

HiRoKin
"Sword for the Downtrodden"

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TITLE UP:

PLANET ARADIUS

THE ARID PEOPLE, DISTINGUISHED BY THE LACK OF LINES ON THE PALMS OF THEIR HANDS, HAVE BEEN ENSLAVED AND OPPRESSED BY HUMANS FOR OVER A MILLENNIUM.

IN RECENT YEARS THE PLANET'S DECLINING POPULATION HAS BECOME PLAGUED BY INFERTILITY.

THE RUTHLESS HUMAN VICEROY -- THE GRIFFIN -- HAS BEGUN AN UNYIELDING CAMPAIGN TO FIND A KILL THE ARID LEADER -- MOSS -- WHO SPEAKS OF REBELLION.

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ARID CAMP - NIGHT

A nervous energy fills the air. A gathering of the REBEL LEADERS -- all pale skinned and fair haired.

OLDER ARID

We cannot stand for this any longer. These humans have come to our planet, stolen our resources and left our world for dead. Now, our planet is plagued with infertility.

(beat)

Will we continue to allow the Griffin to enslave us? He takes our men and tortures our women? Are we that different from the humans...

The LEADER lifts his hand --CLOSE ON: we see his palms are unlined.

LEADER

...Because our palms are unlined?

WE pull back off the ARID LEADERS to reveal...

A DARK FIGURE -- Hirokin -- approaching the camp.

ANOTHER ANGLE

He walks past a CURIOUS CHILD -- Hirokin waves -- the child looks at Hirokin's palms. The child looks back at Hirokin with wonder and mouths "Human?" Hirokin smiles, and...

... Steps up to an ARID GUARD. The dark figure lifts his hand -- we see the lines on his palm.

HIROKIN

Human.

ARID GUARD
Hirokin?

HIROKIN
Let's avoid getting to know one
another. Not exactly good for
business.

ARID GUARD
Wait here.

MOMENTS LATER

The guard returns.

ARID GUARD (CONT'D)
Follow me.

An OLDER ARID WITH WHITE BEARD stands in the shadows flanked
by two WARRIOR ARIDS.

OLDER ARID
Let's see it.

Hirokin holds out a piece of Aradium. It floats. Hirokin
eyes the group -- his hand on his sword hilt ready to draw --
cautious about a double cross.

HIROKIN
I showed you mine...

CUT TO:

2 EXT. OUSKIRTS OF ARID CAMP - NIGHT 2

A DARK SHADOW IMPALES AN SURPRISED ARID SENTRY. HIS MUFFLED
SOUNDS UNNOTICED.

A silhouette of a group of OMINOUS FIGURES IN BLACK with
DEMONIC RED MASKS AND seven foot tall TRIANGULAR WEAPONS
surround the town.

The outline of GRIFFIN's silhouetted armor, Viceroy of the
Horde...

GRIFFIN
Take it down.
(ALT DIALOGUE)
To their knees.

...Gives the order to attack.

The Apostate step forward.

BACK TO:

3 INT. TOWN OF ELEVEN - NIGHT

3 *

AHHHHHHH!!!!

*

GAURD

*

The Griffin has sent the Apostate!

*

A scream fills the air. The old man snaps a look to Hirokin.

*

OLDER ARID

*

You...

*

HIROKIN

*

Wha...

*

ARID TRIBAL LEADER

*

Sir, we must get you to safety.

*

OLDER ARID

*

I should have known we couldn't trust
a human. How could you do this?

*

HIROKIN

*

I didn't.

*

OLDER ARID

*

Then help us.

*

HIROKIN

*

Not my fight.

*

THE ARID GUARD RUNS OVER

*

OLDER ARID

*

There isn't a moment to spare.

*

He turns to the Arid Captain.

*

OLDER ARID (CONT'D)

*

Quickly. Get word to Moss. Moss
must not retreat. He must pull back.
Help him get to safety.

*

(beat)

*

If word doesn't reach Moss the
rebellion will be lost. We will try
to hold them off as long as we can.

*

Screams rise in the BG.

*

OLDER ARID (CONT'D)

*

(To Hirokin)

*

Please, you can help my people escape.

*

HIROKIN

*

Not my problem --

*

OLDER ARID

They are innocent arid women and
children. Some with the gift.

HIROKIN

Not my fight.

Hirokin grabs his sword and inserts the Aradium into the
hexagonal hilt. The weapon begins to float. He turns...

HIROKIN'S POV

An APOSTATE slaughtering SCREAMING RAIDS.

BACK TO

Hirokin ducks into the shadows -- he hurls his blade into an
encroaching APOSTATE who mystically turns out of the weapon's
way.

ANOTHER ANGLE

An arid guard is slain in front of him as he ducks out of
the way. He sees a beautiful woman covered in blood -- TERRA.

BEHIND HIM

THE ARID GUARD from the entrance sees Hirokin.

ARID GUARD

You. Leave her alone, human!

The Arid Guard goes to kill Hirokin -- Hirokin parries and
takes out the Arid Guard. Blood sprays on Hirokin's face.

HIROKIN

(to Terra)

Come with me if you want to live.

Everywhere APOSTATE slaughter ARIDS. Terra sees this.

Hirokin and Terra run through the mayhem.

MEANWHILE

The APOSTATES hack ARIDS -- AN APOSTATE HAS THE ARID GUARD
CORNERED.

APOSTATE

Where is the rebel leader Moss?

ARID GUARD

I'd rather die than tell you human
scum anything.

(MORE)

ARID GUARD (CONT'D)
 (ALT DIALOGUE)
 I'd rather die than tell the APOSTATE
 anything.

ANOTHER ANGLE

An Apostate impales the OLDER ARID.

ARID GUARD (CONT'D)
 No!!!!

CUT TO:

4 INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Hirokin lurches up from the flashback.

Terra beside him. A child next to her under the covers. He
 looks around.

TERRA
 You okay.

HIROKIN
 Yeah.

TERRA
 We don't have to do this. We're too
 close to the horde. There are just
 too many Deacons in these parts.
 It... doesn't feel right.

HIROKIN
 I'll be back before before first
 meal. It's -- so close to here.
 We've come all this way. I can't
 turn back now.

Terra turns away, despondent. Out of breath. Another
 nightmare. Another day of torment.

Hirokin touches the head of his sleeping child with a worried
 smile.

He lays back down AS WE...

CUT TO

:

5 EXT. ARID TENT - MEANWHILE

A warrior poet begins his day by TEA RITUAL. Clothed in an
 elegant ARID ROBE, his face is rich in character and
 accentuated by a magnificent beard. This is MOSS, (51).

CLOSE ON - His hands as he flattens the herbs; folds the bag.

Standing nearby is a tempestuous fighter, CAIN, 27 he addresses the older man.

CAIN

What you're asking of us is suicide.
The Apostate won't spare a single
soul. It is only a matter of time
before they find us.

Moss takes a sip from his tea. Considers the younger soldier's words.

MOSS

If we do not stand up -- as a people --
we face extinction.

CAIN

You can't save everyone.

MOSS

An individual life is meaningless,
Cain, unless it is shared.

CAIN

And what meaning is there in death?

Maren ENTERS. Even out of breath and GHOST WHITE, her radiance is undeniable. Her blue eyes are filled with fear.

MAREN

Deacons.

Cain glares at Moss.

CAIN

Are you sure?

MAREN

None of the Apostate's markings.

MOSS

Women and children to the cloaking.
Prepare the men to engage.
(to Maren)
Walk strong.

Maren exits. As Moss rises, Cain turns to him.

CAIN

The Deacon's harnesses will soon be
followed by the Apostate's blades.

Moss thinks.

MOSS

We are strong in the "wei", Cain.
It is not our time.

Moss then exits, leaving Cain visibly frustrated.

CUT TO

6 EXT. ARID CAMPSITE -- MOMENTS LATER 6

We see the small campsite with HEXAGONAL LAYERED TENTS situated against a massive sand dune. But suddenly, CAMOUFLAGE cascades over it. Each tent disappears one by one, fading into the background of vast dunes.

6A INT. CLOAKED TENT -- CONTINUOUS 6A

CLOSE ON - Moss and Cain as they lay hidden in the ground with weapons drawn. Tension is etched on their faces.

Next to them, Maren hides with a young, elfish BOY, (7). This is GABRIEL Cain's younger brother.

MAREN holds the slightly fragile Gabriel in her arms. Nervously, the child, shakes as tears stream from his face. Maren, she resists thinking the unthinkable. *

6B EXT. DESERT -- CONTINUOUS 6B

As the last ARID MAN UNLATCHES his CLOAK, spins, and DISAPPEARS under it -- blending into the barren earth.

An eerie silence follows. The desert beyond is perfectly still.

A moment later - a HUM can be heard approaching. It is followed by a MASSIVE HULL that HOVERS across the DESERT. PENTAGONAL SILVER MAGNETS along its side seem to give it lift and propulsion. This is a DEACON TRANSPORT.

The transport crests the nearby horizon where only moments ago the Arid encampment lay exposed.

The hull SLOWS to an idle...

THE CAMERA BOOMS UP onto the DECK of the Transport to reveal...

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

... The beasts were like unto demons prepared for battle, with hair and teeth like razors, and tails like daggers and their power was to hurt men...

An ANGULAR FACE SHIELD WITH METAL JAWS. This is KORE (40), underneath APOSTATE ROBES. KORE removes his GOGGLES revealing a heinous face, cold eyes. Hideously disfigured with absent nostrils.

He carries a specialized WHIP/SWORD hybrid weapon; a woven cord attached to a staff -- its end is formed into a curved blade. *

Kore looks around, SENSING A PRESENCE.

INTERCUT - CAMOUFLAGED CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Cain and Moss tighten their grips on their weapons. *

CLOSE ON - A DEACON'S MASK as it floats past in eerie silence. Ever so slowly, the Deacon's stare penetrates the earth, searching, hunting...

Maren finds herself caught in the Deacon's eye-line. Motionless. She holds her breath. Fearing smothering Gabriel, her eyes roll back as if she is about to lose consciousness. She wants to let go but a strength arises within. She holds on. *

Kore's demonic eyes scour the area.

Moss remains stoic; tense. Cain, nervous -- ready to pounce. Moss places a calm hand on his shoulder. *

The Deacon's glare fails to discover the Arid tribe as the massive Transport hovers past, carrying the Deacon farther from Maren. *

Exhale. *

CUT TO

6C EXT. THE HORDE -- DAY -- ESTABLISHING

6C

In the middle of this barren wasteland, dozens of PENTAGONAL TENTS; bustle with commerce. This isn't a city, it's a beehive. Its isolation makes it defensible from every side.

The CAMERA pushes into A COMPOUND at the head of A BLOODY PIT...

7 INT. CAVERN -- DAY

7

...INSIDE the compound, we descend into the BOWELS...

 GRIFFIN (O.S.)

 ...to fulfill his will and give the
kingdom unto the beasts...

...To find GRIFFIN (50), a sexy beast. He places a blade at the throat of an ARID LEADER - bound and on his knees.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Where's Moss?

THE ARID LEADER simply stares back at Griffin, resolute.

Slice.

Griffin walks to the next captor.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Where is Moss?

ARID LEADER #1

Do as you must.

SLICE.

Next captor. This one doubts

GRIFFIN

Moss?

ARID LEADER #2

We'll never betray our people.

