead of her.

MISSY

Wade? Come out of there, this isn't funny, seriously.

In the shadows of the brush, Missy sees Wade's eyeball looking out at her.

MISSY

If you think you're getting any tonight after this, you're dreaming.

Missy turns around and angrily begins walking back toward the river, but behind her, the branches snap as

A HUGE HIPPO RUMBLES FORWARD WITH WADE'S BLOODY CORPSE HANGING FROM ITS MOUTH. Wade's dead face is frozen in a state of shock, eyes bulging.

Missy turns and screams. From behind her, a SECOND HIPPO STORMS OUT OF THE WATER.

The second hippo's jaws OPEN WIDE and SNAP MISSY IN HALF.

CLOSE ON: the plate of white cream marbles, as a stream of blood pours over them...

FADE TO BLACK.

THE SOUNDS OF A MEADOWLARK CHIRPING, FOLLOWED BY...

EYES STRAINING TO OPEN.

INT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD

BROCK HUNTER awakens in a worn leather-bound chair. He is in his mid 40s, unshaven, and taking poor care of himself. He wears a bathrobe and immediately clutches his head upon waking.

The windows are covered by dark shades. Papers and books are strewn about everywhere. Not only has this house not been cleaned in months... we wonder if he's seen anyone in months. Or bathed in months.

The meadowlark chirp persists. Brock looks up.

In the corner of his living room rests a meadowlark. It occasionally flies against the crack in the window, or swoops down to the crevice under the door, trying to break free.

Brock has a revolver in his lap. He picks it up, takes aim-- BANG! A miss.

He brings the gun to eye level. He takes a deep breath after he aims. BANG! A miss again.

Brock tosses his gun to the ground in frustration. He draws from behind the chair an UZI and OPENS FIRE. After firing off a couple dozen rounds...

BROCK'S POV: his wall, riddled with new bullet holes, a splash of red against it. On the ground, what used to be a tiny bird.

Brock sighs. He received zero enjoyment from this.

Suddenly, the sound of helicopter propellers. Growing closer.

He grabs the Uzi, braves the hangover, and steps outside into the sunlight.

EXT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD-- A KANSAS PRAIRIE

Brock's home is the only house for miles. He is surrounded by a desolate prairie, sandy, wind-blown, and currently infested with one black HELICOPTER.

As it lands, out charge several ARMED MEN, assault rifles aimed at Brock.

Following them: a WELL-DRESSED MAN in his late 50s. He looks more dressed for a business meeting than an attack. This is LANCE ROBERTSON.

Brock keeps his Uzi pointed, but he realizes quickly he's outnumbered. Lance approaches.

LANCE

Mr. Hunter?

Brock fires a couple of shots at Lance's feet. Lance is completely unmoved by this gesture and continues forward.

LANCE

Brock Hunter, my name is Lance
Robertson--

Brock shoots again at Lance's feet, but Lance again does not blink.

LANCE

Please stop firing at my shoes or
I will have to send you the bill
for a new polish.

BROCK

I'm not looking for work.

LANCE

Maybe not, but work has found you.
May we go inside?

Lance passes Brock and lets himself in.

INT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD

Lance begins to clear himself space on the sofa.

BROCK

Wait--

Brock grabs the stacks of papers covering the sofa and delicately puts them on the floor.

BROCK

These things are in order, believe it or not.

LANCE

I believe it.

Lance sits. Brock heads to the bar and pours two tumblers of whiskey. He walks over and offers one to Lance.

LANCE

No, no thank you.

Brock shrugs, chugs Lance's drink, and takes his own over to the leather chair. A tense moment passes.

Lance looks around the room. A few heads of ANIMALS mounted on the wall stand out.

LANCE

Mr. Hunter's a hunter. Aptly named.

BROCK

Glad my parents didn't name me Brock Proctologist.

Lance laughs. Brock doesn't.

LANCE

I've been sent here to--

BROCK

To fetch me. Like I'm some government puppet.

LANCE

Not true.

BROCK

I've served my time.

LANCE

Marine Corps. CIA. Black ops. I'm aware of your record.

BROCK

Then you're also aware you're wasting your time.

LANCE

You give me five minutes, we'll see if it's a waste.

Lance stands and walks to the bar.

LANCE

I'll have that drink after all, if you don't mind.

He pours himself a double.

LANCE

The US government has been training animals for combat since this country was founded. Dogs, horses-- these are common. The last few decades, we've trained dolphins and seals for underwater missions, birds for air combat. Again, none of this is new.

(takes a sip)

A couple of years ago, government scientists began... experimenting.

BROCK

Experimenting?

LANCE

Cross-breeding, steroid implementation... even genetic mutation. The goal was to create an animal that, despite its physical limitations, could serve as a type of... soldier. Obey orders. Carry out missions. Reside in plain sight before striking with deadly force.

BROCK

What, like some sort of... super pigeon?

LANCE

Something like that, yes. Only... bigger. See, one good swat with a broom and a pigeon's out for the count. If you can alter a wolf, a lion, maybe even an elephant? They could do serious damage.

(beat)

With the recent anti-American uprisings in Africa, it's become more and more important to have weapons at the ready... just in case. So we commenced a project with Africa in mind. And it was an overwhelming success.

BROCK

Congratulations.

LANCE

Only we went too far. Not only did we create animals of above-average intelligence, they were stronger, faster, more agile than others of their kind. They became increasingly... aggressive, uncontrollable. Deadly. The scientists wanted to put them down... The government, however, deemed too much money had been spent on this project to merely reboot. If you gave them the option now, however, they might reconsider.

Lance takes a deep sigh and stares down into the bottom of his empty tumbler.

LANCE

Two of these animals have escaped from our secret facility near Quantico. There have already been civilian casualties.

BROCK

So send in the Marines.

LANCE

Too messy, too much potential for
a media leak. We wanted someone
more... discreet.

BROCK

I'm retired.

LANCE

So was Michael Jordan. And you're
the Michael Jordan of killin'
shit.

BROCK

You could have gone to anyone. Why
did you come to me?

Brock turns away to the bar to refill his drink.

LANCE

Because, Brock... they're hippos.

Brock turns suddenly to face Lance.

BROCK

Hippos?

LANCE

Hungry... hungry... hippos.

Brock looks at a PHOTO hanging on the wall-- a portrait
of himself, younger, with a beautiful woman. The sounds
of SCREAMS suddenly fill his head and pull him away from
the current discussion. He staggers.

Lance leaps up to help Brock stay on his feet.

LANCE

Brock... are you alright?

Brock takes a few deep breaths... and steels his resolve.

BROCK

... when can we leave?

EXT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD-- A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The helicopter propellers ROAR to life.

INT. HELICOPTER-- CONTINUOUS

Brock sits in the helicopter next to Lance. He watches his house grow small in the distance.

He pulls a piece of paper out of his pocket-- the PHOTO from moments ago. He stares at the woman, attempting to bottle up the emotions welling beneath the surface.

Finally, he puts the photo back in his pocket.

BROCK

You said there've been casualties.

LANCE

Two.

BROCK

Two that you know of.

LANCE

What do you mean?

BROCK

... what do you know about hippopotami, Lance?

LANCE

... they're big?

BROCK

Big. We're talking an animal 5 feet tall, 17 feet long. It can weigh up to 9000 pounds-- that's double the size of a Dodge Ram. Most people think an animal that big can't chase them down. Most people would be wrong. Swimming, a hippo can travel nearly twice as fast as the average person. On land, they're even faster. They can sprint nearly 30 miles per hour.

(MORE)

BROCK (CONT'D)

If you piss off a hippo, you're looking at a creature the size of a rhinoceros with nearly bulletproof skin coming at you at the speed of an Olympic sprinter.

LANCE

Jesus.

BROCK

Jesus couldn't save you. In Africa, hippos kill more people per year than any other creature. Every year, people report seeing a hippo bite a crocodile clean in half with one bite. I personally know people who had chunks bitten out of their boats.

Brock stares out the helicopter at the rolling landscape.

BROCK

Kids think hippos are friendly, cute... they see them in TV shows and cartoons. They just don't know...

He turns back to Lance.

BROCK

The reason you may not know if there are more casualties, Mr. Robertson, is there may not be any parts left to identify.

EXT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

The helicopter lands. Brock and Lance are greeted by a number of gunmen in suits. This isn't your typical military base.

INT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

Brock is marched down a long metallic corridor. Lining the corridor are a series of doors, all labeled with animal names: BAT. APE. MOOSE. HOUSECAT.

Finally, they reach a door labeled HIPPOPOTAMUS.

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY

Brock is led down a huge aisle. Along either side are series of HIPPO PENS.

Each pen is roughly 200 square feet with a sizable body of water in the back. Walls are bulletproof glass on all sides, so each pen seems to blend into the next. Inside of each pen: a gigantic HIPPO.

As Brock stares at the hippos, the hippos, eerily, seem to stare back. They sense the presence of an outsider.

Looking deep into the eyes of a hippo, Brock begins to hear the SCREAMS in his head, same as before. They grow clearer to us this time.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Brock! Save me! Oh my God, please help--

Brock is SUCKED suddenly back into the present by a HAND on his shoulder. He grabs the hand and, as a reflex, twists it behind his potential assailant's back.

LANCE (O.S.)

Brock! Brock!

Suddenly, Brock is aware of his surroundings. Lance is staring at him as the gunmen point weapons at him.

One man pushes the barrel of his gun pushed against Brock's back. He's the mustachioed chief of security, CARL. You know those cops who shoot unarmed kids just because they're angry at any gesture of disrespect? Carl is one of these.

Brock looks down and sees he is twisting the arm of a bearded man in a LABCOAT, no older than 30. This is DR. AIDAN ROSS. He is one smug son of a bitch.

AIDAN

Mr. Hunter, if you'd be so kind as
to let me go...

Brock obliges. Aidan rubs his elbow for a moment before
extending his arm for a handshake.

AIDAN

I am Dr. Aidan Ross, head of the
Hippopotamus Facility. Behind you
is our chief of security, Carl.

Carl steps back, remaining wary of Brock.

LANCE

Dr. Ross has worked with hippos
his entire life.

BROCK

So not long?

AIDAN

If that's a jab at my age, let me
assure you, Mr. Hunter, my
expertise in the field of
hippopotami studies is second to
none.

BROCK

Then how did two of them escape on
your watch?

AIDAN

(beat)
No one knows.

Aidan, Lance, and the rest begin walking down the hall.
Brock stays puzzled behind.

BROCK

Wait a minute... no one knows?

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY-- LAB

Brock catches up with them as they enter a large
LABORATORY. The walls are lined with liquids, test tubes,
and various devices. This place would make Victor
Frankenstein sexually aroused.

The centerpiece of the room is a GIANT LAB TABLE, ten feet wide, twenty feet long. Strapped to the top of it is a HUGE HIPPOPOTAMUS, currently anesthetized.

Four doctors in lab coats stand on a tall stair surrounding the table, examining the creature's vitals.

Aidan steps directly up to the hippo. Brock staggers.

BROCK

What in the name of God...?

AIDAN

Just a checkup, Mr. Hunter. To ensure our friends here are responding well to the treatments we've been giving them.

BROCK

You're continuing this freak show? Two have escaped and are currently snacking on innocent people!

AIDAN

Admittedly, it's a hiccup. But, as they say, one monkey don't stop no show. Two hippos don't stop no show either, I guess.

BROCK

How did they escape?

AIDAN

(nonchalant)

We told you, we don't know.

BROCK

How do you not know? Are there no... no security cameras?

LANCE

The government prefers no record of any kind kept for these facilities.

BROCK

Were no... no doors smashed? No guards missing limbs or heads?

LANCE

... strangely, no. Night-time security reported no sightings, no casualties, no damage. They were just... gone.

BROCK

Have you somehow taught them how to teleport?

AIDAN

Let's not be ridiculous. We can't create magic, Mr. Hunter. This is merely a lab designed by the government for genetic mutation of hippopotami for the purposes of creating a covert force of weaponized wildlife.

BROCK

What kind of modifications have you made? Specifically.

AIDAN

They're smarter. We wanted them to have the same intelligence as an above-average soldier. Know when to strike, when to lay low. How to strategize. They're also faster, stronger... you know, the usual genetic mutation stuff.

BROCK

So you took an efficient killing machine and made it more efficient?

Aidan smiles, as if Brock meant this as a compliment.

AIDAN

Yeah, that sounds about right.