Griffin about to slice the leader's throat -- when a pale hand takes hold his grip. The hand belongs to a sinewy, porcelain-skinned beauty named ORANGE (20s).

ORANGE

You are a king my lord. Such deeds should be left to those *better suited* for them. *

(beat) *

Arid or Human -- they must all admire you.

GRIFFIN

They must fear me. Admiration is short lived. *

ORANGE

Then think of the economics. At this rate there will be no strong men for either work or entertainment.

GRIFFIN

Economics.

ORANGE

Indeed. Come let me soothe your weary feet. *

Griffin examines the defiant Arid Leader's face.

 GRIFFIN
 (re: Arid Leader)
 Take him to the pit.

Orange and Griffin exit.

CUT TO: *

8 INT. UNDERGROUND POOL -- DAY

8

A crystal-clear pool of water that nearly GLOWS with life. At the opposite end of the pool, three beautiful CONCUBINE ATTENDANTS sit lounging.

IN THE POOL - The nearly naked figure of ORANGE swims toward the other side.

AT THE HEAD OF THE POOL - the beastly Griffin stands comfortably enjoying the fruits of his regal position.

He washes his blood stained hands in the pool.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
 (re: water)
 The very fabric of life and death
 held within this cavern, Orange.
 (beat)
 While others sought the power to
 kill, I sought the power to give
 life.

 ORANGE
 And, thus you became everything.

 GRIFFIN
 Precisely.

 ORANGE
 What else are you becoming?

Griffin's face changes. A darkness.

 GRIFFIN
 Only that which you are making me. *

Griffin traces his fingers across her wet stomach. She leans over and kisses him deeply.

 ORANGE
 You used to believe that "your vision
 creates your reality"?

GRIFFIN

(scoffs)

The gig *sentient wei* -- a relic of my youth. I am no longer that naive. Though I can not say that about many others.

ORANGE

You know I don't like that word.

GRIFFIN

"Gig?"

ORANGE

Yes.

GRIFFIN

Once you've stood opposite a blood-stained gig blade; stood beneath their cold, piercing eyes -- it's clear what their "vision" is.

ORANGE

And so now you enslave them.

GRIFFIN

I harness them. For the greater good of my people. That is *my way*.

ORANGE

Are you in fear, my lord. *

Griffin stares at Orange.

GRIFFIN

Rest assured, I will root Moss out. And I will destroy him. And his gig beliefs.

Griffin turns her over. *

CUT TO

9 EXT. HIROKIN'S HOME, DESERT CAMP - DAWN 9 *

NURAN (O.S.) *

Ava! Ava!

A boy excitedly approaches. NURAN (7), is pale, ethereal.

NURAN (CONT'D)

Ava!

Hirokin takes Nuran in his arms.

NURAN (CONT'D)

I'm seven today.

HIROKIN

Yes you are, my love.

NURAN

Today then?

With a hesitant breath...

HIROKIN

(playing dumb)

Today what?

NURAN

Today? You will teach me the hunt?

Nuran takes hold of his father's hand and pulls on him. Hirokin playfully resists.

HIROKIN

I don't think you're ready, Nuran.

Hirokin feigns going back to sleep.

NURAN

Ava?

Suddenly, Hirokin grabs his son playfully.

CUT TO

10 INT. WHITE CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

10

Inside the cave an OBELISK has been chiseled. Hirokin unhinges his weapon and offers it to Nuran, who's face goes wide.

CLOSE ON - The finely etched metal blade. A CORD woven to stretch and recoil like elastic drapes from the sword's hilt. A small CREVICE laid within a HEXAGONAL CREST on the hilt appears to be missing a piece.

NURAN

(re: sword)

Does everyone know how to use this?

HIROKIN

Every tribe uses different traditions.

NURAN

I want to be just like you.

A FLASH of a BLOODY HIROKIN, SLASHING -- the TOWN OF ELEVEN.

Back in the present, hesitation. Hirokin's eyes hint shame. *

HIROKIN

Promise that you...

NURAN

...will only fight for my life and my family's life. No exceptions.

HIROKIN

No exceptions.

NURAN

I promise, ava.

Hirokin reveals the same woven cord looped through a HEXAGONAL TOOL.

HIROKIN

Start with this. This is used in the Aradium caves by the Arid people to dig.

(beat)

Be careful. It's still dangerous.

NURAN

I'll be careful.

Hirokin reaches into a compartment on his belt and pulls out a SILVER PEBBLE enclosed...

NURAN (CONT'D)

(awed)

Aradium.

(The same magnetized substance that keeps Griffin's Transport afloat.)

NURAN (CONT'D)

I've never touched it before. It feels so...

Hirokin PUSHES DOWN his son's hand. Instead of falling with Nuran's hand, the Aradium remains stationary, FLOATING IN THE AIR.

HIROKIN

Light.

Nuran smiles from ear to ear.

Hirokin grasps the tiny rock and places it in the hexagonal tool's empty crevice, designed to hold just such a pebble. *

NEARBY *

A WOMAN stands watching. TERRA, (29) is a raven-haired beauty with wounded eyes. She is Hirokin's wife. She smiles at the pair. *

HIROKIN (CONT'D)
Aradium makes it float. *
(beat)
Gives it life.

The compartment locks and the tool takes life - the tool now buoyant. Hirokin hesitates. *

HIROKIN (CONT'D)
(re: the Aradium)
No one can ever know we have this.

NURAN
Yes, ava.

HIROKIN
Ever.

Hirokin senses movement...he nods.

Nuran sees the movement...A WHITE CREATURE that resembles both a lizard and a rabbit.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Don't think about it too much.

Nuran swallows. *Whoosh!*

Nuran hurls the blade, STRIKING THE REPTILE.

The woven cord SNAPS THE TOOL BACK. Nuran fails to catch it. Hirokin snatches the tool before it hits his dazed son.

CLOSE ON -

The reptile as it writhes in a pool of blood seeping into the sand.

Nuran's face turns ghostly white. *

HIROKIN (CONT'D)
It's suffering. Go on, son. *

Nuran tears up as he watches the innocent creature's blood merge with the sand. He cannot deliver the fatal blow. He turns away.

Hirokin witness to his son's pure heart.

Terra watches; and exits the mouth of the cave.

Hirokin takes the Aradium and places it in his blade. The sword proudly awakens - buoyant, hungry. Hirokin sends his sword flying and elegantly finishes the reptile.

*
*
*

Nuran, a sweat has broken on his brow. Embarrassed. Hirokin turns to the mouth of the cave apprehensively.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

We'll eat well tonight.

Hirokin pauses as he casts his gaze on his son. Fatherhood has made everything different now.

*
*

CUT TO

11 EXT. CAVE -- MOMENTS LATER

11

Hirokin and Nuran exit to find Terra waiting. Hirokin kisses Nuran on top of his head.

*
*

HIROKIN

Go play.

*
*

As Nuran walks out, Terra pats his head.

*

TERRA

Don't go too far.

They look at the broken vista as Nuran walks away with a wounded glance back at his parents.

HIROKIN

(re: the landscape)

Beautiful, isn't it?

TERRA

I don't know. It feels... cold.
Lonely.

HIROKIN

It doesn't have to be.

TERRA

It is what it is.

Hirokin looks down -- he will lose this battle.

TERRA (CONT'D)

(re: her unlined palms)

Amazing how such a small thing can determine so much.

HIROKIN

Some say the lines tell your future.

TERRA

Does that mean I have no future?

Hirokin sinks.

HIROKIN

You okay?

TERRA

Fine.

HIROKIN

Not a good sign.

TERRA

Can we talk?

HIROKIN

Aren't we talking?

TERRA

You know what I mean.

TERRA (CONT'D)

I can't do it anymore.

HIROKIN

What?

TERRA

Be out here. Alone. All the time.

HIROKIN

But you have...

TERRA

...without my tribe. Outside everything. No friends. Just us.

HIROKIN

But...

TERRA

You're gone more days than I remember. Doing who knows what. I just can't do it. I've tried for too long. I can't do it anymore.

HIROKIN

What about our family?

TERRA

We haven't been a family in a long time.

HIROKIN

But Nuran.

TERRA

Nuran's seven...now. He's... he's
going to be fine. I need to... I
need more...

*

HIROKIN

(resignation)

I need you...

TERRA

I can't spend one more day like this.
Impoverished. On the outside. Not
Arid. Not human. I mean, who are
we!?

HIROKIN

We're outside because we... don't
belong.

TERRA

No. You chose this life. Not me.

HIROKIN

I'll fix it.

TERRA

No, you won't. This is who you are.
That's the problem.

HIROKIN

I'll fix it. I just need a little
time, Terra.

Terra turns her head as Hirokin reaches out to her...

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

One trade. One more trade and then...
we'll do whatever you want.

TERRA

More of the same.

*

HIROKIN

One. Trade.

TERRA

Fine. One trade.

She turns and leaves.

*

THE NEXT DAY - SAME SPOT

*

Hirokin stares at the white trees. Scorpion like. Some with WHITE RIBBONS. The ribbons flap in the wind. Creating a hum. A field of song.

Hirokin takes a burdened breath and heads to their cave.

Terra's eyes turn from his. He grabs his BAG.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. ARADIUS ROCK - HIROKIN'S HOME - DUSK 12

The day has been long. Hirokin stands and looks to the horizon as if longing for a glimpse of what will come.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. CANYON OF LOST SOULS - EARLY MORNING 13

Hirokin walks through a deep, red canyon. He comes to a narrow crack in the canyon wall. A heavy pause. Hirokin looks up to the morning sky, then back to the narrow crack. He decides.

A quick glance in each direction, then he slips into...

14 INT. UNDERGROUND CANTEEN - DAY 14

Another world. Various people. Various activities. Drink. Profit. Loss. As Hirokin negotiates his way through -

Suddenly, he snatches at a TINY HAND out of mid-air.

Hirokin looks into the eyes of...

A DIRTY LITTLE BOY; a pick-pocket. His expression retreats. Before Hirokin deliberates.

RENAULT (O.S.)

We all do what we have to do.

Hirokin turns to find RENAULT, (30), a worn yet muscular man. He lets go of the boy, who hurries off.

RENAULT (CONT'D)

Last I heard your name, it was tied to the massacre at the Town of Eleven.

HIROKIN

You believe everything you hear?

RENAULT

Only half of what I see.

Hirokin looks at Renault who presents an INSTRUMENT with DIALS. Hirokin looks at it; unimpressed.

HIROKIN
Not what we discussed.

RENAULT
This is better.

HIROKIN
Not for you to decide.

RENAULT
(showing his cracks)
This is all I have.

Hirokin turns to move on.

RENAULT (CONT'D)
HIROKIN.
(off his attention)
You're the only man within weeks of
here with the cure.

HIROKIN
Then you understand its value.

IN THE BACKGROUND

A WOMAN with CHILD, PHEON (30) and EMERALD (12) watch with fearful eyes. This is Renault's wife and daughter. Renault and Pheon's eyes meet. He pleads. *

RENAULT
Mercy, brother. Mercy. My wife --
she's sick. She needs that medicine.

Hirokin pauses at this. He turns his head back slightly. There is guilt there. But...

HIROKIN
We all do what we must.

As he turns, *CLICK*.

CLOSE ON - Renault's unlocked weapon.

Hirokin calmly turns. He unhinges his blade.

RENAULT
Those who will not help, cannot be
helped.