BROCK

Mr. Robertson, I'm out.

Brock heads toward the door when Carl and his men all
DRAW THEIR GUNS AT HIM.

BROCK

Go on, do it. I'd rather be shot to death than bitten in half.

(MORE)

BROCK (CONT'D)

At least they'd get to bury all of me, I wouldn't have some goddamn animal shitting out my torso in 3 days.

Brock keeps exiting until Lance steps in front of him.

LANCE

Mr. Hunter. Please reconsider.

BROCK

This whole facility is fucked. I hope you realize that.

LANCE

My job isn't to analyze the usefulness of the facility, my job is to protect the government interests. And right now, that's to get those hippos out of the wild.

BROCK

... and bring them back here to scramble their brains some more. Maybe the next time they escape, they'll be five times as deadly! That'd be great!

LANCE

You'll have whatever resources you need. We'll pay you whatever you want.

BROCK

Tempting, but pass.

LANCE

More people will die.

BROCK

Your problem, not mine.

LANCE

Do you think Katie would agree?

Brock grabs Lance, rams him against the wall, unsheathes a HUGE KNIFE from his back, and pushes it against Lance's neck. The gunmen grow understandably agitated.

LANCE
(to the gunmen)
It's fine! Don't shoot! Don't
shoot.

BROCK
Say her name again. I'm begging
you.

LANCE
I sincerely apologize.

Brock eases up, as do the gunmen surrounding him.

LANCE
Look, Brock... we have rooms here.
Stay the night. Think it over. If
in the morning you're truly not
interested, we'll take you back to
Kansas where you can get back to
the life you were living.

Brock steps back, still shaken from the mention of Katie.
He nods in agreement to Lance. Carl extends his hand,
asking for the knife. Brock hands it over reluctantly.

BROCK
I'm getting this back.

Lance, Brock, and several gunmen head out of the lab.
Brock hears a deep, pained rumble coming from the lab
table. He turns to see the HIPPO, twitching in its
restraints, as Aidan chuckles with joy.

INT. QUANTICO-- BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Brock lies restless on a cot in a dark room. He is
shirtless, his arms and torso splattered with scars and
tattoos from various military and black ops squadrons.

He tosses in bed, grimacing in pain, talking in his sleep
to the voices he hears in his head.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Brock! Save me! Oh my God, please
help--

BROCK

Katie... hang on... oh god...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

We don't have much more time!
Please!

BROCK

I'm hurrying... please... Jesus
Christ...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Why is this happening?! Oh my
God... oh my--

We suddenly hear a DEEP BASSY GROWL. The register is the same as the one from the hippo, but this is meaner, more vicious. As the GROWL escalates in volume...

Brock shoots up in bed, awake, covered in sweat. He wipes his forehead and grimaces.

He reaches for his jacket, hanging on the chair. In it is a SILVER FLASK. He removes the lid and empties the entire flask down his throat.

He lays back down, letting the alcohol take him away.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS -- THE NEXT MORNING

A SCHOOL BUS pulls out of an elementary school parking lot and hits the road.

INT. SCHOOL BUS-- CONTINUOUS

A middle-aged teacher, MRS. HALL, stands at the front of a bus packed with small, eager-eyed KIDS. She whistles to get their attention.

MRS. HALL

All right, everyone, I've got one
question... Who's ready to go to
the National Zoo?!

The KIDS ERUPT IN JOYOUS SCREAMS. MRS. HALL smiles-- her students' delight is infectious.

The DRIVER smiles as well, but as he turns a corner, his smile turns to shock.

DRIVER POV: A HUGE HIPPOPOTAMUS stands in the middle of the road. This is the hippo that ate Wade in the opening scene. He has a crack running down the middle of his right front tooth.

We'll call him GEORGE.

The bus screeches to a halt. Everyone LURCHES forward, and Mrs. Hall flies forward to the windshield. She looks up, disoriented. The hell is a hippo doing in Virginia?

A BOY stands up, delighted.

BOY
Look everyone! It's a hippo!

A bunch of kids pile toward the front of the bus to look.

As the kids in the back fight for a better look, a GIRL turns around and looks out the back. She squeals--

GIRL
There's another one! Behind us!

The kids immediately turn around-- sure enough, another HIPPO has positioned itself immediately behind the bus. This hippo has no crack running down its tooth.

We'll call this one MARTHA.

The girl presses herself against the emergency exit window in the back... and Martha begins approaching the back of the bus.

GIRL
It's coming this way!

Now everyone pushes toward the back-- they want a closer look. Mrs. Hall stands on a seat to look.

Martha gets within inches of the back of the bus. She opens her mouth wide.

KIDS
(in unison)
Ooooooooooh!

Suddenly, Martha LUNGES herself at the back of the bus. The KIDS SCREAM and jump back as Martha's teeth PUNCTURE the glass and the metal on the back of the bus.

MRS. HALL
Get away from there, kids!

Martha chomps down and YANKS at the back of the bus, starting to rip it away. The kids all pile towards the front of the bus.

MRS. HALL
What the hell?

Martha CHOMPS again, RIPS again. The hole in the back of the bus is starting to grow large.

The DRIVER panics in the front seat and opens the bus door. Mrs. Hall grabs him.

MRS. HALL
What do you think you're doing?

DRIVER
With all due respect, fuck you and your kids. I can outrun that thing.

The DRIVER takes off running. George catches him nearly instantly. He BITES OFF the top half of the driver in one chomp, gulping him down.

The KIDS GO BALLISTIC. Mrs. Hall closes the bus door... as if that will help protect them.

Martha CHOMPS away. Most of the back of the bus is GONE. She steps her front feet onto the bus, causing the bus to TILT back towards her.

MRS. HALL
Grab onto something!

The kids all CLUTCH to the seats and each other, crying.

Mrs. Hall looks out the front. George waits by the front of the bus in case someone runs for it. She realizes-- there's no way out.

MRS. HALL
Okay kids... help is on the way!
Let's sing a song while we wait,
okay?

Martha CHOMPS one of the back seats right off of the bus.

MRS. HALL
Let's sing "Wheels on the Bus, all
right? Everyone with me?

CHOMP. Another back seat gone. Fate climbs closer. The kids tearfully sing along with Mrs. Hall.

KIDS
(singing)
The wheels on the bus go round and
round, round...

CHOMP.

KIDS
(singing)
... round and round, round and
round...

CHOMP.

CUT TO:

INT. QUANTICO-- BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Brock is sprawled out across his bed, the victim of a restless night of sleep. The sun shining in the window illuminates the room.

Sounds of COMMOTION from outside. Someone enters.

 LANCE
 (off-screen)
Mr. Hunter.
 (no reply)
Brock!

Brock sits up, startled, wide awake. He notices the commotion outside.

 BROCK
What happened?

 LANCE
Kids. They found some kids.

INT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

Brock, disheveled, having thrown on the same clothes from yesterday, follows Lance down a hallway.

 BROCK
How many kids?

 LANCE
We're not entirely sure. There
aren't any bodies, any... clear
remains.

 BROCK
Then how do you know--

 LANCE
We did find the remains of a
school bus. It was ripped apart...
one bite at a time.

Brock freezes where he stands, then immediately changes direction, walking with purpose away from Lance. Lance knows where he's headed.

LANCE

Oh shit.

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY-- LAB

Aidan is enjoying a meal of STEAK AND EGGS, humming softly to himself. He cuts a piece of his steak with a SURGICAL SCALPEL and eats it.

Brock storms in. Aidan looks up, mouth full.

AIDAN

(while chewing)

Mr. Hunter!

Brock grabs Aidan's arm, takes his scalpel, and STABS Aidan's hand, pinning it to the table. Aidan screams in agony, while men in suits draw their guns.

BROCK

Enjoying your breakfast?

AIDAN

What the fuck is wrong with you?

Brock grabs Aidan's breakfast plate and SMASHES him across the face with it. This tears a large LACERATION across Aidan's cheek.

Carl runs forward, attempting to gun butt Brock. Brock disarms him one-handed and retaliates, SMACKING Carl across the face with his own gun, sending him reeling.

BROCK

(to Aidan)

Your hippos enjoyed a breakfast too. A busful of children.

AIDAN

... it's regrettable.

BROCK

You don't regret it. Not yet, anyway.

Brock kicks the chair out from under Aidan, causing him to fall, which TUGS on his pinned hand. Aidan screams again.

Brock points Carl's gun at Aidan, preparing to shoot. Carl draws another weapon and points it at Brock.

CARL

Get rid of the gun, asshole!

BROCK

How about I just get rid of the bullets?

Lance runs into the room.

LANCE

Guns down, everyone!

CARL

Sir, this lunatic--

LANCE

Carl, gun down.

Carl reluctantly obeys. Brock still remains cocked and ready to blow off Aidan's head.

LANCE

Brock.

Brock looks up.

LANCE

We're going to the clean-up site, then I'll take you home if you so choose. But the chopper is leaving now.

Brock stares Aidan down for a moment. Aidan stares right back, furious at the intrusion. Brock tosses the gun into the corner of the lab and storms off.

Aidan pants, staring at his pinned hand, bleeding heavily from the cheek. Carl goes to help him up.

AIDAN

Fuck off, Carl.

EXT. QUANTICO MARINE BASE

Brock puts on some sunglasses as the HELICOPTER takes off, Lance seated next to him.

We watch Quantico grow smaller in the distance in the reflection of Brock's sunglasses.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

The helicopter approaches an area of the road already blocked off, with a few government vehicles and dozens of clean-up crew men working hard to scrub blood off of the ground.

As they land, Brock hops off the open side and jogs toward the crime scene. The bus is gathered into three distinct piles of jagged metal, tire remains, etc. Half of a stop sign conspicuously emerges from one pile.

Lance catches up with Brock. They stand, silent.

LANCE
We found it like this.

BROCK
What?

LANCE
The bus.

Brock nearly does a double take.

BROCK
Your men didn't do this?

Lance shakes his head no. Brock investigates closer. Sure enough, the road around the pile is covered with scratches-- these pieces were pushed together.

BROCK
Why would they do this?

FEMALE VOICE
(off-camera)
To mark their territory.

Brock turns around. Emerging from the other side of a pile is DR. CARA RICKERSON. Younger than most, smarter than everyone.

LANCE

Brock, this is Dr. Cara Rickerson.

BROCK

Doctor? Aren't you a little young to have a doctorate?

CARA

Actually, I entered graduate programs in biology and ethology concurrently... so I'm a little young to have two doctorates.

LANCE

She wrote an impressive thesis on the behavior patterns of hippopotamuses.

CARA

Hippopotami. And yes, I did.

BROCK

Why would they need to mark their territory?

CARA

To alert others to their presence. In the wild, hippos define their property with middens, piles of their fecal matter, to tell the other hippos to, you know, eff off.

BROCK

Fuck off?

CARA

Sure, right. That.

BROCK

Nothing says fuck off like a big pile of bus.

CARA

Two things confuse me, though. Why would they eat all of these children? Generally speaking, a hippo feels full after eating one, one point five percent of its body weight.

(MORE)

CARA (CONT'D)

I would believe it if each hippo ate two, maybe even three percent... But a whole bus?

LANCE

It's a possibility that one of the side effects of our experimentation is a large increase in metabolism.

CARA

What kind of experimentation?

BROCK

All the worst kinds. What's the second thing? The second thing that confuses you.

CARA

... why mark their territory at all? They likely haven't detected any sign of any other hippo out here, there's no reason to try to fend them off.

BROCK

These weren't left for other hippos. They were left for us.

Brock walks away as Cara and Lance contemplate the message sent by these bloody stacks of yellow metal.

INT. HELICOPTER

Brock looks out of the side of the chopper, lost in thought. He glares back into the helicopter at Lance, who sits by Cara.

BROCK

How much weaponry do you have back at the base?

LANCE

It's a Marine base. We could take over a small country.

BROCK

I'll do this thing. You started it, I'll finish it. But we're running it my way.

CARA

I'm coming too.

BROCK

The beasts have had enough to eat today. They don't need a dessert.

CARA

With all due respect, I'm a prime athlete. I'm a black belt in eight different forms of martial arts.

BROCK

Great, maybe you can karate chop a 9000 pound animal with bulletproof skin. That'll really fuck its day up.

CARA

I know the way hippos move, their habits, their routines. I'm an invaluable source and you know it.

LANCE

She should go along, Brock.

BROCK

You may know about hippos, Doc...

Brock resumes staring out of the side of the helicopter.

BROCK

... but these aren't hippos. Not anymore.

EXT. QUANTICO MARINE BASE

The helicopter lands. Dozens of gunmen are piling into the back of several SUVs. Brock gets out with Cara and opens the back of a nearby VAN-- more artillery than one could imagine fitting in the back of a van.

CARA

Holy God.

BROCK

(smiles)
Feels like home.

Brock starts picking up guns, figuring out which he wants. A big-ass ELEPHANT GUN seems to suit his fancy.

CARA

So what are you? The world's biggest badass or something?

BROCK

I've been called the Michael Jordan of killin' shit.

CARA

These hippos aren't going to go down easy.

BROCK

(getting serious)
You don't have to tell me about hunting hippos.

Cara catches the tonal shift and doesn't dwell on it.

CARA

I guess I'll go hop in one of the cars. I'll see you out there.

BROCK

If you want to stay alive, you'll stay with me.

CARA

What?

BROCK

Look around.

Cara looks around at the gunmen, armed with bulletproof vests, helmets, and assault rifles.

BROCK

These guys don't know what they're up against. Otherwise they wouldn't be wearing helmets. No helmet in the world stopping a hippo jaw, sweetheart.

Brock grabs another grenade or two before closing the van, not seeing Cara's eyeroll at his comment.

CARA

That's Dr. Sweetheart.

BROCK

Alright, Doc.

Brock cocks a huge-ass gun and turns towards the camera. He is covered in all manner of weaponry: he makes John Rambo look like a pussy.

BROCK

Let's go fuck up some animals.

Brock loads himself into an SUV, noticing Aidan whispering to Carl. Aidan, stitches in his face and a bloody bandage wrapped around his hand, catches Brock's eye. He smiles and waves.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

Four SUVs ZOOM down the road, taking curves in the road quickly, plowing through stop signs.

A little BOY on a TRICYCLE stops in his driveway as he watches these CARS zoom past in amazement.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Brock's SUV in second in the 4-car convoy. He drives, with Cara riding shotgun. Cara brandishes a large tranquilizer pistol and loads it with darts.

BROCK

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

CARA

Why not?

BROCK

Those darts aren't nearly strong enough to pierce hippo skin. Besides... we're not bringing these things back alive.

CARA

First option is always to bring them back alive.

BROCK

Their first option is to kill us.
I plan on giving them equal
treatment.

CARA

I realize things have gotten out
of hand, but at the end of the
day, they're still animals. Maybe
they're just responding to a new
hostile environment. It's possible
they don't even know what they're
doing--

SLAM! The SUV in front of them gets RAMMED from the side
by a sprinting GEORGE, causing the SUV to go sailing off
the side of the road, violently CRASHING into some trees.

Brock swerves their car around George, who icily stares
at them as they maneuver around.

BROCK

You were saying?!

The SUVs behind Brock hit their brakes. Ten gunmen
emerge, peppering George with a barrage of bullet fire.

CARA

Aren't you going to get out?

Brock waits in the driver's seat, keeping his hand on the
gear shift.

BROCK

There are two of them.

CARA

What?

BROCK

There are two of them. The other
is close by.

Brock continues to wait. George stands, averting his head
from the gunfire, taking countless blows to the body.

CARA

This one will be dead soon, who
cares if there's another?

Brock revs the engine, preparing to take off.

BROCK
This one's not dead... he's just
getting started.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

As the gunmen continue to shoot at George, one ASTUTE GUNMAN notices something. He leans forward to get a closer look.

The bullets are BOUNCING off of George's skin.

ASTUTE GUNMAN
We're not hitting him! We're not
hitting him! Get the heavy
artillery!

The gunmen cease fire and notice it's true-- they haven't drawn first blood at all. They stare in amazement at this creation.

George stares back... and smiles.

A distant RUMBLE to their left causes them all to turn their heads.

ASTUTE GUNMAN
Is that a tank?

It grows louder.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

The rear view mirror vibrates as the rumble gets louder. Brock rolls down the window.

BROCK
Can you hand me the grenade
launcher?

Cara looks in the back seat at a barrage of guns and weapons. They all blend together.

CARA

You're going to have to be more specific.

Brock turns around, finds an M203 grenade launcher roughly the size of a rifle, and points it out the window.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

To the left of the gunmen, the trees start to shake. The sound of wood splintering echoes through the air. It's a thunderous, intimidating din.

Suddenly, from the crunches of tree trunks exploding to give way, Martha BURSTS forth from the wilderness, grabbing three gunmen with one CHOMP and cutting them into pieces.

George also charges, grabbing limbs and torsoes in a whirlwind of blood and guts.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Cara recoils in horror, cracks her door open, and vomits.

Brock sits, composed, grenade launcher aimed. Waiting.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

As the gunmen scream in agony as they are torn apart, the ASTUTE GUNMAN runs to the SUV and looks through weapon options. Not much other than guns, guns, and more guns.

He sees a GIGANTIC CROCODILE DUNDEE STYLE KNIFE and picks it up, brandishing it in a stabbing pose.

Suddenly, his SUV is pushed swiftly to the side, disappearing before he can react. Standing in front of him is George.

George slowly approaches the Astute Gunman. The gunman is shitting his pants. When George's snout gets so close that it's nearly touching the gunman, he SCREAMS and STABS the snout as hard as he can.

The KNIFE BENDS to the side, unable to penetrate George's skin. George stares at him as he gently sobs. We watch as, before we can blink, George takes him down in one gulp, leaving behind the Astute Gunman's feet, still standing on the road.

George and Martha nudge the remains around, looking for survivors when...

KABOOM!

Brock launched a grenade, landing it right underneath George's JAW.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Brock and Cara look at the billowing smoke from the explosion.

CARA

You got em!

Brock puts his hand back on the gear shift and starts revving the engine. He is not convinced.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

The smoke clears.

George is sporting a deep BURN across half of his face. Martha is dazed but undamaged.

They look up. These hippos are pissed. Blood drips from their mouths.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Brock revs the engine harder. Cara, hands shaking, reaches for her seatbelt and clicks it on.

George and Martha start sprinting towards the SUV. Brock THROWS IT into REVERSE and starts speeding quickly down the road backwards.

EXT. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BACKROADS

Brock's SUV careens down the road backward, the hippos in full pursuit.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Brock looks over his shoulder in order to steer. Cara keeps her eyes on the approaching hippos.

CARA

Can't you go faster?

BROCK

We're on a small winding road. I'm driving backwards. The fuck else do you want me to do?

CARA

Turn the car around?

BROCK

The second they get one of those big-ass teeth in this car, you can kiss getting that third doctorate goodbye.

A TURN approaches. Brock hangs a backward LEFT at a dangerously high speed, wheels squealing. The hippos remain in hot pursuit.

BROCK

Don't worry, once I get up to about 40, they won't be able to keep up.

Brock hits the accelerator. They are hauling ass in reverse. The speedometer reads: 30. Then 35. Then 40.

They look in front of them. The hippos are gaining on them, if anything.

CARA

Looks like they can keep up.

BROCK

Remind me to stab that mad scientist in his other hand.

CARA

Who'd you stab?

Brock sees an ENTRANCE RAMP for I-95.

BROCK

God, this is a stupid idea.

CARA

What is?

Brock speeds up.

CARA

What's a stupid idea? Brock?
Brock?

Cara looks back and sees the entrance ramp. She looks forward and sees the hippos a few feet away.

CARA

Help me, Jesus.

Cara braces herself using the ceiling and the side of the car. Brock grits his teeth and SWERVES onto the entrance ramp in reverse.

When he gets to the top of the ramp, he YANKS the wheel hard to the left, SPINNING the car one eighty degrees. Other cars on the freeway SLAM on the brakes to avoid a collision. Once he's facing forward, Brock straightens out and POUNDS the accelerator.

EXT. I-95 - CONTINUOUS

Brock begins to speed down the highway. The hippos storm up the entrance ramp and keep pursuit, but they start to fall behind.

INT. BROCK'S SUV

Cara breathes a sigh of relief at seeing the hippos shrink in the distance behind them.

CARA
We're losing them!

BROCK
Not for long.

He points to a sign on the side of the road: EXIT 158--
CONSTRUCTION AHEAD.

CARA
Road work? Why is there always
road work?

Brock leans his seat all the way back.

BROCK
Here. Take this.

CARA
Take what?

BROCK
The wheel.

CARA
Are you crazy?

BROCK
I've got to try to stop these
things.

CARA
But... I didn't bring my license.

Brock gives her a "really?" glare.

CARA

Fine.

Cara, worried, unbuckles her seatbelt and puts her hands on the wheel, preparing to climb over.

BROCK

On my count, ready? One... two... three!

Brock climbs quickly into the back, as Cara hops into the car seat... and SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

BROCK

The hell are you doing?

Brock looks back. The hippos bear down on them like two fat grey missiles.

CARA

Sorry, sorry!

The WHEELS SHRIEK as Cara slams on the accelerator and the SUV shoots forward-- the hippos now considerably closer than before.

CARA

Just hit the wrong pedal, my fault.

BROCK

The wrong pedal?

(pause)

Do you know how to drive?

CARA

Of course! You know, a learner's permit...

Brock turns around, exasperated.

CARA

I'm sorry, there was never much need for a car in school! I just stayed on campus or took a cab!

Brock gets back to work, sorting through his weapon options.

BROCK

It's okay. Just keep your eyes on the road, you'll do fine.

CARA

Got it. What are you going to--

CRASH! Brock uses the butt of a rifle to SMASH the back windshield of the SUV. Cara swerves the car in a panic and looks back at him.

BROCK

Eyes on the road!

CARA

Got it. Eyes on the road. Just warn me when you're about to--

BANG! Brock FIRES a GRENADE at the hippos, but it misses wide left. Cara swerves in response to the loud bang.

BROCK

Eyes on the road!

CARA

You startled me!

Brock, frustrated, reloads the GRENADE LAUNCHER.

BROCK

Well, let me warn you properly. To keep us from dying, I'm going to be shooting all manners of very loud shit. Consider yourself warned.

Cara turns back to the road, mumbling something unintelligible about manners. Brock FIRES again at the hippos-- wide right.

CARA

Brock?

BROCK

For the last time--

Brock turns and looks ahead, seeing what Cara sees.

EXT. I-95 - CONTINUOUS

A series of BRAKE LIGHTS in front of them, as the freeway merges all into two left lanes only. We pan up to see...

... this GRIDLOCK continues for a few miles. The shoulder is closed off, a concrete barrier to its left. All other lanes are littered with CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT.

CARA

Thoughts?

BROCK

In the middle of the steering wheel is the horn. I'd start leaning on it.

CARA

You can't be serious.

Cara glances back as Brock mounts a giant ROCKET LAUNCHER onto his shoulder.

CARA

(to herself)

He's serious.

Cara starts honking the horn frantically.

INT. MERCEDES BENZ - CONTINUOUS

A DOUCHEBAG in a Mercedes Benz is in the back of the gridlock listening to a Dane Cook comedy album. He sees Brock's SUV racing toward him, honking the horn.

DOUCHEBAG

Gonna have to wait your turn, bro.

The SUV doesn't wait. He looks back again.

DOUCHEBAG

Christ, shut the fuck up!

The douchebag's expression changes when he hears a new rocket explosion from behind the SUV.

A huge wall of smoke in the distance obscures the hippos from the douchebag's view.

DOUCHEBAG

Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit.

The douchebag turns off to the side as far as he can, as do many of the cars in front of him. It's gonna be close.

DOUCHEBAG

Oh, please, not my car. Don't let this terrorist hurt my car.

Brock's SUV passes his Benz, a mere inch from his side view mirror.

DOUCHEBAG

Oh, thank God. Thank you, God.

Suddenly, he is RAMMED from behind by something.

DOUCHEBAG

WHAT THE FUCK?!

The douchebag turns around. He sees George. His face badly burned. He's pissed.

DOUCHEBAG

What's a fucking rhino doing here?

George growls loudly and CLIMBS OVER THE DOUCHEBAG'S BENZ, crushing it flat as it goes. Blood and viscera spurt out the Benz's sides as George flattens the douchebag within.

INT. BROCK'S SUV-- CONTINUOUS

Cara drives, nervously looking at the speedometer. She can only go 25 MPH while navigating through the narrow part in the sea of standstill traffic ahead of her.

CARA

How are we doing?