Renault's brow -- it twitches. Sweat breaks. The two men stare each other down. The background goes silent. Tension. *

RENAULT (CONT'D)
I know who you are. *

HIROKIN

Do you?

IN THE BG

Pheon clenches Emerald closer, her eyes reach out to her husband.

RENAULT

How can you be so selfish?

HIROKIN

We all do what we must.

Just as Hirokin turns to exit, a LOOKOUT (25) races in.

LOOKOUT

DEACONS!!

CLOSE ON - Hirokin, as he clenches his jaw and DASHES OUT.

CUT TO

15 EXT. CANYON - CONTINUOUS

15

Hirokin sprints across the desert terrain; sweat streaming down his face.

JUMP CUT

As Hirokin curses himself for leaving as BONE-CHILLING SCREAMS echo down the canyon corridor behind him.

CUT TO

16 EXT. HIROKIN'S HOME - DAY

16

Terra sees Hirokin sprinting toward her. She knows. She bends to Nuran, who stands next to her.

TERRA

Nuran. It's time to practice our cloaking.

NURAN

Is it the Deacons?

TERRA

Quickly sweetheart. Quickly.

Terra and Nuran rush into their cave.

Hirokin runs in after them and with a swift pull of a hidden cord, CAMOUFLAGE falls to cover the cave's entrance.

16A INT. CAVE -- CONTINUOUS

16A

Hirokin pulls Terra and Nuran close to him. Nuran looks up at his father then peers through the camouflage. Hirokin settles his breath.

*
*

16B P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS

16B

As Hirokin watches the empty landscape.

NURAN

(nervous)

Ama?

TERRA

Shhhhh...Completely silent, Nuran.
Like we practice.

Nuran nods to his mother and father. Terra watches her husband. Hirokin lifts his eyes to the horizon.

Silence, then...

The Transport emerges over the horizon, coming ever closer.

P.O.V. NURAN -- CONTINUOUS

As the Transport is about to safely pass...

Terra holds her breath. The Transport slows. It turns toward Hirokin's hidden dwelling...

And comes to a stop.

Off steps Kore, weapon in hand.

A DOZEN Deacons follow. They are FIFTY FEET from the hideout.

Kore menacingly approaches the nearly invisible campsite and KICKS a forgotten UTENSIL.

Inside the hideout, Terra's eyes dart to her husband.

CLOSE ON

Hirokin; standing strong; stoic. Watching.

The Deacons scour the area. Nothing.

The Deacons appear to speak to Kore then head back to the Transport. Kore turns to follow.

When he turns, Kore's HIDEOUSLY SCARRED FACE comes into full view.

CLOSE ON - NURAN - as he lets out a GASP.

*

Kore HEARS the tiny sound. He turns. A smile.

Nuran looks to Hirokin, shamed. His father tries to comfort Nuran with a weak smile, but fear fills his eyes.

Kore turns slowly, carefully. He bends down to the dirt and looks at the sand.

Kore LOOKS DIRECTLY at the hideout. He lifts his hand, signaling, "four."

Four Deacons head over. As the first Deacon nears -

HIROKIN

Human.

Hirokin EXITS the hideout, followed by Terra and Nuran.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

(holding up his lined
hand)

I am Human.

(beat)

We thought you were vandals so we
took cover.

Kore looks like he won't buy it.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

I don't want any trouble. We're just
passing through.

(to Terra and Nuran,
commanding)

Come. We still have a long walk ahead
of us.

They start to move, but with a nod from Kore, the Deacons block their path.

KORE

Where are you headed?

HIROKIN

East. Following the food.

Hirokin and Kore hold a long stare. Kore smiles knowingly.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Look, here, I have something.

Hirokin reaches for his side. The Deacons point their weapons. Hirokin moves slowly.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Easy.

Hirokin takes the Aradium from his sword and holds it out.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

This is worth at least a hundred
gigs. *

Hirokin holds out the pebble and lets it go. IT FLOATS.

KORE

More like a thousand.

HIROKIN

Let us go and it's yours. *

Kore glares at Hirokin.

KORE

I'll decide what's mine.

Hirokin holds Kore's stare.

HIROKIN

Please. We don't want any trouble.

KORE

Trouble?

Kore steps forward.

KORE (CONT'D)

Oh, my friend. You are in a world of
trouble.

The Deacons edge closer -- weapons lifting.

KORE (CONT'D)

(to the Deacons)
Take them all.

As the Deacons move in, Hirokin looks to his wife. She empowers him with her eyes.

And just as a Deacon is upon him -

HIROKIN spins; draws his SWORD and SLICES AT HIM.

Hirokin attacks with grace, but THE DEACON MOVES with incredible speed, AVOIDING THE BLADE.

ANOTHER LUNGE and ANOTHER MISS.

HIROKIN

NURAN, RUN!

Nuran begins to flee.

AERIAL SHOT -- SLOW MOTION

As the Deacons move ahead of Hirokin's increasingly desperate moves. The Deacons' clothes and bodies flow as they dodge Hirokin's vicious attacks. *

RESUME SPEED -

When suddenly - *THUNK!*

Hirokin falls to his knees, revealing Kore behind him holding his weapon.

Hirokin's eyes flutter open as he struggles with consciousness.

16C P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS

16C

As he sees Terra and Nuran being DRAGGED to the Transport.

Nuran reaches out to his father...

NURAN

Ava!!!!

Hirokin reaches out to them...

WHACK!

His eyes close.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

17 EXT. THE HORDE - DAY

17

Vendors come and go. Tents go up. Tents go down. Hundreds of twenty foot long STREAMERS high above provide cover from the sun. Varied PLACAS hang over different sections of the city, marking territory. *

IN THE BACKGROUND *

ARID SLAVES line acres of ground like ants. Passing dirt, water, bodies.

At the center of the Horde, a rabid CROWD gathers around a DEEP, BLOOD-STAINED CRATER. This is THE PIT.

THREE BLOODY SPIKES tethered with rope line the Pit's edge.

In the center, a platform for three victims.

CUT TO

18 EXT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS

18

Orange joins Griffin in his box at the Pit. She reaches out to his face caressing it. She leans in for a kiss but Griffin turns. His interest fading.

ORANGE

Did you enjoy...this morning? *

His hand traces down her body.

GRIFFIN

I enjoyed it very much.

(beat)

Such a beautiful vessel.

He lets his hand rest upon her stomach.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

And yet...empty.

Orange places her hand upon his.

ORANGE

I am more than just a vessel. You used to understand that. Anyone with sight would understand that.

GRIFFIN

Perhaps...I am blind. *

He studies her.

ORANGE

I will give you an heir. It's only a matter of time.

GRIFFIN

Obedience to my word...

ORANGE

(sharp)

Is my freedom.

GRIFFIN

I am father to a civilization. I will not be forgotten. A tree that does not bear fruit is only fit for the fire.

Griffin exits. *

CUT TO:

19 I/E. HOLDING CELL - DAY

19

A long CAGE of undesirables. Mostly Arid, a few Humans.

To one side of the cage, the Pit.

To the other, the city MARKETPLACE.

Above, GRIFFIN'S SHELTER and his PRIVATE BOX.

Nearby, in the market, a LONG LINE OF HUMANS waits for rations of water -- no more than a cup per person.

At the FRONT of the line, a PAIR of GUARDS, AIRBORNE and SEVREN, (30s), dole out the rations.

19A INT. CELL -- CONTINUOUS

19A

Hirokin sits in a corner; looks up. Renault sits across from him, glaring at Hirokin.

Hirokin glances toward the marketplace and sees his BLADE behind Sevren in a hidden pile of confiscated goods.

As Airborne and Sevren continue their mindless work, they see HONSU (35) -- an eccentric black Human trading in dried root.

SEVREN

Oh, look there.

*

AIRBORNE

Oh crap. Isn't that Honsu...

*

SEVREN

He's supposed to be in with Moss?

*

AIRBORNE

Oh crap. He's coming over. What do we do?

*

*

SEVREN

No matter what he wants, we want five.

AIRBORNE

Five. No matter what he wants?

SEVREN

Five.

AIRBORNE

What if he wants two or three?

SEVREN

Five for two.

AIRBORNE

Five for two. Right.

Honsu slides in for his ration of water.

HONSU

And what do you have for me today,
Gentlemen? Though I suspect there
is nothing gentle about you.

SEVREN

Oh, I can be real gentle...would you
care to find out.

HONSU

Tempting.

Sevren peels back a blanket hiding the black-market goods.
Honsu's eyes immediately land on Hirokin's sword.

HONSU (CONT'D)

What's this?

AIRBORNE

Love stick. The gig kind.

Honsu examines the blade carefully.

HONSU

Two palm roots for this one.

SEVREN

Five.

AIRBORNE

Five.

(beat)

It's worth at least five.

Airborne looks to Sevren.

SEVREN

Right. Five.

HONSU

FIVE? Seriously. What Human wants
an arid blade? They're too heavy
for any value.

*
*

SEVREN

Oh, no you don't. If you want it,
that means it's worth somethin'.
You're not going to rip us off this
time.

HONSU

Rip you off? Gentleman. Have you entirely forgotten that precious blue tea I brought you only six suns ago?

AIRBORNE

Ooh. I do remember. That was great blue tea.

SEVREN

Yeah... that was great. Really great.

AIRBORNE

Very great.

SEVREN

And why was it great?

AIRBORNE

It was just...

SEVREN

Life affirming...

AIRBORNE / SEVREN

Aye. Life affirming.

Honsu smiles. Sevren whispers in Airborne's ear.

AIRBORNE

We'll take five.

HONSU

Two.

SEVREN

Two's good.

Airborne sends a confused look at Sevren.

AIRBORNE

I thought we wanted five?!

SEVREN

Two's good. We'll take two.

AIRBORNE

All right. We'll take two. And now we're even.

HONSU

Almost.

(then)

So why don't we add this little trinket and we have a deal?

SEVREN

Two blue.

AIRBORNE

Two for two.

SEVREN

Alright. Deal.

Honsu tucks the blade under his garb and walks in the direction of the holding cells.

SEVREN (CONT'D)

Let's have a five for two.

AIRBORNE

He's gone. How are we gonna get five now? We've got two.

SEVREN

NO. Let's have a five for two.

The pair keep the discussion going as they change watch. The thirsty Humans grumble.

NEAR THE CELL -

As Honsu walks by the cages carrying the blade, he sees Hirokin WATCHING his sword.

HONSU

This belong to you?

Hirokin meets his eye.

HONSU (CONT'D)

Now what would you be doing with a blade like this?

Hirokin remains silent.

HONSU (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

They say you were defending an Arid woman and her child.

Hirokin's eyes lift with the word "Arid."

HONSU (CONT'D)

That's right -- Arid. I don't call anyone a gig.

(beat)

Perhaps I will bet on you.

HIROKIN

Bet on death.

HONSU

Ha. I always do. That's what keeps me alive.

(handing him a root)

Here. Liferoot. It may just save your life.

*
*

Hirokin takes the root, bites. Honsu watches Hirokin, intrigued. As he walks away...

HONSU (CONT'D)

Walk strong in the wei, my friend.

A moment later, GUARDS arrive to transfer Hirokin, Renault, and another to the PIT. Parading them in front of the betting crowds.

19B P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS

19B

As the crowds swarm him, touching, cheering, spitting his way.

20 I/E. THE HOLDING CELL - CONTINUOUS

20

A TRIO of PIT GUARDS drag Terra, Renault's wife Pheon, and a HUMAN WOMAN out into the Pit. Renault moves to the bars when he sees his wife.