Brock is looking out the back window: the hippos storm forward, occasionally smashing a car, occasionally slamming their head against a car and knocking it off the highway.

They're advancing. And not slowly.

BROCK
Might need a new plan.

CARA
You didn't hit them? Even once?

BROCK
You want to shoot the rocket launcher?

CARA
I can't even lift a rocket launcher.

BROCK
Then get out of this traffic.

CARA
The shoulder's closed.

BROCK
I suggest you open it.

Cara puts on her turn signal and tries nudging her way in between cars in the left lane. The car in front has nowhere to go. The car in back has nowhere to go. There's not enough space.

CARA
We won't fit!

Brock looks at the hippos. They're getting closer. He looks at a car to their side-- it's a Buick LeSabre, driven by an OLD MAN. Brock shouts out the window.

BROCK
Sir! Make room! Back up!

The old man rolls his window down.

OLD MAN
What?

BROCK

Back up, please! Make room!

The hippos push more cars, trample more cars. Thirty seconds away. Only a matter of time.

OLD MAN

There's nowhere to go! If I back up, I'll hit them!

BROCK

Fine, do that! Just move!

OLD MAN

Fuck you! I'm not moving!

Brock groans, then reaches into the SUV and pulls out the ROCKET LAUNCHER, pointing it at the old man.

BROCK

Do not fuck with me, old man!

The old man throws his car in REVERSE, crunching several cars as he shoves his way backward, making room for Cara to squeeze through.

Cara gets the SUV onto the closed shoulder and ACCELERATES. CONES fly up at the windshield and under the car as she batters them.

CARA

I don't like this!

Brock watches the hippos rumble their way onto the shoulder and make chase.

INT. MINIVAN -- CONTINUOUS

A TEENAGER'S MOM sits behind the driver's seat as her moody TEENAGER texts in the backseat closest to the shoulder. He hears the horn honking behind him and turns.

Brock's SUV zooms up and passes... but the hippos are right behind.

The teen's eyes go wide.

TEENAGER

Damn!

TEENAGER'S MOM

Language, please!

He quickly switches his phone to CAMERA MODE and takes a VIDEO of the hippos as they race past his car. The deafening RUMBLE takes Mom off guard.

TEENAGER'S MOM

What the fuck was that?

INT. BROCK'S SUV-- CONTINUOUS

Cara sees ahead of her a BULLDOZER sitting on the SHOULDER. To her left is an entrance into the HOV lane, closed off.

CARA

Hang on. I'm taking the HOV.

BROCK

You DO realize...

She breaks through the arm blocking the HOV lane...

BROCK

... that traffic is going south?

Cara enters the HOV... and finds a MULTITUDE of CARS driving DIRECTLY AT HER.

CARA

OH SHIT.

EXT. HOV LANE -- CONTINUOUS

The SUV swerves in and out of oncoming traffic, sending cars peeling out of their way.

Behind them, the hippos BARREL into the HOV lane as well, using their heads to SWAT cars out of their paths.

We see from overhead: cars drive up, cars swerve to dodge Brock and Cara, cars get pummeled by angry fucking hippos. Repeat.

INT. BROCK'S SUV-- CONTINUOUS

Brock looks back at the car carnage.

BROCK

Something tells me the base isn't going to be too happy about this.

CARA

Are the cars hurting them at all?

The hippos are unquestionably slowing down, dodging and hitting all these cars... but they aren't stopping.

BROCK

Not the way we need them to get hurt.

Brock looks ahead-- an ENTRANCE ramp to the HOV.

BROCK

Get off here.

CARA

At that on-ramp?

BROCK

That's right. We need to get off the freeway, so we can let the hippos get closer.

CARA

Closer?

BROCK

They're unfazed by proximity blasts. It's not enough to shoot at them. I have to shoot ON them.

CARA

What if you miss when they get close?

BROCK

They're pretty big fucking targets, Doc.

CARA
Right. Getting off.

Cara needlessly uses her turn signal as she swerves across the HOV towards the oncoming on-ramp, going up the wrong direction and hitting south-bound traffic dead-on.

She HONKS the horn and weaves her way towards the closest freeway entrance. Brock looks behind. The hippos have fallen behind, but they aren't quitting.

CARA
Another mile til we can get off.

Brock climbs back toward the front seat.

BROCK
Let me drive.

CARA
Like hell I will.

Brock reaches forward, leans the seat back, and removes her seat belt.

CARA
I'm not switching while we're moving!

Brock pulls the EMERGENCY BRAKE, bringing the car squealing to a stop. Cara sighs and climbs quickly out of the driver's seat. Brock hops forward, releases the e-brake, and PEELS out into oncoming traffic.

Brock's style of driving is far more aggressive-- he just moves straight forward, no horn honking, no swerving. Nothing but pure I-don't-give-a-fuck attitude.

CARA
Have you done this before?

BROCK
Chased by hippos down the wrong way of the interstate?

CARA
You're right. Dumb question.

Brock sails across the remaining lanes of traffic and UP the exit ramp. A VAN turns down at the top of the exit ramp.

CARA
He's gonna hit us!

BROCK
He'll move.

The van pulls off to the side of the road but is still blocking their path.

CARA
He's gonna hit us!

BROCK
He'll move!

Brock slams the side of the van, sending the van careening down a hill into some trees.

BROCK
He moved.

CARA
You could've killed him!

BROCK
The trees broke their fall.

Brock turns right at the top of the ramp and quickly brakes to pull a 180 on the OVERPASS above I-95.

They sit in the car, blocking traffic both ways on the overpass. Brock gets out of the car and opens the side door, grabbing his rocket launcher. He straps himself to the SUV using the seatbelts.

The hippos come waltzing up the exit ramp, grabbing a few cars with their jaws and tossing them to the side. They see Brock's SUV.

CARA
This is a bad idea.

BROCK
The best ideas are bad ideas.

George nods at Martha, who in response starts sprinting towards the driver's side of the SUV. Brock, sits in the back seat, door open: exposed, fearless.

CARA

Brock?

Brock is waiting. Don't shoot too soon.

Martha gets within arm's reach of the SUV, approaching ramming speed, when...

BOOM! Brock fires the ROCKET LAUNCHER at MARTHA'S HEAD. The explosion sends the SUV sliding backward across the road, nearly sending it over the opposite side of the OVERPASS.

When the smoke clears, Martha is across the overpass from them. She is dazed, heavily burned on the face, two front legs broken, a third hanging off the edge of the overpass... but she's not quite dead.

Brock sees this and hops in the driver's seat.

BROCK

Get out.

CARA

They're still out there!

Brock grabs a pistol and points it at her. Cara reluctantly gets out of the car. He gets in the driver's seat and turns the key. The SUV struggles to start.

Martha struggles to find her footing, as George approaches her.

EXT. OVERPASS

Cara watches as George nudges Martha, trying to help her. We see them look into each others' eyes. There is a clear intelligent kinship between these two creatures.

We see a sadness in their wordless exchange. Martha's plight worries George-- he doesn't know what to do. George utters a soft moan at Martha. Martha moans back. They're TALKING.

Brock's SUV suddenly REVS to life. We see fear in Martha's eyes. Martha grunts at George. George tries to gently grab Martha's leg with his mouth.

INT. BROCK'S SUV-- CONTINUOUS

Brock shifts the car into DRIVE. He FLOORS it.

EXT. OVERPASS

Martha roars at George and butts him away with her head. George steps back... and sees the SUV. Seconds away.

Brock leaps out of the SUV at the last second as we switch to...

SLOW MOTION: the SUV plows into Martha's head like a missile, pushing her other back leg off the overpass. Martha and the SUV both roll off the overpass. As Martha hits the ground, the SUV RAMS into the underside of her neck, piercing her skin.

George looks over the edge of the OVERPASS. Martha gasps for breath, but no breath arrives. Blood runs from her neck and mouth. Finally, the gasps cease.

George, saddened, looks over at Brock. Brock watches as the sadness in George's eyes turn to full-blown anger. George's face twists up, causing the BURN on his face to crack and ooze.

Before this stand-off can go any further... the sounds of distant HELICOPTERS approach.

They don't take their eyes off one another. George's scowl relaxes. Almost turns to a closed-lip smile. This throws Brock for a serious loop.

By now, the few people in the area taking video with their phones start looking at their phones in frustration. Everyone on I-95 below starts getting out of their cars and checking their engines. All electrical equipment in the area has clearly gone on the fritz.

George takes a seat on the freeway... and simply waits. Brock is sincerely disturbed by this.

A helicopter lands. A GUNMAN sporting a gas mask comes out and tosses gas masks to Brock and Cara. Three other gunmen approach George and fire GAS CANNISTERS around him. Without any struggle, George slowly takes in the gas and passes out.

GUNMAN

You two okay?

BROCK

The hell are you guys doing?

GUNMAN

A little damage control.

BROCK

Gas? You need to kill that thing.

GUNMAN

That's a negative. That thing is government property, worth tens of millions of dollars.

BROCK

Fine, if you won't, I will.

The gunman pulls out a TRANQUILIZER DART and stabs it into Brock's neck. Brock falls to the ground immediately.

CARA

Brock!

Before Brock closes his eyes...

BROCK'S POV: the gunman takes off his gas mask. It's Carl. Carl lifts his limp body and starts dragging him away as his vision goes dark...

FADE OUT.

CLOSE ON: BROCK'S EYES OPENING

INT. QUANTICO MARINE BASE-- MEDICAL WING

Brock lies in bed with an IV plugged into his arm. Cara sits by his side.

He quickly realizes that he's back at the base. He sits up, startling Cara.

CARA
God, you scared me.

BROCK
Where is he?

CARA
Where's who?

BROCK
The doctor.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY-- LAB

Brock marches angrily into the lab, where Lance, Aidan, and Carl are engaged in serious conversation. He KICKS Aidan in the spine, sending him to the floor.

BROCK
You piece of shit!

Cara enters after Brock, unable to stop the conflict from playing out. Lance and Carl attempt to stop Brock, but he wiggles free of both of them, hopping on top of Aidan.

As Brock prepares to throw down another punch on Aidan, Aidan reveals a HUGE KNIFE and STABS Brock hard in the shoulder, sending him reeling backward.

AIDAN
Nobody fucks with me twice.

Aidan kicks Brock in the face a couple of times.

CARA
Stop it!

Aidan pulls the knife out of Brock's shoulder. He wipes Brock's blood on his labcoat before re-sheathing it.

AIDAN
You're a guest in this lab. And you will learn some manners.

BROCK
You saved a murderer.

AIDAN
Oh, please. Jeffrey Dahmer's a murderer.

BROCK
Jeffrey Dahmer didn't weigh 9000 pounds. Jeffrey Dahmer can't toss a car. This hippo makes Jeffrey Dahmer look like a pussy.

AIDAN
Be that as it may, he is ours. He is a weapon for your government and you will respect your government's wishes.

BROCK
Lance, you can't possibly be going along with this psychopath.

LANCE
I'm sorry, Brock. These guys know what they're doing.

BROCK
Know what they're doing? Their hippo just destroyed a ten mile stretch of I-95!

AIDAN
Did it? Our clean-up crew got the hippos out of there before the press arrived.

(MORE)

AIDAN (CONT'D)

Our directional EMP took out all the phones and cameras. Our friends at Twitter and Facebook took care of most of the references online. We planted a few "witnesses" who described a large gray tank. Something destroyed a ten mile stretch of 95... but no one knows exactly what.

BROCK

Lance, you can't honestly think this is going to work.

LANCE

It has worked. Sure, Alex Jones is ranting about it, but really that just helps our cause.

BROCK

You have to kill this thing. I saw it in action. It is beyond your control.

LANCE

Dr. Ross is the top man in this field. If anyone can get him under control, it's him.

BROCK

I looked into that hippo's eyes. He wasn't captured... He gave up.

AIDAN

He knew he was surrounded. He's an intelligent creature.

BROCK

Intelligent enough to let himself be captured because he wanted to be. He wanted to come back.

LANCE

If it wanted to escape, why would it want to come back, Brock?

BROCK

I don't know. But you can't trust that thing. You have to kill it.

Lance kneels down to talk confidentially to Brock, away from Aidan.

LANCE

Look, I realize Dr. Ross's methods are... unorthodox. There's nothing orthodox about this entire initiative. But these hippos can change the world. For the better. We can't just hit the reset button on this.

(pause)

I know there's a part of you that wants... revenge. For what hippos have done to you, personally. And I appreciate that. I appreciate everything you've done for us and for your country today. But I need to know that you and I... and Dr. Ross... that we're all on the same team here.

BROCK

I can't sit idly by and let that monster live for another moment.

Lance looks sadly at Brock and stands. He looks back at Carl and nods his head. Carl and two other gunmen start BEATING Brock with riot sticks. Cara screams.

CARA

Stop it! Please!

LANCE

If you're not on my side, Brock... I can't protect you. I'm sorry.

Brock, beaten badly, is lifted up and restrained by gunmen, his hands tied together. He spits some blood out in Lance's direction.

BROCK

I'm not the one who needs protecting, Lance. Remember that.

Brock is dragged off by two of the gunmen. Cara steps up to Aidan.

CARA

Where's the first aid kit?

AIDAN

Why? Want to do a little nurse/patient roleplay?

Cara slaps Aidan hard across his stitched cheek. Aidan recoils in pain. Cara turns to Lance instead.

CARA

Where?

LANCE

Cara...

CARA

He's been stabbed, Lance. After all he's done today, the least you can do is let me stitch him up. That's literally the very least you can do.

LANCE

(after a beat)

Third cabinet to the left of the door.

Cara doesn't say thank you or goodbye. She turns, grabs the first aid, and storms off. Aidan groans in pain, grabbing his face.

EXT. BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Cara approaches Brock's room. A guard stands outside.

CARA

Lance sent me to stitch him up. I won't be long.

The guard looks at her, suspiciously.

CARA

If I tried to free him, you can shoot me, okay?

The guard isn't fully at ease with that explanation, but he reluctantly lets her in.

INT. BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Cara enters and is immediately GRABBED by Brock. He is handcuffed to a bed and has dragged that bed over to the door in the vain hope of escaping.

He looks to see who he has pinned to the wall and realizes. His adrenalin keeps him there for a few beats, her pinned to the wall, them staring at each other. Sexual tension bubbling to the surface.

He lets her go and sits on the bed. Cara sits next to him and opens up the first aid kit.

CARA

You mind if I cut your shirt off?

BROCK

Go right ahead.

Cara makes an incision in the shirt. As the shirt is removed, she sees his muscular back, covered in scars and tattoos. She gets for the first time a clear idea of his back story.

CARA

Not your first time getting stabbed, I take it?

BROCK

First time in a while. At least a month.

Cara removes the shirt entirely. Brock sits, blood flowing from his shoulder, half of his torso covered in dried blood. He is a mess.

She grabs as much gauze as she can from the kit and hands it to Brock.

CARA

Apply pressure.

BROCK

Just give me my shirt.

CARA

Your shirt?

BROCK

Save this for someone who needs it.

CARA

You need it. Your shirt is dirty.

BROCK

Probably no dirtier than the knife
that asshole dug into me.

CARA

Point taken, but no need to risk
infection.

BROCK

I was in Afghanistan for a few
weeks, spent most of that time in
the desert. I was bitten one night
by a viper.

Brock two small bottles of vodka in the first aid kit. He
grabs one with his free hand.

BROCK

I had to cut open my own arm and
suck out the venom. We didn't have
the resources to patch me up, so I
just rubbed some dirt on it, tore
off a piece of my pant leg, and
tied it up.

Brock pours the vodka on his wound. He winces with pain,
then belts down the rest of the bottle.

BROCK

My body's pretty resilient to
things like dirt.

CARA

And knives.

BROCK

(looking at blood)
Not that resilient, unfortunately.

Brock grabs his shirt and hands it to Cara.

BROCK

Just go ahead and stitch me up.

CARA

I don't know...

BROCK

You have two doctorates, not a
single class taught you how to
sew?

CARA

I know how to sew. My grandmother taught me.

BROCK

Same thing as sewing. Just think of me as your quilt.

Cara takes the needle and thread and ties it off.

CARA

This is going to hurt. Not as much as being stabbed. Or bitten by a snake. Or... on second thought, maybe it won't hurt.

Brock smiles and grimaces slightly at the pinch of the needle going through his flesh.

BROCK

You did some pretty good driving back there.

CARA

Yeah? You'd be surprised what you can accomplish when a giant angry animal is trying to kill you.

BROCK

They didn't prepare you for this in school?

CARA

Alright, get in your school jokes now. Cara the Nerd.

BROCK

You definitely don't look like your typical nerd.

CARA

Well, I left my thick-rimmed glasses and Urkel suspenders in my other suitcase.

BROCK

I'm assuming you're married? Boyfriend?

Cara is flustered by this line of questioning. Why is he asking this?

CARA

No. Married to my work, as they say.

BROCK

That's surprising.

CARA

Why? You think I look like I need to settle down? I look domesticated?

BROCK

Not at all. Just... you look pretty. Pretty girls generally aren't alone for long.

CARA

Well... thank you. But you know how guys are put off by cat ladies? Not sure they'd feel much better about hippo ladies.

BROCK

As long as you don't have ten of them in your apartment, you should be okay.

Cara finishes stitching him up, then ties his shirt around his shoulder.

CARA

There you go. Good as new.

BROCK

Good as it can be, anyhow.

Cara pats him on the back, but her hand flinches. She touched a LARGE SCAR. She then gently, somewhat sensually, puts her hand on his back and runs them over his old war wounds.

CARA

How do you get scars like these?

BROCK

Each one has a story. Some more painful than others.

Cara examines the scars. Some raised, some merely discolored. Some bullets, some cuts, some shrapnel. Brock turns and looks at her. Cara smiles.

BROCK

Thank you for stitching me up.

CARA

Thank you for, you know, saving my life. A lot.

BROCK

That's what I do.

Cara turns to start putting the kit away. She notices something missing, and turns back to Brock...

He's holding out the other bottle of vodka to her. She smiles.

CARA

Keep it. Might be a rough night's sleep on that shoulder.

BROCK

Oh, I wasn't giving it back. I was offering you a drink. Unless you're in a rush to get back to those maniacs.

Cara takes a reluctant swig and coughs heavily-- she can't handle her liquor.

CARA

You're right, by the way.

BROCK

About what?

CARA

It wanted to be captured. I mean, if freedom was its goal, it'd be gone. It could just stay in the river, keep itself unexposed. They can hold their breath for a half hour at a time, at least. They'd only need to appear a few times a day while awake... so why...

BROCK

Eat a bus?

CARA

Right.

BROCK

I'm starting to wonder whether those hippos escaped at all.

CARA

You think someone let them out?

BROCK

I don't see how anything else is possible.

CARA

How long have you thought this?

BROCK

Since I arrived.

CARA

Christ, Brock, don't you think we should tell Lance?

Brock sits silently.

CARA

You think Lance did it.

BROCK

He's the one who brought me in. He knows hunting is what I do. If the animals are being trained for field work... he might have wanted to see just how effective they can be against the best.

CARA

What should we do?

BROCK

They won't let me leave for a while, knowing that I want those things dead. You need to convince them to let you leave, then get as far off the radar as you can for a while.

CARA

I'm not going to just leave you here.

BROCK

You just met me. I appreciate your nobility, but no one else should die at the hands of these monsters.

CARA

... do you want me to let someone know you're here? Your wife, girlfriend...?

Cara looks at Brock's reaction-- she realizes she's struck a nerve and immediately regrets it.

CARA

I'm sorry...

BROCK

It's okay...

CARA

I didn't know...

BROCK

No... it's...

CARA

... how could I know?

BROCK

The worst scars aren't on the outside.

Cara nods then turns to leave.

CARA

I'll come back to say goodbye before I leave.

Brock sits silently. Cara turns, forlorn, and leaves Brock to his bottle of vodka.

FADE TO BLACK.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Brock! Save me! Oh my God, please help--

BROCK (V.O.)

Katie... hang on... oh god...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
We don't have much more time!
Please!

GUNFIRE.

INT. BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Brock wakes up from his nightmare to the sounds of GUNFIRE and SCREAMING. Not all of the screaming noises are necessarily human.

Brock tries the doorknob. Locked from the outside. Goddammit.

He desperately kicks at his bedpost in hopes of freeing himself. No dice. He kicks and kicks until he winces with pain-- blood runs from his shackled wrist.

Suddenly, from behind him, the DOOR OPENS and in rushes Cara. She slams the door behind her.

CARA
Here.

She hands Brock two PISTOLS.

BROCK
The hell is going on?

CARA
They got out. All of them.

BROCK
The hippos?

CARA
No... all of them.

Brock is confused but kicks into action.

BROCK
Stand back.

He FIRES a bullet at the handcuff attached to the bedpost, shattering it. One shackle remains attached to his wrist, but it'll have to do for now.

Brock runs out of the room, down the hall, and outside, where he sees...

EXT. QUANTICO MARINE BASE-- 2 AM

In the light of the moon, a SWARM of ANIMALS brutally murdering countless GUARDS, GUNMEN, SCIENTISTS, and SOLDIERS.

- a HELICOPTER in the night sky shoots rounds at large BATS, which pelt the windshield of the chopper and bring it down to the ground in an explosion.

- several MONKEYS WITH GUNS are engaged in a firefight with gunmen on the ground. One particularly scary APE RIPS A MAN'S ARM OFF and begins beating him with it.

- a guard fires at a small group of HOUSECATS, until they sprint towards him, CLIMB up his body, and proceed to CLAW out his EYES and LACERATE his major arteries.

- a MOOSE stampedes forward and SPEARS a scientist against the wall of the building with his ANTLERS. When the moose pulls back from the wall, it finds the scientist is stuck to his antlers, skewered all the way through. The moose shakes its head furiously, trying to dislodge its victim.

- a COW stands chewing grass, but when a guard runs by, the cow rears up, kicks him in the head, then proceeds to continue chewing grass.

Blood is soaking the ground-- and while there are more people than animals, the animals are quite clearly holding their own.

Brock spots the entrance for the lab and sprints for it, shooting in the head a few MONKEYS along the way.

A CAT jumps at Brock's face, but before it can dig its claws in, Brock grabs it and SNAPS THE KITTY'S NECK.

An APE charges Brock, wielding a giant AXE. Brock shoots at it a few times, but the APE DEFLECTS THE BULLETS WITH THE HEAD OF THE AXE. Finally, as the ape is within arm's reach, and it raises its axe ready to swing, Brock gets a bullet through, shooting the ape in the face.

Brock sees a MOOSE sprinting towards him. He tries shooting it, but quickly realizes he's out of bullets. He taxes the axe from the dead ape, THROWS IT forward with perfect aim, and splits the charging moose's skull.

He takes an ID card from the dead body of a GUNMAN nearby and swipes into the base...

INT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

Brock approaches slowly, leading with his gun, down the hallway. The doors marked BAT, HOUSECAT, MOOSE, etc. are either wide open or torn down. Peeking inside, you see dead bodies strewn about, light fixtures flickering, blood splattered everywhere.

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY

Brock enters the hippo facility and looks around. All of the pens are EMPTY, with the back of each pen leading into the water standing wide open.

BROCK

Holy shit.

He hears a meager cough. He draws his gun and advances.

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY-- LAB

He enters the lab and sees the feet of a man lying down behind an operating table. Brock gets closer...

It's LANCE. He's in his suit... in a puddle of his own blood. He writhes in pain.

Brock kneels beside him.

BROCK

Lance? What the fuck happened here?

LANCE

The doctor... Aidan. He's the one who let the hippos out.

BROCK

Lance, it's not just the hippos, they're all--

LANCE

No... listen... I suspected Aidan let... the first hippos out. The ones you hunted down.

Brock tries to help him up, but he moans in agony. Brock looks at Lance's side-- in it, a big-ass KNIFE, covered in blood. Aidan's knife.

BROCK

He did this to you?

LANCE

He knew I was on to him... when I wasn't looking... got me in the back.

BROCK

Let me call a medic, get you to a hospital.

LANCE

Just listen... he went in... to check on the hippo... the one he brought back... the one he tranquilized... or so he thought....

BROCK

The hippo wasn't unconscious? But the gas...

(realizes)

He was holding his breath.

LANCE

You were right... it wanted to come back. It wanted to come back... for the rest.

BROCK

How did the others get free?

LANCE

The doctor... the hippo grabbed him... brought him over to the controls... made him open every door. Chaos... panic... but the hippos didn't charge... they simply swam out.

BROCK

Holy shit... they were creating a diversion.

LANCE

You have... to stop them, Brock... you were right... we were fools to think we could play God.