RENAULT

Pheon!

PHEON

Renault!

Hirokin sees Terra. He's filled burning with rage.

GUARDS strap a petrified Terra and the other two women to the STAKE at the center of the crater.

Renault and Hirokin watch helplessly.

RENAULT

(re: the Pit)

They want to know what we're willing to die for.

HIROKIN

(sotto)

Terra.

GUARD

MOVE IT. Time to make the crowds happy.

*

The Guard prods the men out of the cages into...

21 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 21

Above the men, a CROWD at fever pitch. *

The CROWD CHEERS its approval. As each male is prodded out. *

Each woman is in line with one of the three tethered SPIKES along the crater's rim. Terra's white ribbon remains in her hair. *

The loudest BOOS of all as Hirokin is prodded out before the feverish crowds. *

Suddenly a hush...all heads turn to... *

22 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 22

Griffin enters his box with Orange and their entourage, including Kore and Orange's three concubine attendants.

Griffin accepts their adoration, then lifts a hand.

The whole crowd goes SILENT.

He sits... *

...The crowd ROARS! *

23 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 23

At the stakes stand the Pit's ceremonial wardens; THE REAPERS. Each set a fire under the ropes affixed to the spikes. Once these lines burn, the women will be IMPALED.

Hirokin races to Terra, but a Reaper thrusts out a pentagonal weapon, stopping Hirokin short.

REAPER
Kill your opponent first.

Renault grabs a WEAPON from a stockpile.

The other Human attacks Hirokin from behind, knocking Hirokin to the ground. As he stands over him, he is SLICED OPEN by Renault's blade.

A REAPER'S BLADE slices through a burning line.

WHOOSH!

The third woman's spike IMPALES her, SPLATTERING Terra and Pheon with BLOOD.

The crowd ROARS.

IN THE PIT -

Hirokin rises and SPINS past Renault's slicing sword, just missing a PIT GUARD's blade. He uses his legs to -

SWEEP Renault to the ground. The impact sends Renault's weapon FLYING.

24 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX - CONTINUOUS

24

Griffin watches the battle carefully. He also watches Orange who seems fixated on Hirokin.

ORANGE
Impressive.

Kore scoffs and Orange shoots him a contemptuous look. Griffin notices the exchange.

GRIFFIN
(to Orange)
What exactly do you find impressive?

ORANGE
A man who would die for his convictions.

Griffin chuckles.

GRIFFIN
Tell me you don't believe that.

ORANGE
Does it seem so absurd.

GRIFFIN
There's little satisfaction in sacrifice. Power is much more satisfying.

ORANGE
As satisfying as pain?

Griffin glances at Terra.

GRIFFIN
Almost -- though not quite so as the conquest of innocence.

*

ORANGE
That depends on your definition of innocence.

Griffin glances at Terra.

25 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 25

Renault and Hirokin are in the middle of a death-battle. Hirokin ABSORBS a HIT, then ANOTHER. As the battle rages -

26 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 26

GRIFFIN

(to Kore)

You say you rounded up this Human with that gig?

KORE

And the whore's child.

Orange reacts to this.

ORANGE

Perhaps she is more than a whore.

Kore glares at Orange.

KORE

A no good gig whore is what she is.

This is a direct racial slur. Kore punctuates it with a devious smile.

GRIFFIN

(amused)

More than a whore?

*

27 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 27

A bloody Renault snaps his hand around Hirokin's neck.

RENAULT

Those who will not help, cannot be helped.

Hirokin, unable to break his ferocious grip HEAD BUTTS Renault. Renault's nose EXPLODES.

CLOSE ON PHEON'S ROPE - on its last thread.

Pheon's eyes cascade onto Renault, then close as she prepares for the inevitable.

RENAULT (CONT'D)

No! Pheon!!

Renault PANICS and runs toward the rope. It's almost within grasp when...

SQUISH.

A Deacon's weapon BORES into Renault's heart. Renault falls, DEAD.

28 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 28

GRIFFIN

Rules. Where would we be without them?

A terrified SCREAM is followed by the spike's deafening THUNK into flesh.

29 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 29

It's over. Hirokin has won, which means Terra lives.

The crowd CHEERS. A CHANT arises.

CROWD

HUMAN! HUMAN! HUMAN!

Hirokin looks around, panicked. The Reaper isn't moving.

HIROKIN

LET HER GO!

But Terra's ropes continue to burn. No one moves.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

LET HER GO!

30 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 30

Griffin stands and moves to the edge of his box. A diabolical grin creeps through. *

The crowd goes SILENT.

Griffin whispers to a Deacon who heads immediately out. The Reaper then waits for Griffin's signal.

ORANGE

(coy)

He has won the fight. According to the 'rules,' the woman is free.

GRIFFIN

Indeed. Though...I must admit. I find him quite entertaining, *don't* you?

31 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 31

Hirokin sprints to the unraveling rope; grabs it just as -
WHOOSH!

The spike vaults him forward.

Hirokin digs his feet in; RESTRAINS the spike.

Hirokin, battered and beaten, struggles desperately with the rope, shaking and reeling under the pressure.

It looks like he can't hold on another second when -

He somehow musters the strength to hold firm.

The Arid captives in the cages begin to CHEER FOR HIROKIN.

THE CROWD JOINS IN.

CROWD
HUMAN! HUMAN! HUMAN!

32 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 32

Griffin NODS to the Reaper who has just been whispered to by the Deacon who left Griffin's side moments ago.

33 EXT. THE PIT - CONTINUOUS 33

The singed rope draws blood from Hirokin's charred hands, but he HOLDS STRONG.

Arid captives and Humans alike continue to rally him, CHEERING LOUDLY.

Terra and Hirokin's eyes meet.

She transmits compassion. Love.

Griffin signals to Kore, who LAUNCHES from the box seat, a NOOSE swinging from his hand.

Kore strides over to Hirokin and tosses the noose around his neck, pulling it tight.

KORE
You can't win.

Hirokin's eyes start to water, dimming. His body quivers.

Griffin nods and a REAPER moves to the Terra's rope.

34 EXT. THE PIT, IN THE CROWD - CONTINUOUS 34

THE CROWD BOOS.

Honsu, disgusted, turns and fades into the sea of bodies.

BACK IN THE PIT -

The ROPE BEGINS TO SLIP through Hirokin's fingers.

ALL SOUND FADES AWAY...

*

HIROKIN

(to Terra, faltering)

This world or the next, I will find
you.

Hirokin can't hold on any longer.

He BLACKS OUT.

SLOW MOTION

*

The rope RIPS through his palms, painting the rope red. He
falls backward. His eyes close.

CUT TO BLACK.

SFX - *THUNK!* The disturbing sound of a BODY colliding with
the spike.

FADE TO BLACK.

35 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE HORDE - NIGHT

35

The Horde softly glows in the background, when...

A BLADE PLUNGES into a dead BODY.

It's Airborne and Sevren, the Human GUARDS from the market.
They're walking through piles of bodies, STICKING
indiscriminately as they go.

SEVREN

Dead.

And another. *THUNK.*

SEVREN (CONT'D)

Dead.

This is their detail, making sure these lifeless bodies are
all dead.

SEVREN (CONT'D)

Did you see that Human in the pit?

*

*

AIRBORNE

The bony one?

*

*

SEVREN

No the fat one.

*

*

AIRBORNE
There was a fat Human in the Pit?

SEVREN
Exactly.
(beat)
Honestly, I really don't know why I
put up with you sometimes.

AIRBORNE
I do like 'em with a little meat.

THUNK!

SEVREN
You like what with a little meat?

AIRBORNE
Humans, arids, doesn't really matter.
So long as there's a little meat on
'em.

SEVREN
Whatcha do? Eat 'em after you're
done?

AIRBORNE
After I'm done what?

SEVREN
Sticking 'em. What do you think I'm
talking about?

AIRBORNE
I don't know what you're talking
about -- it keeps changing. I thought
you was talking about the Human in
the Pit. A bony one. And now you're
talking about sticking 'em.
(beat)
Eh, look, *isn't that him?*

ON THE GROUND, it is. Hirokin.

SEVREN
He is bony, isn't he.

AIRBORNE
Needs a little meat on him.

SEVREN
Heard he was with a fertile arid.
Say he's some kinda murderer. Town
of eleven or something. Killed a
bunch of Moss' Arid Rebels.

AIRBORNE

Suppose - Griffin appreciated that.

They stare at Hirokin.

AIRBORNE (CONT'D)

Do you really think he did that?

SEVREN

Possible I suppose.

AIRBORNE

Alright, I'm gonna stick him.

SEVREN

Careful not to get stuck.

TWANG!!!

Both drop, revealing Honsu wielding a shovel.

HONSU

Has a certain ring to it.

Honsu bends; waves a cherry-colored herb under Hirokin's nose. After a moment, Hirokin stirs to consciousness.

HONSU (CONT'D)

You are lucky you ate that life root, my friend. Otherwise this conversation would have been very one sided.

HIROKIN

Revenge.

HONSU

Revenge can wait. It can wait a long time. Trust me. There are steps: First -- heal. Then plan -- then revenge.

HIROKIN

Why are you helping me?

HONSU

A friend of mine had a vision -- I believe it was of you.

Honsu offers a flask. Hirokin drinks, coughing.

HIROKIN

(weak)

My...son...

Honsu looks up; alert.

IN THE BACKGROUND - Two DEACONS approaching.

HONSU

Now is not the time for grieving --
now is a time to run.

*
*

Honsu picks Hirokin up and shuffles into the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO

35A INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER - EVENING

35A

Griffin sits over a game board reminiscent of "Go." Orange eyes Kore as if scolding a child with her glare.

KORE

Their numbers are of little threat,
my Lord.

ORANGE

Many underestimate the invisible
enemy.

Kore gives a contemptuous glare to Orange.

KORE

Are you addressing me?

Griffin ignores their mutual animosity.

GRIFFIN

Moss is remaining hidden, but rest
assured, the time will come when he
and his people take form. It is the
"wei."

KORE

I will find him.

ORANGE

Perhaps you should not return until
you do.

Kore shoots Orange another glare.

GRIFFIN

Yes, that would be wise.

KORE

As you wish, my lord.

Orange smiles. Victorious -- again.

GRIFFIN

Find him, Kore.

KORE
Yes, my lord.

DISSOLVE TO

35B P.O.V. HIROKIN -- DAY

35B

Laying on the ground, Terra's beautiful face hovers in front of him. CLOUDS roll past her. It's surreal.

TERRA
Do you hear it? Do you hear...

CUT TO

36 EXT. DESERT/CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

36

CLOSE ON HIROKIN - As his eyes flutter open. Still weak. It's dark. Quiet. Standing over him is Honsu. A great contrast to the vision he was just enjoying.

HIROKIN
Where are we?

HONSU
Half a day from the Horde. I've taken you as far as I can go. See *that red star?*

Honsu points to the sky.

HONSU (CONT'D)
Keep walking toward that star. You'll eventually find an old friend of mine. His name is Moss.

Honsu takes a distinctive HEXAGONAL MEDALLION from his pocket and places it around Hirokin's neck. The crest matches the crest from Hirokin's sword.

HONSU (CONT'D)
If he's managed to escape the Deacons, he'll be able to help you.

Honsu reaches into his pack and pulls out HIROKIN'S SWORD. He hands the blade to Hirokin. The sword looks lifeless without the piece of Aradium.