BROCK

You had no way of knowing.

LANCE

You knew.

(after a cough)

I'm sorry, Brock. I'm sorry for not trusting you... I'm sorry for locking you up... I'm sorry that after everything you've been through... I once again ask too much of you.

BROCK

How do I stop them?

LANCE

Find them. Call the National Guard. Blow them the fuck up.

BROCK

Sounds easy enough.

Brock stands and looks around in a nearby cabinet. He finds two syringes and two bottles of liquid medicine. He hands them to Lance.

BROCK

(hands him the first)

This is a painkiller. Stick yourself with this, it should help.

(and the second)

(MORE)

BROCK (CONT'D)
This is if the first doesn't help.
This one... the pain will
definitely go away. Forever.

LANCE
Thank you... For everything.

Brock stands to run out of the lab.

LANCE
(feebly)
Brock...

Brock turns back to him.

LANCE
Doctor Ross... should be in the
third pen on the right... what's
left of him.

BROCK
I'll see you soon, Lance.

Lance smiles, knowing Brock is lying.

INT. HIPPO PEN

Brock enters and sees Aidan, lying on the ground, BITTEN
OFF FROM THE WAIST DOWN. His eyes are open, but he
doesn't seem responsive.

Brock shoots a BULLET next to Aidan's ear, and Aidan
winces. He's still alive.

BROCK
You motherfucker.

AIDAN
What happened?

BROCK
You let all the animals out. All
of them. Nearly all of your men
are dead out there.

AIDAN
The hippo... it had me.

BROCK

It still does. Half of you,
anyway.

Aidan lets out a belabored breath. He is going to die any
minute.

BROCK

Why did you do it, Aidan? Why did
you let them out?

AIDAN

I needed to see... what it could
do. What it was capable of.

BROCK

And now you know.

AIDAN

Please... I'm so sorry...

BROCK

Where are they headed?

AIDAN

Where...?

BROCK

The hippos. Where did they go?

AIDAN

They went...? I don't understand.

BROCK

You unleashed an army of
genetically mutated hippos into
our country, you son of a bitch!
Tell me where they're going!

AIDAN

... Washington. Washington DC.

Brock staggers backward, thinking of the horror. He pulls
out his gun in anger, leans down, and sticks it in
Aidan's face. He's on the verge of tears... when he
stops. He stands back up and holsters his weapon.

BROCK

There's a good man out there
dying. Because of you. I gave him
the choice of a quick and painless
death.

(MORE)

BROCK (CONT'D)
(after a beat)
Something you don't deserve.

Brock heads out of the pen. Aidan looks after him in horror, calling out as he turns the corner and walks down the hallway.

AIDAN
(off-screen)
Brock... please... where are you
going?... Help me, please...
Broooooock....

EXT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

Brock exits, and the few gunmen left are shooting up at the skies, taking out the final remaining BATS. The dead bodies of cats, bats, moose, apes, and countless people litter the ground in the moonlight.

Brock sees one ape sneaking away on a rooftop and SHOOTs IT. It falls off the roof with a thud onto the ground, grabbing the attention of the remaining survivors. They all stare at Brock.

BROCK
Listen up, everyone!

Carl emerges from the pack.

CARL
Why the fuck should anyone listen
to you?

BROCK
Because I'm the guy who brought
down the first hippo yesterday...
and who's going to lead you into
battle against the rest of them.

CARL
Like hell you are! I'm the leader
of this group, and I say we--

Out of nowhere, THREE CATS jump onto Carl, RIPPING out his THROAT.

Brock pulls out his gun as they scramble quickly over Carl's dead body-- before they race towards the others, POP POP POP! Three dead cats fall on the ground.

The men look at the dead cat that fell closest to them. The bullet wound is right between its eyes.

BROCK

Anyone have a problem with me
being the new leader?

A chorus of "no"s, "nuh-uh"s, "no sir"s, etc.

BROCK

Sorry for the lack of sleep,
gentlemen, but we pull out in half
an hour. There are roughly twenty
hippos heading for our nation's
capital. We're the only ones that
can stop them.

Brock heads back to his room.

GUNMAN

(calling after Brock)
Sir? What weaponry should we
bring?

Brock stops and turns back around, glaring at them with the fire of a thousand badasses.

BROCK

All of it.

INT. BROCK'S SLEEPING ROOM

Brock enters his quarters, where Cara waits with a small handsaw.

CARA

Figured you could use this.

BROCK

I don't think that's gonna stop
any animal I've seen tonight.

Cara grabs his hand. We see the joined hands in close-up: His is dirty, blood-stained. Hers is soft, smooth, sensual. BROCK stares at her. Cara's fingers slide up his hand to his wrist, still shackled with half a handcuff.

CARA

It's for the animal in front of me.

Brock smiles and shakes his head.

BROCK

I don't have time.

CARA

You're always making time to fight others... you need to make time to take care of yourself.

Cara sits him down, puts a small metal rod between his wrist and the shackle, and hands him the saw. Brock reluctantly takes the saw and starts going to work.

CARA

You don't need to go after them, you know.

BROCK

Yes, I do.

CARA

You can call the National Guard, the Marines... you've been fighting the last twenty-four hours--

BROCK

I've been fighting since she died. I don't know how to do anything else.

(pause)

Four years ago, I took my wife, Katie, to Africa. We went on a safari, stayed in small villages... I had an idea that we should go canoeing. We were heading up river when we hit something, and our canoe capsized. Lost our supplies, our oars, all of it. At the time, we thought nothing of it... we were laughing.

(MORE)

BROCK (CONT'D)

It was an adventure. I tipped the canoe upright and climbed in, thinking it would be easiest to get her back in once I was inside.

(pause)

When I looked back, I saw that I had drifted-- 50 feet, 60-- away from her. She called out to me. Swimming her way... was the biggest hippo I'd ever seen. I tried to get to her in time, she was within reach when... just like that, gone. Forever.

Brock breaks through the shackle, rubbing his raw wrist.

BROCK

I'll never forget, the creature's front tooth on his right side... it had a crack running down the center of it. Like a lightning bolt. No wonder he was such an unpleasant fucker.

(pause)

Ever since then, I've been in and out of Africa, hunting them down. But not from a distance... no. I let them get nice and close. I wait until I can see... until I can see if this thing bearing down on me is the same thing that destroyed my life.

(pause)

It's been well over a year since the last time I even saw a hippo. I've been sitting in my house, drowning in a pool of whiskey, hating myself for letting her go.

CARA

You can't blame yourself, Brock.

BROCK

Funny, that's what people always say who never have anything to blame themselves for.

CARA

Killing these hippos today won't bring her back.

BROCK

You're right... but it sure would be fun.

CARA

(after a beat)

Fine. I'll come with you.

BROCK

Like hell you will. You're staying here.

CARA

In a den full of dead animals?
With killer cats waiting to leap
out from every corner? I'd rather
stick by you.

BROCK

People who stick by me end up
dead.

CARA

I stuck by you today, and here I
am, still standing.

BROCK

Beginner's luck.

CARA

I liked the rugged badass you
better than the pity party you.

Brock smiles-- she has fight in her.

CARA

Besides... you need someone to
drive.

Brock throws his bag over his shoulder.

BROCK

We're not driving.

EXT. QUANTICO MARINE BASE-- 5:30 AM

It's mere minutes until sunrise when a FLEET OF MILITARY
AIRCRAFT takes off from the base. Everyone is strapped
in, including Cara... except Brock.

Brock stands by the open side door, the wind whipping his face, as he stares out over the horizon...

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER-- CONTINUOUS

The camera soars up the Potomac River, slowing its pace when we see TWENTY HIPPO NOSES swiftly moving north up the river.

We pull up to look to the right of the river DC's southwest waterfront and Nationals Stadium. They're close.

EXT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- MOMENTS LATER

Cara moves over to stand behind Brock. They look out as the sun just begins to peek over the horizon.

CARA
Beautiful sunrise.

BROCK
Enjoy it while you can.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER-- CONTINUOUS

Cars already whiz along 14th St. Southwest over the Potomac... while underneath, the hippos emerge into...

EXT. TIDAL BASIN-- CONTINUOUS

... the TIDAL BASIN, looking upon JEFFERSON MEMORIAL, and already peppered at this early hour with dozens of PADDLE BOATS.

In one paddle boat, JACK, a 50-something senator, paddles as DIANE, his 19-year-old intern, stares slack-jawed at the sunrise.

DIANE
This is so romantic, Jack.

JACK
Isn't it? I thought you'd like it.

DIANE

You promise you never took your
wife out here?

JACK

(lying)
Never! Scout's honor!

DIANE

I only wish there weren't so many
boats out here.

As Jack and Diane talk, in the background, we watch boat
after boat get pulled under water at lightning speed.

JACK

That's the price you pay for a
view like this.

DIANE

I just wish we could make love,
here, right now.

JACK

That'd make a great CNN headline.
"Senator Caught Balls Deep In
Teenage Intern."

DIANE

Hey! I turn twenty next week!

JACK

I know, baby. And I'll take you
somewhere very special. Somewhere
very... secluded.

DIANE

Are you ashamed of me?

JACK

I'm not ashamed at all. You're a
brilliant young woman. I'm honored
to spend time with you.

DIANE

Then kiss me. Out here, in front
of all of these...

Diane looks out and realizes... they're all alone.

DIANE

Am I crazy... or were there more
boats out here?

JACK

You're not crazy...

They hear BUBBLES alongside their boat. They both peer
into the water off the left side, staring deep into the
darkness of the water... is something down there?

Suddenly, out of the water pops a DISEMBODIED HEAD,
floating to the top, bobbing on the surface.

JACK

What the fuck?

DIANE

Is that a head? Jack, is that a
head?

JACK

The fuck you think it is? Of
course it's a head.

Without warning, a large CRUNCH, and the middle of the
paddleboat is GONE. Jack and Diane are on separate
pieces, floating alone.

DIANE

Jack! Jack, don't leave me! Jack!

JACK

I won't! Just be quiet for a
second!

DIANE

Jack! Oh my God, Jack!

JACK

I SAID, BE--

A hippo emerges from the water and grabs Diane and her
side of the boat, dragging her down into the depths. All
is quiet quickly. Jack is dazed.

And then YANKED out of frame violently.

EXT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- MOMENTS LATER

As the sun comes up, they see the first signs of DC off far in the distance. Brock pulls out some aviator sunglasses and puts them on.

EXT. TIDAL BASIN-- CONTINUOUS

The hippos emerge as a group, slowly, from the Tidal Basin. In front, their leader, George, his scorched face glistening in the morning sun.

They cross Independence Avenue as a group, causing cars to screech to a halt. One car hits a hippo, who grabs it with its teeth and TOSSES it violently to the side. People get out of cars screaming, running the other direction.

The hippos march forward, and as we pan out, we see what lies before them.

The Washington Monument.

EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT

A MOTHER patiently lines up her TWO SONS to take a photo in front of the monument.

SON
Look mommy, a hippo!

MOTHER
Patience, sweetie. We'll go to the zoo right after this.

SON
A LOT of hippos!

The mother turns around. All twenty hippos are marching toward them. Pissed.

MOTHER
Oh my God...

The mother leaves her camera, grabs her kids by the arms, and sprints away into the city.

George breaks from the pack. The rest line up, attentive.

He turns back around and faces his hippo brethren, staring them down. They stare back. Then...

George unleashes a massive, window-rattling bellow. The others immediately join in, roaring as loud as they can.

INT. WHITE HOUSE-- OVAL OFFICE

We see the PRESIDENT, seated at his desk, signing papers, when he feels a deep bassy rumble. He turns around.

The windows behind him are visibly VIBRATING.

INT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- CONTINUOUS

Still a healthy distance away, they feel the vibrations of a deep rumble. Brock keeps an eye out.

PILOT
(off-camera)
Was that an earthquake?

EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT

The HIPPO PACK splits in half. Half of them line up in a tight formation facing the monument.

Suddenly, they SPRINT, in a perfectly unified line formation. They barrel through the flagpoles and benches surrounding the monument and CRASH their bodies into the side of the obelisk. A loud CRACK.

The first wave of hippos retreats as a second wave races forward. Again, crashing into the obelisk in unison. CRACK.

Now the CRACKING noises don't stop. They first sound small, and suddenly get larger.

A massive crack starts to spread around the obelisk from the point of impact, roughly five feet off the ground. The monument begins to slide towards the point of impact...

Then, IT TOPPLES.

INT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- CONTINUOUS

They're over the southeast of the city, approaching downtown, with the monument in sight... when Brock sees it begin to slide.

BROCK
Head to the monument.

PILOT
Trying to sightsee while we're--

The pilot turns and sees the monument falling from its position.

EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT

Individual bricks rain down as the monument in its entirety comes CRASHING down like a tree chopped from its trunk. Bikers and nearby gatherers recording with their iPhones sprint out of its path.

EXT. INDEPENDENCE BLVD

A JOGGER, wearing some large headphones, waits to cross Independence Avenue. He jogs in place, listening to loud rock music. Behind him, we see the MONUMENT, falling precisely in his direction.

He sees a couple of people in their cars in front of him get out and run away. "That's weird," his expression seems to say.

He turns around RIGHT AS THE MONUMENT SLAMS TO THE GROUND, the POINT OF THE OBELISK A MERE INCH FROM HIS BODY. He staggers to the ground, assesses the situation, and faints.

INT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- CONTINUOUS

The pilot turns the helicopter toward the mall.

PILOT

(into radio)

Head toward the Monument. Repeat,
they are at the Mall.

EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT

George looks up to the sky.

GEORGE POV: a fleet of military aircraft head right toward them.

He lets out a deafening roar.

INT. MILITARY AIRCRAFT-- CONTINUOUS

BROCK watches, deadpan.

BROCK

Well, they're expecting us.

PILOT

The hell did they knock over the
Monument for?

Brock looks back at Cara.

CARA

They're marking their territory.

BROCK

Time for us to mark back. Where's
the National Guard?

PILOT

Thirty minutes out.

BROCK
(muttering to
himself)
If those slowpoke fucks take any
credit for killing these things...

Brock walks over to an ENORMOUS JEEP in the back of the
aircraft, teeming to the brim inside with ROCKET
LAUNCHERS. He starts prying open a nearby crate. A gunman
named JORDAN approaches.

GUNMAN
Sir? My name's Jordan. I was
Carl's second-in-command.

BROCK
What'd you think of Carl?

JORDAN
He was a piece of shit, sir.

BROCK
I like you, Jordan. If I go down,
you've got to make sure every
hippo on the ground is destroyed.

JORDAN
It'd be my pleasure.
(after a beat)
Why you prepping all those rocket
launchers?

BROCK
I like rocket launchers.

He opens the crate and pulls out from the inside a
massive JETPACK.

JORDAN
The fuck?

BROCK
It's a jetpack.

JORDAN
I know it's a jetpack. Why did you
bring it? We use it back at the
base for drunken joyrides.

BROCK
You never know.

JORDAN

It stays in the air about fifteen seconds, tops.

BROCK

Fifteen seconds might be all I need.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL

The fleet lands in the sunlight gleaming upon the National Mall.

Upon landing, the gunmen get out and take positions near all the museums-- American History, Natural History, Smithsonian Gallery.

Jordan sees a TOURIST filming with his iPhone by the Natural History Museum. Jordan grabs the phone and THROWS it violently back in the person's face.

JORDAN

Are you fucking stupid?

The tourist runs.

Out of the aircraft closest to the Washington Monument drives the ENORMOUS JEEP CONVERTIBLE. Cara behind the wheel and Brock in the back. Crates of weaponry are stacked in every spare inch of seat room.

They look around. No hippos.

BROCK

Take me closer to the monument.

CARA

Famous last words.

Cara drives the car slowly closer to the monument.

CARA

If those hippos attack and you bail on me...

BROCK

You're scared?

CARA

... yeah. I am.

BROCK

Anything they teach you in those doctorates about dealing with hostile animals?

CARA

Yeah, get the hell away from them.

BROCK

Or?

CARA

Or put them down.

BROCK

I like that plan.

Cara drives around the toppled monument slowly, when she slams on the BRAKES.

On the other side of the monument, camped out, waiting, are all of the HIPPOS. They look at the jeep.

Cara slowly reaches her hand down, trying not to startle them, and, deliberately as can be, shifts the jeep into reverse.

Click.

The split second the jeep hits REVERSE, the HIPPOS ROAR to life and begin charging, pouring out into the Mall, following the jeep.

Cara hauls ass straight down the Mall backwards, dodging the occasional bench and flagpole.

CARA

They were ready for us!

BROCK

No, they're not.

Brock throws open a crate and pulls out a rocket launcher.

CARA

Those didn't work so well last time!

BROCK

It's not the size of the rocket that counts, Cara. It's how you use it.

Brock takes aim-- this launcher has a LASER SCOPE. He fires-- the ROCKET squeals through the sky, turning in mid-air toward its target, and blows a hippo at the front of the pack to Kingdom Fucking Come.

BROCK

It also helps if these missiles are guided.

CARA

I think I love you.

Brock tosses the empty rocket launcher out of the jeep and throws open another crate. Another rocket launcher. Another BOOM. Another hippo reduced to guts. The others are dazed but charge on.

CARA

Hang on!

Cara makes a hard turn. She navigates her way between the dozens of aircraft parked on the Mall. Brock fires another rocket. Three hippos down.

BROCK

Seventeen hippos to go.

The hippos don't bother navigating between the aircraft. They smash right through, plowing through the metal like a hot knife through butter.

BROCK

Keep her steady! We're almost there.

Cara navigates through the last of the aircraft. The hippos have gained considerable ground.

Brock sees a hippo mere feet away from them. Calmly, he launches a rocket directly into its mouth. It PROPELS the hippo backward through the air before...

BANG! The hippo explodes in mid-air. Hippo guts fall like a Biblical plague. The blast breaks up the hippo formation and sends Cara swerving.

CARA

Hold on!

Cara emerges from the aircraft onto the Mall. They steer to the side. As the hippos plow through onto the Mall in pursuit, they are met by WAVES OF GUNFIRE AND GRENADES. All of the soldiers stationed at the museums attack.

The hippos scatter every which way, but a couple continue to bear down on our heroes.

Cara hangs a hard right and heads TOWARD the Natural History Museum. Brock fires another rocket, killing another hippo, but one more remains on their trail.

CARA

How much longer do you need?

BROCK

Ten seconds.

CARA

Brace yourself.

Brock looks. They are headed STRAIGHT for the front doors of the museum. Brock grabs a rocket launcher and tries to fire before impact. It's too late.

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS

A GIANT ELEPHANT REPLICA sits in the center of the ROTUNDA of the Natural History Museum. All, for the moment, is quiet.

BOOM! The jeep CRASHES through the entrance. Cara sees the elephant and swerves to the right, circling around the rotunda

The hippo enters after them, just in time to see the jeep coming around the rotunda toward it. BROCK leans out the side and FIRES A ROCKET RIGHT AT IT.

The hippo blows up feet from the jeep. The proximity of the explosion THROWS THE JEEP BACKWARD... and directly into the Mammal Exhibit Museum Store.

Stuffed hippopotami rain down upon them and fill the now-wrecked jeep. Brock is splayed out in the back, his lap covered with cute little hippo plushes. Cara looks back, dazed, and laughs.

BROCK

When all of this is over... will
you want to spend another minute
of your life studying hippos?

CARA

Fuck no.

Brock smiles.

CLOSE ON: a SMITHSONIAN NATURAL HISTORY DONATION BOX.
Brock pulls all the cash from his pocket and stuffs it
into the box.

EXT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM-- ROOF

Brock comes up the staircase to the roof of the museum, toting a rocket launcher over one shoulder. Cara follows, dragging her own rocket launcher, scraping the ground behind her. Brock shoots her a look.

CARA

What? It's heavy.

BROCK

What do I care? I love breaking
government property.

He takes her rocket launcher, slings it over his other shoulder, and looks out at the mayhem.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL

A surprising number of dead gunmen are spread throughout the Mall battleground, but a few dead hippos as well.

- one soldier fires more rounds into a dead hippo, apparently not convinced it's dead.

- a hippo helps nudge another critically injured hippo out of the line of fire as grenades are lobbed at them.

- a gunman, whose legs are crushed under the body of an injured hippo, screams for help, while the hippo roars for help from its comrades.

BACK TO:

EXT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM -- ROOF

Cara is shocked. The nation's capital. A war zone.

CARA

Good God. This is a nightmare.

BROCK

You should see it on holiday weekends.

Brock fires one of the rockets at the hippo helping the critically injured hippo, blowing them both up.

BROCK

Hand me the other--

BOOM! A rocket soars off the roof and kills a hippo attacking a group of guards on the Mall. Brock looks behind him and sees Cara, holding the still-smoking launcher. She tosses it to the ground.

CARA

What?

BROCK

I haven't found a woman attractive in years until now.

CARA

So I wasn't before?

BROCK

Stay here. I've got to go help the others.

CARA

What am I supposed to do?

Brock runs to the stairs.

BROCK

There's a giant squid exhibit on the second floor.

Brock smiles and exits. Cara sits, restless, somewhat dejected.

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM -- ROTUNDA

Brock walks away from the wrecked jeep. He now sports seven grenades, each painted WHITE, on a strap around his midsection. He's ready for battle, when...

FROM EACH OF THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE ROTUNDA EMERGES A HIPPO. We see a shot from above. Four hippos surrounding our hero. It looks not unlike the set-up of a popular children's game.

Brock stands in the middle, arms at sides, and spins, trying in vain to keep his eyes on all of them at once.

Suddenly, a HIPPO lunges forward. Lightning quick, Brock pulls the pin on two grenades and throws them into the hippo's mouth, darting out of its way.

Another hippo lunges. Two more white grenades tossed into its mouth.

Both hippos have an INTERNAL EXPLOSION and fall dead, bleeding from the nostrils and mouth.

Brock turns, keeping his eye on the other two...

The third one lunges and Brock pulls two of his last three grenades, tossing them into the mouth of the hippo...

But this one ain't dumb. He SPITS THE GRENADES BACK AT BROCK. Brock dives out of the way as the grenades EXPLODE, creating a massive hole in the floor in the middle of the rotunda.

With Brock on the ground, the FOURTH HIPPO races toward him. Brock leaps up, backed against a wall, and sees a CRACK in the wall above him. He JUMPS AND HANGS BY THE CRACK as the hippo plows into the wall beneath him.

Brock lets go, drops down on TOP of the dazed hippo, and grabs hold of it by its ear. The hippo backs out of the wall, enormously DISPLEASED at the rider on its back.

Brock pulls from a sheath a big knife-- AIDAN'S KNIFE. He swings forward as hard as he can and STABS THE HIPPO IN HIS LEFT EYE. The HIPPO ROARS.

He removes the knife and STABS THE HIPPO IN THE RIGHT EYE. The hippo staggers backward into a wall in pain, furious and thoroughly blinded. Brock is SMASHED against the wall. He hangs on to one of the HIPPO'S EARS, refusing to be shaken.

Brock wills himself up back onto the hippo's head, climbing onto its face. He lets out a PRIMAL SCREAM, grabs the KNIFE, and SHOVES IT BACK INTO THE HIPPO'S SKULL AS HARD AS HE CAN.

His whole arm SINKS into the stab wound.

The hippo falls dead. BROCK, covered in blood, pulls his disgusting arm out of the hippo's oozing eye socket, and dismounts. He stares down the final hippo in the room with great vengeance and furious anger.

Brock kneels by the dead hippo and wipes ITS BRAIN OFF HIS ARM ONTO THE DEAD HIPPO'S FACE. The final hippo-- the smart one from before-- knows this guy is not to be fucked with.

The hippo circles the hole in the rotunda. BROCK circles, staying on the other side of the hole. They stare each other down.

More circling. More staring.

The HIPPO ROARS at Brock.

Brock sees an opportunity, pulls his last grenade, and throws it at the hippo... but TOO FAR, as it sails and lands on the floor behind the hippo!

The hippo smiles, as if to say "You missed."

Brock smiles back. The hippo's smile fades. He sees the hole in front of him on the ground...

The grenade goes off, creating a hole in the ground behind the hippo. The weight of the hippo causes the rest of the floor underneath it to CAVE IN! The hippo FALLS through down to the floor below, landing on his back.

HIPPO POV: the ELEPHANT REPLICA teeters on the edge of the HOLE, crumbling and preparing to grow wider...

The floor CRACKS by the elephant, sending it down on top of the hippo. TUSKS FIRST.

Brock carefully walks to the edge of the hole. The hippo lies dying, pierced through the belly by the massive elephant tusks. It stares helplessly at Brock.