HONSU (CONT'D)
(re: sword)
To steady your feet.

Hirokin nods his appreciation, but he's still barely conscious. He fades out. Honsu studies him. Smiles.

HONSU (CONT'D)

Walk strong... in the wei, my friend. *

With that, Honsu leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

37 EXT. THE WASTED PLANET - DAY 37

WIDE SHOT of an empty world. Hirokin, alone, the will to live - a question mark.

38 EXT. BADLANDS, ON THE TRANSPORT - DAY 38

Kore interrogates newly harnessed Arid men and women. *

KORE

The Rebel leader -- Moss? *

The battered people simply stare back at Kore, resolute.

Kore places a blade at captive's throat.

KORE (CONT'D)

Protecting him does nothing for you?

The Arid slave turns his face.

Kore walks to the next slave. *

KORE (CONT'D)

Moss?

SLAVE

We will never betray him.

KORE

You just did? *

SLICE.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. DESERT - DAY 39

Where Hirokin is staggering across the petrified earth. He has walked all night -- weary in the blistering heat.

40 P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 40

AN OASIS a few hundred feet away.

Hirokin can taste the water; its cool freshness.

But as he approaches, it FADES. MIRAGE.

Exhausted, Hirokin pushes on.

41 P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 41

In the distance, a FIGURE.

Step after step, his half-dead body gets closer...

Only to realize it is an ARID TREE with HUNDREDS OF WHITE RIBBONS attached to it. *

Hirokin reaches the tree and raises a spent hand up to the solitary shrine for the lost with TERRA'S WHITE RIBBON.

But he cannot reach.

He falls to his knees, out of breath, out of strength.

Drop. Dead. Mercy. Down in the sand.

A moment later, a SHADOW descends. One even the dead can feel. Hirokin opens his eyes.

41A P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 41A

The tree has COME TO LIFE; an outline of a man with soulful eyes.

MOSS

Life or death. We all must choose.
What is to be your choice?

FADE TO BLACK

OVER BLACK:

WAAAAHHHHH!!!!

The beautiful strains of a baby's cry.

MAREN

(out of focus)

Bet you wish you were dead.

FADE IN:

42 EXT. DESERT - DAY 42

As a NOMADIC TRIBE of ARIDS make their way. Women. Children. Infants. In the middle of this, HIROKIN lies unconscious on a makeshift GURNEY. *

42A P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 42A

Hirokin peels open his eyes to see a blue-eyed angel. It's Maren, kneeling over him.

MAREN

You're okay now.

Maren washes Hirokin's wounds.

FADE TO BLACK.

A soft voice over black.

MAREN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You have to drink. Come on.

Open your eyes.

CUT TO

42B P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS

42B

There she is again, the blue-eyed angel.

Hirokin lifts his head; drinks and tries to speak. His voice fails.

One of his DRESSINGS fall to the desert SAND.

MAREN

Lie back down. Close your eyes.

Hirokin turns his head and sees... *

ANOTHER ANGLE *

Moss, fighting five of his tribe mates. HE appears to be in four places simultaneously - four multiples of Moss. The desert sands lift to create a sandstorm around his movements. Graceful, precise. *

Hirokin's eyes close. *

CUT TO:

43 P.O.V. HIROKIN -- LATER

43

Again, opening his eyes; Moss, Maren and Cain stand over a barely conscious Hirokin.

CAIN

He shouldn't be here. He's putting us in danger. We should leave him. Immediately.

MAREN

He needs our help. Honsu must have sent him to us for a reason.

CAIN

How do we know this scum didn't steal
the medallion? For all we know, he
killed Honsu.

*

Moss leans down; stares at Hirokin/us.

MOSS

There is little danger in helping
him recover.

CAIN

Helping him puts our tribe at risk.
It puts your daughter at risk.

Cain places a hand on Maren.

MAREN

Cain, he needs our help.

Cain's hand drops. Maren's whole attention is on Hirokin.
Cain exits frustrated.

MOSS

Be careful, Maren. Cain may be right
about this Human.

Moss exits. Maren looks down at the Human. She smiles
tenderly.

*

*

DISSOLVE TO:

*

44 EXT. CAMPSITE -- LATER

44

Where Hirokin emerges from his tent. He seems to have
gathered some strength. He looks at his hands; sees the
bandages covering his rope-burns.

He struggles to focus his eyes. When his vision clears, he
sees the entire camp: a whole new world.

About 30 Arid people in all.

A GROUP of CHILDREN are singing and playing.

CHILDREN

(sing/song)

*White ribbon, white ribbon, oh sing
me this day The song of my mother
who's gone far away...*

Hirokin watches an MID-WIFE (26) ahead of him carrying the
infant from the tent. She and a PREGNANT ARID WOMAN, AUDOWEN
(20s), walk under large, hexagonal sun-shields.

*

*

*

ANOTHER ANGLE

*

Hirokin sees the tribe's men engaged in a silent dance with their weapons. A flute player sits nearby. The movements are timed with the music of the ARID FLUTE PLAYER.

MEANWHILE

The boy GABRIEL approaches, looks up to the imposing stranger. Hirokin studies him for a moment. Gabriel then reaches out; offers a piece of FOOD. Hirokin accepts.

MAREN (O.S.)
*On your feet? Already? Hmmm.
 Gabriel, go to your brother.*

Hirokin turns to see Maren. Gabriel rushes away.

MAREN (CONT'D)
 You must be thirsty.

Hirokin looks about the camp; fascinated.

MAREN (CONT'D)
 Father has asked that I show you around.

Gabriel peeks his head out and stares at Hirokin glancing at his weapon. Hirokin smiles, reminded of his lost son. Gabriel darts away.

MAREN (CONT'D)
 Cain's brother? A curious brother.
 (then)
 Why don't I show you around?

Hirokin struggles to stand.

45 EXT. ARID CAMP - AFTERNOON

45

Hirokin walks -- workers pluck THORNY SHRUBS from crevices.

MAREN (O.S.)
 We grind the thorns.

Hirokin turns to find Maren behind him.

MAREN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 The wax helps with the sun. The thorns have a numbing agent which helps with injuries.

Around the camp - men and women use HAND-CRANKED DRILLS to dig for water. Maren explains.

MAREN (CONT'D)
 The constant search for water.
 (MORE)

MAREN (CONT'D)

(then)

Our tribe once went two moons without
finding a drop. We lost four people.

(beat)

Hopefully, today, we are strong in
the wei.

(off Hirokin)

When we are -- our vision creates
our reality.

*
*

She pulls out a BLUE POMEGRANATE.

*

MAREN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Look at the shape... so beautiful.
The hexagon -- the strongest shape
in nature. That is how the Arid
people see ourselves -- as part of a
system that connects with one another
for strength. Stability.

Both are caught in a stare.

*

They continue on where Hirokin's attention is taken by the
Warrior Men. The move in precision silent movements. Only
when the flute player isn't playing a note.

*
*
*

MAREN (CONT'D)

Movement is like music. The silence
is what defines the music. And,
only by hearing can you...unfold...the
timing.

*
*
*
*
*

Just then -

CAIN (O.S.)

MAREN!

Maren looks over. Cain signals to her.

CAIN (CONT'D)

WATER.

Maren smiles at Hirokin before moving towards Cain, who glares
his way.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. DESERT - DAY

46

Kore and his Deacons survey the DUNES. This looks like an
absolutely pristine desert. But Kore seems to sense
something.

A DEACON signals. Another rushes towards Kore and hands him
the DRESSING that fell off Hirokin. Kore studies it.

He knows he is on the right track.

DISSOLVE TO:

47 EXT. NOMADIC CAMP -- NIGHT

47

Hirokin sits at a fire. Apart. Around him, the Arid tribe is AT PLAY.

-- Cain plays a game of GO with Gabriel and TWO OTHER CHILDREN.

-- Elsewhere, young men and women play hopeful, natural songs on elegant INSTRUMENTS.

-- Older tribe members sit back and listen while brewing ARID LIQUOR.

-- Another man entertains a group around another fire with a well-told story.

Hirokin watches it all with silent eyes.

Maren notices Hirokin. She rises, grabs a SMALL JUG.

47A P.O.V. CAIN -- CONTINUOUS

47A

As he watches Maren making her way over to Hirokin.

Jealousy courses through his veins. Disgusted, he moves towards Moss's tent.

When Maren reaches Hirokin she offers him the jug.

MAREN

Homemade Arid redbrush. Only a few tribes make it. We trade it for what we need.

Hirokin accepts the jug and takes a huge swig.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Careful, it--

He GAGS.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Tastes awful. But it'll make you forget your troubles, that's for sure.

(beat)

Maybe even your own name.

Hirokin can barely nod in response.

47B ANOTHER ANGLE

47B*

Cain scowls as he watches Hirokin with Maren.

*

CAIN

He shouldn't be here.

Moss looks up.

MOSS

He poses no threat.

CAIN

He is the threat. He will reveal us for a reward the first chance he gets.

MOSS

We'll keep a close eye on him.

CAIN

I doubt keeping an eye on him will be enough.

*

Moss takes a burdened breath.

MOSS

Time will tell, Cain, as it does all.

*

INTERCUT - FIRE WITH HIROKIN AND MAREN

Hirokin is silent. He continues to stare at the fire.

MAREN

You don't speak much.

(then)

You know, we did help save your life. The least you could do is make small talk.

Hirokin doesn't blink. Instead, he rises to leave. As soon as he turns his back -

MAREN (CONT'D)

(pretending to be

Hirokin)

Yes, Maren. I appreciate all your tribe has done for me. *How old are you?*

Hirokin turns; stares at her curiously. She goes on.

MAREN (CONT'D)

(then answering)

I'm 20, Hirokin; the second oldest daughter of my tribe.

(then; as Hirokin)

My goodness, Maren. I thought you were much older. At least 25. Thank you for the redbrush. It was a little hard at first, but I really enjoyed it.

The two stare at one another. Finally, Hirokin's face bends into a smile.

HIROKIN

Good night, Maren. Second oldest daughter in her Tribe.

Maren watches Hirokin depart.

47C EXT. CAMPSITE -- CONTINUOUS

47C

As Hirokin passes Cain on the way to his tent, Cain grabs him.

CAIN

Stay away from her.

He takes his shoulder.

CAIN (CONT'D)

She's too pure for your kind.

Hirokin looks Cain dead in the eye, then at the hand. His message is clear: Cain will get a pass...for now. *

Cain lifts his hand and watches as Hirokin walks on.

CUT TO

48 EXT. ARID CAMP - NIGHT

48

The Arid people have settled and are prepping the camp. Cain intercepts Maren.

CAIN

I missed you last night at the singing.

MAREN

I miss being there. But with everything that's been happening.

She knows why he's there and addresses it.

MAREN (CONT'D)
I need to help him, Cain.

CAIN
Help us or help him?

MAREN
Maybe they're the same.

CAIN
I wish it were that simple, Maren.
But life never is. We all must choose
at some point. *

Cain leaves her with that.

DISSOLVE TO

48A EXT. THE TOWN OF ELEVEN - DAY 48A

A 30-year-old, bloody Hirokin sends his sling-shot sword
into a body. *

He FREEZES. *

Through the smoke he sees NURAN... *

...A SWORD DESCENDS toward his exposed neck... *

CUT TO:

48B EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT 48B

HIROKIN'S EYES POP OPEN. He wakes from his dream with a
start. Sweating shame. It's dark, but the camp is vibrant
with life. Hirokin rises; moves toward one of the tents.

48C INT. MEDICAL TENT -- MOMENTS LATER 48C

Where the pregnant AUDOWEN with a WHITE RIBBON in her hair
is in the middle of labor. *

Maren holds the woman's hands. Another woman, THE MIDWIFE,
performs the Tea Ritual in the background. *

PREGNANT ARID WOMAN/AUDOWEN
I can't! It hurts! I don't want my
baby to die!

MAREN
No one is going to die. Don't think
like that.

ARID WOMAN
No ribbons.

MAREN

Be strong in the wei, Audowen.

AUDOWEN

I can't.

MIDWIFE

You must.

Maren looks up desperately. Her eyes meet Hirokin's.

Hirokin wants to help but Maren shakes her head "no".

The Midwife finishes the tea and gives it to Audowen. She calms slightly.

MIDWIFE (CONT'D)

Drink. Calm. Calm.

MAREN

Steel yourself Audowen. You must do this.

The Midwife prepares to deliver the baby. Audowen breathes heavily, tears streaming down her face.

MIDWIFE

It's time to start pushing.

Audowen pushes. Another horrific SCREAM.

AUDOWEN

Wait. Wait! WAIT! Please wait.

Fear fills Maren's eyes.

MAREN

You can not wait!

She glances at Hirokin.

MIDWIFE

Just breathe.

As Hirokin watches the midwife puts one arm behind Audowen's back, and Maren does the same from the other side so that their arms cross as they support her.

MAREN

Breathe and push.

Audowen pushes. More screams, but now with resolve.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Just like that.

AUDOWEN

No ribbons. Please. My baby.

After one agonizing push, a BABY'S CRY can be heard. The Midwife wraps the baby in a CLOTH...

AUDOWEN (CONT'D)

Let me see her. My baby...let me see...

Hirokin can see that Audowen is fading. He looks to Maren before respectfully leaving.

Maren hands the baby to the mother, but AUDOWEN'S ARMS ARE LIMP, HER EYES CLOSED.

MAREN

Audowen. Audowen!

The Midwife works frantically.

MIDWIFE

She's bleeding everywhere.

They work to save her...then that moment. A silence. Maren feels the weight of the mother's death. *

MAREN

(despondent)

I will attend to the song. *

The midwife leaves with the newborn.

49 EXT. TENT - DAY

49

Outside the tent, Hirokin glances at the newborn. The fragility of life. The child claws for breath. The midwife covers the babe.

MIDWIFE

Oh, my sweet, sweet, child. Oh my child. What a world you've come into. *

Maren walks out of the tent holding a WHITE RIBBON. Silence.

CUT TO

50 EXT. BARREN TERRAIN -- DAY

50

A field of WHITE TREES with ribbons. Members of the TRIBE have gathered as Maren places Audowen's RIBBON on a tree.

MAREN

Every ribbon, a song.
(MORE)

MAREN (CONT'D)

A song for every Arid woman who died
giving birth. A ribbon for every
life we are blessed with.

Hirokin is here watching. He and Maren's eyes meet once
more.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Listen.

After a moment, a steady gust fills the tree, and the
vibrating ribbons HUM IN THE WIND.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Even in death there's life.

DISSOLVE TO

51 EXT. NOMADIC CAMP - MORNING. 51 *

THE NEXT MORNING *

Moss trains his warriors in the meditative sword movements.
The arid flute player accompanies the training.

HIROKIN approaches. Gabriel smiles warmly. *

HIROKIN

(throat still tender)
I leave at first light.

MOSS

Returning to the Horde? *

HIROKIN

Yes.

MOSS

Why?

HIROKIN

(flatly)
Revenge.

Moss thinks.

MOSS

Since the beginning, Humans have
failed to see our connection. All
my life, I've dreamt of a world
united. Arid, Human. Together.

(beat)
That dream is fading.

Moss finally raises his eyes to Hirokin once again.

MOSS (CONT'D)

But then I look at you, and the universe tells me, don't give up.

HIROKIN

I'm not the answer you're looking for.

MOSS

Perhaps not, but the wei did bring you to us.

HIROKIN

A lot of suffering comes with believing in "the wei".

Moss considers his words.

MOSS

It is true. My tribe is hunted. Impoverished. It's mere luck that the Deacons caught our trail and not the Apostate. And, yet the Apostate will come.

(glancing at Cain)

This I am certain of.

(beat)

But, I... can't help but still have hope.

(then concluding)

Which brings us to you...

(pointing to...)

You can trade our redbrush.

HIROKIN

No thank you.

MOSS

It's very valuable, and we rarely get the full worth in trade. A Human could trade it much more profitably.

HIROKIN

No.

MOSS

It will get you closer to Griffin.

This has Hirokin's interest.

HIROKIN

What's the catch?

MOSS

The next batch won't be ready for three moons.

Hirokin looks up -- in the BG -- Maren.

HIROKIN

No.

MOSS

What are three moons if it helps you
get that vengeance? *

(then)

Stay with us. Finish healing. Trading
our redbrush *will* only help you to
achieve your purpose.

Hirokin thinks.

HIROKIN

Three moons.

MOSS

An insignificant fraction of time. *

Moss walks away. *

DISSOLVE TO:

51A EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

51A

Griffin looks out over the vast Horde.

Orange stands several feet behind Griffin. Her three concubine attendants linger in the background.

GRIFFIN

Civilization is a delicate balance,
Orange. I must weigh what the people
want against what I know they need.
The people need stability. Order.
Discipline.

(beat)

I give them this.

Orange almost taunts him.

ORANGE

Yet, Moss continues to elude you.

GRIFFIN

Not for long.

ORANGE

You've been holding back with the
Apostate.

She can tell she's striking a nerve.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Reluctance does not suit a powerful man.

Griffin turns and looks at Orange.

GRIFFIN

And what do you consider powerful, Orange?

ORANGE

Control.

GRIFFIN

I thought it was submission.

ORANGE

Are they not the same?

Griffin smiles; kisses Orange.

GRIFFIN

Give free reign to the Apostate.

(beat)

And bring me the girl.

ORANGE

As you command, Viceroy.

CUT TO

52 EXT. DESERT -- AFTERNOON

52

Gabriel plays in the desert wind. He flys a kite with wonder and glee. He keeps playing, drawn further into the vast ocean of desert. Somehow, his play goes unnoticed as he disappears.

*

52A EXT. HORDE DOCKS - NIGHT

52A

We haven't seen this yet: nine-shadowy FIGURES of the APOSTATE as they mobilize toward their specialized TRANSPORT. Triangular staffs seven feet tall.

*

*

The hovering vessel writhes through the city gates and out across the grieving landscape.

CUT TO

53 INT. TENT -- DUSK

53

Hirokin wakes to a BONE-CHILLING SCREAM.

He darts up in bed. Exits.

54 EXT. TENT -- DUSK

54

As Hirokin exits, it seems the whole tribe is awakened and in a panic. At the foot of the camp, Cain is carrying Gabriel's wilted body. Maren wails uncontrollably next to him.

HIROKIN

What happened?

MOSS

The Deacons are not the only threat my people face.

(Moss lifts a dead SCORPION FLYER (scorpion with wings).)

*

Cain lays the boy's lifeless body down as Maren mourns. A moment later, Moss appears, falls to his knees in sorrow.

Hirokin watches helplessly. Cain catches his eye and glares back.

*

CAIN

He brought this upon us. Upon, my brother.

Cain grabs Hirokin's collar ready to destroy.

*

Moss, intervenes, gently resting his hand on Cain's.

*

MOSS

We grieve with you.

*

*

Cain turns away and carries his brother off with madness in his blood shot eyes.

*

*

MOSS (CONT'D)

The other tribes will be uniting at Dead Rock, two days North of the Horde. We will join forces there.

*

CAIN

Forces? What forces? Look around you. We are three dozen people and a human. We must move east, beyond Griffin's grasp.

MOSS

We cannot abandon our people.

*

CAIN

You're putting what's left of "our people" in more danger. Don't you see what happened today?

*

MOSS

My heart goes out to you, Cain.

(beat)

But we must remain selfless. Hold to
the sentient wei.

*

CAIN

Selfless? Is that what you'll say
when they send the Apostate and
slaughter the rest of you?

*

*

*

MOSS

What is your vision, Cain?

Cain watches Maren walk away.

CAIN

My vision -- bloodshed.

(low)

But, I stay, for now.

*

*

*

MOSS

As you wish.

Cain pushes past Hirokin with a heavy shoulder.

CUT TO

55 INT. CAVE - DAY

55

Inside the Aradium cave stands an obelisk just like the one
he saw with Nuran. Hirokin practices the movements he has
witnessed the Arid's perform.

*

*

IN THE BG

*

Moss enters, a jug of Arid liquor in hand. He watches Hirokin.

*

MOSS

Our people have mined these caves
for a millennia. Perfecting simple
movements so that we might dig deeper
faster.

*

*

*

*

*

ON THE WALLS OF THE CAVE - HIEROGLYPHICS; FIGURES with VISIONS
projected from their EYES.

*

After a moment later -

Moss offers the jug to Hirokin.

*

HIROKIN

Cain is right. I should go.

Hirokin takes a swig as Moss sits.

*

MOSS

You wonder why you couldn't save her.

Hirokin looks to Moss. *How does he know?*

MOSS (CONT'D)

She was your wife, *was she not?*

HIROKIN

(then sadly)

I couldn't save her...I couldn't...
I tried...I tried with everything I
had...I held on as tight as I could...

Hirokin stares at his scarred HANDS.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

But...I couldn't...do... anything.

Hirokin is overwhelmed by it all. He buries his head in grief. Moss puts his hand on Hirokin's shoulder.

MOSS

Acceptance is a part of the wei.

HIROKIN

Every time I turn around you people
have a different version of the wei.
You sure - you don't twist it to
mean what you need when you need it.

(beat)

Why aren't you mourning instead of
preaching to me about your wei.

Moss looks to the HIEROGLYPHICS on the wall.

MOSS

We create our reality. It does not
create us. Your family. Gabriel.
They are free now. If you view our
reality differently. You might come
to a more meaningful understanding.

Hirokin studies Moss; confused.

HIROKIN

Sounds like brainwashing to me.

MOSS

Remember the wei, Hirokin. You used
to trust.

HIROKIN

Trust what?

Hirokin exits.

CUT TO

56 EXT. HIROKIN'S TENT - DAY

56

It's a solemn mood as Maren brings Hirokin tea.

MAREN

(beat)

The Arid tea ritual. The tea nurtures
and heals.

(off Hirokin)

It's impolite to refuse.

*
*
*
*
*

Hirokin, can't will the strength to refuse.

She guides Hirokin's hand through the ritual. Hirokin is nervous. A few times during the ritual, their hands lightly touch. Electricity.

After the ritual, Hirokin breaks the silence.

HIROKIN

(re:Gabriel / Nuran)

He was so young.

MAREN

They all are.

Maren hesitates.

Hirokin can barely contain his grief. She lifts the tea to his wounded lips.

MAREN (CONT'D)

The tea -- and the ritual --
strengthen our vision.

Hirokin sips the tea.

MAREN (CONT'D)

We are strong...

She smiles before rising to leave.

As she exits -

*

MAREN (CONT'D)

Stay. Heal.

Maren turns; smiles lightly.