BROCK ROARS at the hippo. Took on four of them and won. Baddest motherfucker alive.

He hears a creak from a door. It's Cara. She looks at the dead hippos, the hole in the ground, the missing elephant. She stares at Brock, bruised and bloodied.

CARA
I thought you'd left.

BROCK

Met some friends on the way out.

Cara walks into the destroyed rotunda. She sees the BLINDED HIPPO.

CARA

What happened to his eyes?

She looks at Brock's arm, still smeared with blood and brains.

CARA

Holy shit.

BROCK

I didn't have any rockets.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL

They walk out onto the Mall, Brock leaning on Cara's shoulders. They stare out at the battlefield, which has settled down.

The remaining hippos are dead, strewn about, including on the stairs of the AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM.

The few living gunmen, including Jordan, help themselves with first aid, a few making tourniquets for those with crushed or missing limbs.

Tourists with iPhones taking video start to gather around, feeling an air of safety.

As Brock looks around at the dead hippos, he begins to sense something wrong...

BROCK'S POV: he looks at the face of one dead hippo. Then another. Then another. None have George's distinctive burn mark.

BROCK

This isn't over.

EXT. WORLD WAR TWO MEMORIAL

In the sunrise's direct light, the fountain at the center of the World War Two memorial seems to sparkle with life.

Then, slowly, through the middle of the fountain's spray, emerges George's face. He scowls viciously, then takes off running.

He runs to the left of the Washington Monument, heading down the lawn. We pan up to see where he's headed...

THE WHITE HOUSE.

EXT. THE ELLIPSIS

George sprints down the elliptical park separating the Mall from the White House.

From the sides of the White House, THREE BLACK SUVs pull up and drive down the center of the ELLIPSIS toward George. Secret Service agents emerge from the windows and begin firing ASSAULT RIFLES at George.

The BULLETS don't even slow him down.

As the SUVs get within his grasp, George CLASPS down on one with his jaws, spins around, and LAUNCHES the SUV at high speed into a second SUV. A FIERY EXPLOSION.

The third SUV tries to turn away to create distance. Too late. George latches on with his jaw... and SPRINTS toward the White House, carrying the SUV with him.

One Secret Service agent trapped in the SUV tries to jump out, only to fall under George's trampling feet.

As George approaches the gate separating the White House from the road, he speeds up... and PLOWS into the gate, using the SUV as a battering ram. The car crunches as the gate gives way and breaks from its hinges.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE

George, refusing to slow, charges through the yard toward the south entrance of the White House. Agents with guns line every window, ready to try in vain to stop this creature.

George spins his body around like a discus thrower and whips his neck up, TOSSING THE SUV INTO THE AIR TOWARD THE WHITE HOUSE. It hits near the ROOF, causing a massive explosion, rattling the White House's pillars.

The American flag on the roof snaps from the force of the SUV's impact, bends over, and falls into the yard, next to George.

We see a profile shot of George, trampling the American flag, facing the White House. He ROARS, letting his power be known.

BROCK
(off-screen)
Hey asshole.

George turns around.

GEORGE'S POV: The yard is empty, absent of challengers. Suddenly, out of the sky drops Brock, wearing the JETPACK. He's still covered in hippo blood, and he sports more grenade straps and two assault rifles.

He looks like the Motherfucking Angel of Death.

BROCK
I saved you for dessert.

GEORGE ROARS at him... and in slow motion...

BROCK'S POV: We see that George's right front tooth has a crack running down it.

BROCK (V.O.)
I'll never forget, the creature's
front tooth on his right side...
(MORE)

BROCK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
it had a crack running down the
center of it. Like a lightning
bolt.

Brock realizes that this hippo... is the same one that
killed his wife.

His face turns from shock... to rage.

George charges at Brock. Brock charges at George. He
fires his assault rifles at George's face, emptying both
clips. They do little good. He tosses the empty guns to
the side.

They meet in the middle-- George opens his jaw to snap
Brock in two, but Brock jumps, plants his hands on
George's snout, and vaults over him, landing on George's
back.

George spins Brock off, tossing him to the ground. Brock
shakes off his landing and looks up as George prepares to
stomp down on him.

Brock rolls back and forth, out of the path of the
George's stomping feet for a few seconds.

Brock pulls a grenade's pin and drops it by his side. He
attempts to crawl away before the explosion, but it
EXPLODES, sending Brock flying toward the White House and
George toppled over onto his back.

Brock flips over and gets up before George can. He
sprints toward George, pulls out a GRENADE, and uses it
as a blunt object to BREAK OFF GEORGE'S CRACKED TOOTH.
George cries out in pain.

BROCK
You like that?!

George flips back over, so Brock starts backing up. He
drops grenades two at a time as he jogs backward, hoping
that one will blow close enough to the charging George to
do some damage.

Brock tosses his last grenade. Boom. The smoke surrounds him. He can't see anything.

He feels the rumble of George's movement, but has no clue where it's coming from. As the smoke clears...

SMACK! From out of nowhere, George whips its head around and SMASHES BROCK, sending him flying back 50 feet in the direction of the White House.

Brock stands up and winces, grabbing at his ribs. Broken ribs, sternum likely. Can't take another hit like that.

He looks back at George, who smiles a bloody smile. He licks his lips. Brock is infuriated.

George charges forward, sprinting as fast as he can.

BROCK
You hungry? You hungry,
motherfucker?

George is almost there. Brock mentally prepares for death, when... he looks down.

The FLAGPOLE from the top of the White House rests at his feet. Brock looks up.

George races forward, mouth open, ready to eat Brock whole.

BROCK
EAT THIS!

BROCK GRABS THE FLAGPOLE WITH BOTH HANDS AND LIFTS IT UP AT THE LAST SECOND.

George notices too late to slow down! The FLAGPOLE goes DIRECTLY INTO HIS MOUTH, and the FLAGPOLE BURSTS THROUGH HIS BACK IN A SHOWER OF BLOOD.

George SLIDES down the pole toward Brock, who drops it. His dying eyes looks up at Brock, as if asking for forgiveness. Brock looks down at him, merciless.

No pity today.

Brock limps away as the wind blows. The FLAG, COATED WITH THE LEAD HIPPO'S BLOOD AND BRAINS, UNFURLS AND FLIES IN THE AIR AS GEORGE DIES, SKEWERED THROUGH THE HEAD.

We pull back on this image...

INT. SECRET HIPPOPOTAMUS EXPERIMENTATION FACILITY-- THE NEXT MORNING

... until we pull back through a television, showing George dead on the screen.

REPORTER

(voice-over)

This disturbing image shows just how close this attack on American soil came to our President.

The PRESIDENT appears at a press conference.

PRESIDENT

(on TV)

We have reason to believe this was an attack organized by Islamic radicals, with the intent of instilling fear, disrupting our way of life, and undermining our freedoms that they so passionately hate.

Brock watches on the television screen. He's still beat up-- covered in bandages around his midsection and neck, with a large icepack taped to his knee.

Behind him, soldiers and government officials clear out absolutely everything. This facility is being shut down for good.

REPORTER

(voice-over)

The roughly two-dozen creatures
were taken down by military
figures that are now being
identified as the National Guard.

Brock shakes his head in disbelief. The REPORTER, a young
preppy woman with gorgeous hair, ends her story.

REPORTER

(on TV)

The damage is estimated to be in
the hundreds of millions. The loss
of life in the hundreds, maybe
thousands. But the real question:
when will these terrorist animals
strike next?

The TV suddenly turns off. Brock turns around-- Cara is
standing with the remote. She has cleaned up from the
battle... and she looks good.

CARA

Your ride home awaits.

EXT. QUANTICO-- SECRET ANIMAL TRAINING BASE

All papers, bodies, and disposable equipment are piled
into GIANT BONFIRES. Everything else is packed into giant
trucks. Soldiers place C-4 on all sides of the building.

Jordan waits beside the helicopter. He helps Cara in
first. Brock extends his hand to Jordan for a
handshake... but Jordan simply salutes him. Brock smiles
and salutes back.

Cara extends her hand from the helicopter, offering it to
Brock. He takes it, wincing as he is helped in.

As they fly away, they watch as the FACILITIES IMplode,
reduced to rubble.

Brock sighs. It's a sigh of relief.

INT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD-- A FEW HOURS LATER

The door swings open and Brock limps in, followed by Cara. She notes the papers, the guns, the animal heads. The wall riddled with bullet holes.

CARA

Wow.

BROCK

These things are in order, believe it or not.

CARA

Sure thing, Howard Hughes.

Cara walks towards the animal heads on the wall.

CARA

Pretty grim in here, isn't it?

BROCK

Life's been rather grim. Seems fitting.

CARA

Surprised you didn't bring home a trophy from your "big kill."

Brock reaches into his pocket.

BROCK

I did.

He holds up the remains of GEORGE'S TOOTH. Lightning-bolt-shaped crack still in tact.

He walks over to the photo of him and Katie. He places the tooth on top of the photo's frame. Cara puts two and two together.

CARA

That hippo... that was the one that--

BROCK

Maybe. I don't know. I'll never know...

CARA

I can only imagine how you must
feel.

BROCK

I feel...

Brock looks at the picture of Katie. He looks at her
smile... but then focuses on his own smile. This is a
younger, happier, more care-free man than the face we
know. He looks at his younger self... and breathes.

BROCK

... calm.

Cara sees the whiskey bottle at the bar and goes to make
a drink.

CARA

Can I make you a drink? In
celebration?

Cara holds up the whiskey. Brock extends his hand.

BROCK

May I?

Cara hands Brock the bottle. He walks through the open
doorway. He opens the bottle and takes a smell. He
inhales it in, smiles... and nods. Slowly, deliberately,
he pours the whiskey into the prairie dirt.

Cara watches as Brock, silhouetted by the light outside,
pours the whiskey out until the bottle is empty.

He comes back in and closes the door, tossing the bottle
into the corner.

CARA

Want me to put that in the trash
for you?

BROCK

I'm... not sure I have a trash
can.

We hear a FLUTTER in the corner. They turn and look-- another MEADOWLARK has found its way into the house.

Brock looks down and sees his UZI, but before he even makes a move, Cara walks over, opens the window, and gently ushers the bird outside.

CARA

Come on, out we go... you don't want to be in here. This way...

The meadowlark flies away. Cara grins and looks back at Brock. Brock stares at for a long time. Cara doesn't know how to handle such an intense look.

CARA

Well, the helicopter's waiting, so I should probably get going.

BROCK

Sure. You're right.

She heads for the door.

CARA

It was... definitely an experience.

BROCK

That it was.

They shake hands. It's far too professional for either of their likings.

BROCK

Thank you.

CARA

For what?

BROCK

For, you know. Seeing me back. Sewing up my shoulder. Helping me save our nation's capital.

CARA

No big deal. Just another day for me, really.

She smiles then walks out the door.

EXT. HUNTER HOUSEHOLD-- CONTINUOUS

She heads for the helicopter when Brock runs back out.

BROCK

Hey, Doc?

Cara turns back to face him. This is incredibly difficult for him to say.

BROCK

Hey, um... my house is kind of a mess, and I don't really know where to start.

CARA

Okay...

BROCK

And you seem like you're... you know, smart... and--

CARA

You want me to clean your house for you?

BROCK

No, no, God no. I just was wondering if you wouldn't mind... helping me. Get back on my feet. You know.

(pause)

It might be nice to have company. Someone to talk to.

Cara considers it, clearly flattered.

CARA

Do I get to drive?

BROCK

MY car?

CARA

Look, I don't need to stay--

BROCK

Fine, yes. Absolutely. I trust you.

Cara is taken aback by his earnestness. She's clearly going to accept, but she's playing it coy.

CARA

I suppose my third doctorate can wait... a few days or so.

BROCK

Right. Just a few days.

CARA

A few days then.

BROCK

A few days.

The helicopter flies off. Brock and Cara walk back into the house. He considers touching Cara's back as she re-enters the home, but hesitates.

The camera PULLS BACK from this happy scene to a wide shot of America...

... then zooms back in on the EAST COAST...

... towards the DC AREA...

... to a FORESTED AREA ALONGSIDE A RIVER, where we see...

... a BABY HIPPO CRAWL OUT OF THE RIVER ONTO THE COAST.

Then another. Then another.

Then another.

We zoom close into a BABY HIPPO's face... it lets out a fierce young ROAR. The camera zooms into its mouth until--

BLACKOUT.