CUT TO

56A EXT. DESERTED LANDSCAPE - DAWN - MONTAGE

56A*

A bloody sun peeks over the horizon.

The Apostate Transport appears in the distance.

On the Transport, the rising sun outlines the elite warriors.

DISSOLVE TO

56B EXT. MOSS'S TRIBE/MOVING - DAY

56B

As Moss's tribe moves through this dark, desolate location, Hirokin brings up the rear. He looks disconnected. Maren waits for him. Once together -

HIROKIN

Moving again.

MAREN

We are not nomadic by choice. If we forget, we are enslaved, or worse.

(then)

Don't worry, we're almost there. You'll be able to rest in two suns, if we are strong in the wei.

HIROKIN

And if we're not?

MAREN

In order to become, we must accept who we are. Both dark and light.

HIROKIN

And what if you're all dark?

MAREN

The challenge is to accept both.

HIROKIN

(facetious)

Then I'll be able to unfold time?

Maren dismisses this. She produces a small LEAF.

MAREN

What size is this leaf?

HIROKIN

Half the size of your hand.

Like an accordion, Maren UNFOLDS THE LEAF.

MAREN

What you see, what you know...can be unfolded. Everything.

(beat)

Humans look with the eyes alone. A limit of their perception. But life, even time, has many layers that can be unfolded, like this leaf.

(beat)

That is our belief; That our vision becomes reality when we are strong in the wei.

HIROKIN

Unfold time.

MAREN

Or, appreciate it.

DISSOLVE TO

*
*
*
*

56C EXT. ARID ENCAMPMENT - BORDERS - NIGHT

56C

A YOUNG ARID MAN stands guard at the edge of the nomadic camp as the rest of the tribe sleeps. The guard's eyes wander up to the stars...

SNAP! The guard spins around.

APOSTATE

(hisses)

Moss?

The guard shakes his head in the negative.

Slice! The Apostate's MASSIVE TRIANGULAR BLADE descends.

56D EXT. NOMAD'S ENCAMPMENT - CONTINUOUS

56D

The APOSTATE TRANSPORT APPEARS over the hillside and slowly moves towards the the Arid ENCAMPMENT. Asleep. Unguarded. Vulnerable.

56E EXT. NOMADIC CAMP, DEAD ROCK - MOMENTS LATER

56E

The Apostate slip into tents. The horrifying distinctive RED MASKS.

Splatter.

Arid men, women and children are KILLED in their sleep.

CUT TO

57 EXT. CAMPSITE - THAT NIGHT

57 *

As the Tribe eats, plays music, laughs. Hirokin sits apart. He looks over at the tribe members brewing spirits. Seven jugs completed.

Hirokin glances at Moss, who steadily returns his gaze from across the camp.

Cain and Maren sit with Moss, watching Hirokin. Cain dresses his bruised lip.

MAREN

Why is he like that, Father?

MOSS

He cannot let go.

Maren digests the thought. She walks over to Hirokin. Cain watches her go.

CAIN

(calling after her)

Maren.

She doesn't turn. On her way over to Hirokin, she picks up a ROCK.

ASIDE

MAREN

(re: the tribe)

Look at them...content.

The tribe plays music. They laugh. They dance.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Nothing can kill our spirit.

HIROKIN

And Cain?

MAREN

Cain holds on too tight.

HIROKIN

Sometimes hanging on is all you can do.

Maren hands Hirokin the rock.

MAREN

All you can do is accept the truth, then let go.

HIROKIN

And how do you do that?

Maren takes Hirokin's clenched fist in her hands. She tenderly pries open his fingers, relaxing his grip...

Letting the stone fall to the ground.

MAREN

You just do.

Maren smiles and walks away.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Here - our clothing. It will keep you cooler when you need. And, warmer, as you need.

*
*
*
*

Hirokin smiles after her as she returns to her tribe. Maren casts an innocent glance back -- a connection.

Hirokin drops his eyes to the scars on his palms.

WHACK!

*

Hirokin is sucker punched.

*

CAIN.

*

Hirokin blocks the next flurry. A battle ensues that results in Hirokin felling Cain.

*
*

CAIN

You people. You think you can take anything you want.

*
*
*

IN THE BG - MOSS Watches.

*

Hirokin walks away.

*

DISSOLVE TO:

*

58 EXT. CANYON OF LOST SOULS - DAY

58

Moving again, Moss's tribe pauses at the mouth of the Canyon of Lost Souls. A hesitant breath. Cain looks at Moss. Moss breaks the glare and turns to Maren who comforts him with a smile. Hirokin takes a deep breath.

CLOSE ON

Moss takes a step.

His tribe follows into what is obviously the most ideal place for an ambush.

DISSOLVE TO:

59 INT. CANYON OF LOST SOULS - CONTINUOUS 59

As they walk through this mysterious place the tribe nervously advances.

60 EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON - AERIAL SHOT 60

We fly over the tribe as they continue trekking across the intrepid land. The tribe summits one final hill...

DEAD ROCK.

A black, barren wasteland stretching to the horizon.

But the tribe members stop in their tracks. All look in horror.

60A P.O.V. TRIBE -- CONTINUOUS 60A

In front of them - DOZENS of slain ARID BODIES. All are laid out in a HEXAGON.

MAREN

The horror.

Beyond the arranged bodies, more DEATH AND DESOLATION.

A deafening silence across the plain. Cain mumbles to Moss.

CAIN

So much for your rebellion.

Cain LAUGHS, a laugh of infuriation and disgust.

CAIN (CONT'D)

Perhaps this is our fault? Perhaps
we were not strong enough in the
wei?

(then)

We are all fools.

MOSS

Fighting for freedom is never foolish.

CAIN

If you can win, but you can't! So
why not live with the way things are
instead of resisting and killing us
off one by one!

MOSS

Reflect, Cain, upon the way of our people.

CAIN

Your "wei" leads to death. It always has. It's nothing more than a way to control us.

MOSS

You see the world through fear -- as did Griffin.

*
*

CAIN

And you see nothing at all!

(then)

Look around you! Your wisdom is killing all our people.

Moss looks around.

MOSS

I am not afraid of what lies ahead. If you are, you are free to go.

CAIN

That's the first thing you've said that makes sense! We're free to go.

MAREN

We're not free, Cain. Not yet.

CAIN

Then our slavery is by our own vision.
(pointing at Moss)
And here stands our captor.

All look to Moss, who despite being called out remains poised.

MOSS

Choose wisely, Cain.

Cain looks to Maren.

CAIN

We all have to choose at some point don't we?

Cain turns to the TRIBE.

CAIN (CONT'D)

I say we move East; AWAY from the wrath of Griffin, away from the Apostate and Deacons and live!

(then)

Whoever wants to stay? Can do so.

Lines are drawn. Maren doesn't budge. In fact, nobody budes. And this further infuriates Cain.

CAIN (CONT'D)

Maren?

Maren stares at Cain, then glances at Hirokin who drops his eyes. She takes a step toward Moss.

MAREN

I've made my choice.

CAIN

Predictable.

CAIN LUNGES at Moss.

Moss effortlessly PARRIES his attack.

Moss TOUCHES Cain square in the chest, sending him FLYING.

THUMP! He lands on his back.

Cain stands, humiliated. He takes one last look at those who remain.

CAIN (CONT'D)

Enjoy the slaughter house.

They watch Cain as he leaves.

DISSOLVE TO

61 EXT. ARID ENCAMPMENT - EVENING

61 *

Moss sits alone. Hirokin enters.

HIROKIN

The redbush is ready. Twelve bottles.

MOSS

We have traveled together.

*

HIROKIN

Yes, we have.

*

*

Hirokin turns to leave.

MOSS

Time for that revenge?

Hirokin pauses.

MOSS (CONT'D)

If you leave now, you will fail.

(MORE)

MOSS (CONT'D)

Griffin will have you killed before
that blade ever leaves your hand.

HIROKIN

Then I die trying.

Moss nods. Hirokin moves to exit.

MOSS

"Sword for the Downtrodden."

Hirokin stops. Turns.

MOSS (CONT'D)

That's what your name means. In the
old tongue. Hirokin.

(beat)

Fight for something more than
yourself.

HIROKIN

I'm fighting for them. *

MOSS

They're free.

HIROKIN

But I'm not. Until Griffin's dead, I
can never be.

(beat)

I've kept my word. Time to keep yours.

Moss nods.

MOSS

So you have.

Moss stands...removes a piece of ARADIUM and places it in
his weapon... *

...AND ATTACKS HIROKIN... *

Hirokin volleys, deflects, dodges... *

MOSS (CONT'D) *

Speed is irrelevant. It is the ability
to perceive...to unfold time...to
expand our vision that is the wei. *

Hirokin struggles to keep up with MOSS... *

MOSS (CONT'D) *

Humans are defined by what you cannot
do. *

(MORE)

MOSS (CONT'D)

Imprinted like the lines on your
hands. Limitations passed on from
generation to generation.

HIROKIN

Arrgghhh.

Hirokin draws his heavy weapon...

MOSS sword crashes down upon it...

MOSS

You are predicting. Prediction is
the opposite of sight. Prediction is
fear -- born of the Human mind.
Prediction paralyzes. Quiet the
mind -- find the silence. The wei
doesn't involve the mind. It is about
sight and the ability to perceive.
To flow -- no resistance -- in and
out. Quiet. Still...listen...

ALL THE SOUNDS FADE AWAY

Hirokin -- blinks.

FLASH!

When we pull out -

SLO-MOTION -

As MOSS spins, unleashes a sweeping shot to the side of
Hirokin's head. BLOOD.

Moss follows with an uppercut that drives Hirokin backward -

MOSS (CONT'D)

In order to unfold time -- Let go
all the fear, emotion, let go the
thoughts ...that is the wei.

FLASH!

We're back close on HIROKIN'S EYES.

Again, we pull out. *Dèjà vu, right?*

WRONG.

MOSS (CONT'D)

Second -- allow your senses to walk
you forward -- hear the sounds, begin
to see the folds...

Moss spins, unleashes a sweeping shot - *

But Hirokin calmly ducks under it. *

Moss follows with his uppercut - *

But Hirokin rolls out of its way, rises and smashes his rod
into MOSS'S SOLAR PLEXUS. *

MOSS (CONT'D) *

Then -- see the choices, believe in
one choice without doubt - and the
belief in that choice will make it
real. Your vision literally creates
your reality. *

RESUME SPEED - *

As Moss goes flying to the ground beneath him. *

ON CAIN - whose eyes go wide. *

MOSS (CONT'D) *

Embracing the reality of our
circumstances is what we call the
wei. By letting go -- you allow the
wei to guide you to your true purpose.
Your true path. All you have to do
is - let go. *

Hirokin pauses. Uncertain as to how he did what he did. He
moves to Moss and offers his hand. *

MOSS (CONT'D) *

Now you know. *

But instead of vindication, Hirokin's face is etched in
uncertainty. *

Hirokin pants... *

Moss removes the Aradium from his weapon. *

Moss hands Hirokin the Aradium. *

MOSS (CONT'D)

Your vision creates your reality.

Hirokin meets Moss's eye. Hirokin then WALKS OUT of the tent
flap as Maren WALKS IN. They SHARE A LOOK before Hirokin
continues out.

MAREN

You're letting him leave?

MOSS
We all choose our own path.

MAREN
I'm going with him.

MOSS
(grabbing her)
Maren.

He looks into her resolute eyes, and he knows. He has to let her go.

MOSS (CONT'D)
No matter what happens, remember the greater vision.

MAREN
Father?

MOSS
No matter what happens -- remember, formless then crushing form. No matter what happens.

MAREN
Yes, Father.

MOSS
I love you.

MAREN
I love you, Father.

She touches his hand.

62 EXT. CAMPSITE - MOMENTS LATER

62

Maren catches up to Hirokin. She carries a HEXAGONAL SHIELD AND SWORD.

*
*

MAREN
You want to get close to Griffin, take me with you. I know someone.

*

HIROKIN
No.

MAREN
I'm coming with you whether you like it or not.

After a moment, Hirokin nods.

HIROKIN
Fine. Give me your hand.

Maren offers it up immediately. Before she can react...

HE SLIPS A CORD AROUND HER WRIST and TIES HER to a BROKEN WATER DRILL stuck in the solid ground.

MAREN

Hey!

HIROKIN

Watch over your tribe. They're what matters.

Hirokin slips into the darkness, leaving Maren pinned.

DISSOLVE TO

63 EXT. DEAD ROCK - DAY

63

Hirokin makes his way back to the Horde alone. He walks all day.

DISSOLVE TO

64 EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

64

Hirokin sits in a makeshift camp staring at THE HORDE -- a barely visible glowing light along the horizon. As he watches, his eyes narrow.

HIROKIN

You shouldn't be here.

Maren enters from the shadows.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Your father--

MAREN

Will be overjoyed when I return safe and sound...and weighed down with the fruits of a good trade.

Hirokin locks eyes with her.

CUT TO:

65 INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER, CONFINES - MORNING

65

A pair of sandaled feet, followed by a fine gown.

Griffin enters, followed by two concubine ATTENDANTS carrying TRAYS of food. He approaches this woman.

GRIFFIN

The mind is its own place, and in
itself can make torment into joy.
Or joy into torment.

TERRA (O.S.)

A prison into a sanctuary?

REVEAL

It's Terra. Still alive. Stunning yet emotionless, like a
porcelain doll.

GRIFFIN

Or a sanctuary into a prison.

She recoils at Griffin's touch.

TERRA

Where is my son?

GRIFFIN

Play nice now.

TERRA

I don't plan on playing at all.
Where is my son.

GRIFFIN

All will be revealed in due time.
(tender)
What matters now is that you
understand that I too know loss.

*

He puts his palm to hers, stroking her arm.

TERRA

Do you take pleasure in stealing
life?

GRIFFIN

Stealing? I give life. I have given
life to all the people in this Horde.
It is for the good of all that some
must bow while others stand. Don't
you see?

Terra remembers the life she had.

TERRA

Why am I here?

GRIFFIN

We are gifts unto each other. Though
perhaps undeserving.

Moss falls to his knees.

MOSS (CONT'D)
Spare my people. Please.

KORE
What "people"...

And Kore LEASHES Moss.

MOSS
What have I done.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. BADLANDS - DAY

67

As Hirokin and Maren cross the darkened landscape, Maren pauses. For the first time since we've met her, she becomes troubled. Hirokin notices.

HIROKIN
Maren, are you okay?

MAREN
Something's happened. I'm frightened.

Maren is visibly shaken now; lightheaded. Hirokin moves to her.

MAREN (CONT'D)
I've never... I'm frightened.

CUT TO

68 INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER -- DAY

68

Where Terra waits alone when Griffin appears.

GRIFFIN
I would like you to join me at my side today.

Terra is despondent.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
He'll be there.

Terra looks up.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
Yes, your son. You've been asking for a long time now.
(then)
Join me with a smile and you will get your desire.

MAREN

My father always said, "Nothing exists. All is becoming."

(this)

You are no longer that man. You are becoming something...else.

*

He looks to her and she smiles warmly. A genuine connection. And we can almost see Hirokin shed the burden of pain from his past.

The two then cross the threshold of the gates, passing the foreboding presence of TWO GUARDS stationed high above the gates.

70 EXT. THE HORDE - CONTINUOUS

70

Inside the Horde, a crowded, noisy, sleazy avenue of stalls where Humans trade in all sorts of goods and services.

Hirokin and a cloaked Maren weave through this sea of homeless vagabonds and vendors. This seems to be the first time Hirokin really stops to notice the depraved conditions of these enslaved people. And he seems moved by it.

Maren walks a few feet behind him, posing as his ARID SLAVE. As they move, we begin to hear a roar from THE PIT.

HIROKIN

Where do we find your friend?

MAREN

We don't. He'll find us.

Just then -

HONSU (O.S.)

So this is Moss's Arid Rebellion?

The two turn to see Honsu grinning.

HONSU (CONT'D)

A child and a Human? Has your father gone mad?

MAREN

My father is quite well -and- I believe you've met Hirokin.

*

HONSU

Yes, the scrapper I worked so hard to get out of here. Welcome back.

Maren hands Honsu his HEXAGONAL MEDALLION.

HIROKIN
Can you get me to the Viceroy?

HONSU
You against his legions?

Hirokin doesn't bat an eye. He's serious. Honsu laughs.

HONSU (CONT'D)
Follow me.

CUT TO:

71 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS

71

Overlooking the Pit. Orange is already seated in her usual seat. Griffin sits down next to her. Both watch as Terra and her two attendant concubines make their way toward Griffin's box.

Orange leans to Griffin, whispers.

ORANGE
She cannot give you what you desire.

Griffin brings his mouth within an inch of Orange's.

GRIFFIN
Can you?

Orange stands, simmering below her calm exterior. She then moves to exit, brushing past Terra along the way. Orange forces a venomous smile.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
(to Terra)
I hope you'll find this view more enjoyable than your last.

Terra's eyes go to the bloody stake at the center of the Pit.

TERRA
I'll enjoy nothing but the sight of my son.

Griffin smiles.

GRIFFIN
My, you are so beautiful.
(beat)
In your...convictions.

He caresses her skin. Terra tightens at his touch.

72 EXT. BOX SEAT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS 72

As Orange makes her way out, she catches a glimpse of Hirokin in the crowd below.

Where has she seen that man before?

73 EXT. HORDE STREET, RED LIGHT DISTRICT - CONTINUOUS 73

Honsu leads Maren and Hirokin into one of the seediest areas of the Horde.

ARID WHORES and HUMAN DRUNKS line every corner and alley.

HONSU

Stay close, and keep your head down.

ROWS OF MUSLIN SHEETS have been set up to form bedrooms.

73A P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 73A

As Hirokin glances into a stall and sees a frail girl lying naked on a mat. She turns. Her GREEN EYES haunt him.

Human men skulk into and out of bedroom compartments.

HONSU

Sorry I could not take you another way.

The "bedrooms" are endless. Hundreds of Arid prostitutes.

A frightened Maren steadies herself against Hirokin.

HONSU (CONT'D)

Easy now. Almost there.

Honsu brings Hirokin and Maren to the entrance of a tent.

HONSU (CONT'D)

Only one may enter. *

Hirokin looks to Maren. Unspoken language. Hirokin will go alone. Hirokin then walks through the flaps into...

74 INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS 74

As soon as Hirokin enters, he sees Orange waiting. He stops in his tracks. Reveal -

ORANGE

Not what you were expecting?

A moment's hesitation.

HIROKIN

Not sure what I was expecting.

ORANGE

One thing is certain -- you're here to barter. The question is; do you have anything of interest to me? *

HIROKIN

Gig liquor. Twelve bottles. Get me next to him and it's yours.

ORANGE

Who?

HIROKIN

I'm not in the mood for games.

ORANGE

Griffin's not an easy man to get next to.

HIROKIN

You managed.

She smiles.

ORANGE

Yes, I did. For now.

(beat)

Twelve bottles of spirits, though exciting... doesn't quite do it for me.

HIROKIN

What would?

Orange smiles. Steps closer.

ORANGE

A child.

Orange saunters toward him.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Griffin needs an heir, and he thinks I can't give it to him. But I think the problem lies...

She runs her her hands over his body.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Elsewhere.

Orange smiles.

HIROKIN

Get me close to him, and it won't matter.

ORANGE

You're telling me you're not the slightest bit tempted?

(sultry)

It might be fun.

Orange goes in for a kiss. Hirokin turns away.

HIROKIN

(telling, not asking)

I'm offering Twelve bottles. *

Scorned, Orange's demeanor changes. She takes hold of his palm, examining his DEEP ROPE-BURN SCARS.

ORANGE

I knew you looked familiar.

She drops his hand and begins to circle.

ORANGE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Quite touching. How you fought to save her.

Hirokin stiffens with the thought of this painful memory. She seems to enjoy it.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

You know, I had a baby once. Or rather, I once gave birth.

FLASH TO -

74A INT. TENT -- NIGHT

74A

As a ORANGE, screaming in PAIN, is in the middle of childbirth.

END FLASHBACK -

HIROKIN

I'm sorry.

She studies him. It worked. *

ORANGE

Griffin will leave the Pit momentarily... With Terra.

Hirokin's face goes slack.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Oh. You didn't know?

(then)

Yes, Terra is very much alive.

Orange smiles devilishly.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

But I see you've already found a replacement - a younger one. Even prettier.

*
*

HIROKIN

She's alive? Terra?

*
*

ORANGE

Why not see for yourself?

*
*

Hirokin bursts out of the shelter.

CUT TO

75 EXT. BEAUTIFUL TENT - CONTINUOUS

75

Hirokin strides past Maren and Honsu toward the bridge.

MAREN

Hirokin?... Hirokin!

Hirokin keeps moving, past the endless rows of squalid quarters.

76 EXT. BOX SEATS - CONTINUOUS

76

Griffin and Terra sit in Griffin's box seats. Terra sits on the edge of her seat. Nervous, excited, scared.

Griffin smiles. He nods to someone inside his shelter. Out runs...

TERRA

Nuran!!

The boy, healthy, happy, RUNS to his mother.

NURAN

Ama!

And the two unite; Terra ENVELOPING her son in a loving embrace.

TERRA

(overjoyed)

Oh, my sweet son. How I've missed you! I love you so much.

*

- 77 EXT. THE HORDE - CONTINUOUS 77
 Below, Hirokin steps ever closer, passing filth and treachery with every step.
- 78 EXT. BOX SEAT - CONTINUOUS 78
 Griffin picks Nuran up. All of a sudden, he's the loving father. Terra recoils slightly at the sight, but is helpless. Plus, her son is alive. She can't stop smiling.
- 79 EXT. THE HORDE - CONTINUOUS 79
 Hirokin finally stops as Griffin's box seat comes into view.
- 79A P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 79A
 As he sees Griffin with Nuran in his arms, and before them...
 TERRA, OVERJOYED.
 AND WE GO SLO-MO
 As Hirokin's lungs empty. His stomach turns. He staggers backward, his knees go weak. Something inside breaks.
 ARID GIRL (O.S.)
No! Please!
 Hirokin's eyes REFOCUS below the box.
- 79B P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS 79B
 As he sees the CAGES FILLED WITH ENSLAVED ARID MEN AND WOMEN.
 In front of the cage, HORDE SOLDIERS hold an AUCTION of YOUNG ARID GIRLS. Two more SOLDIERS keep the girls restrained.
 At the center of the line is EMERALD, Renault's daughter.
 In the background, Maren and Honsu catch up to Hirokin. They take in the site.
 SOLDIER 1
 Gig pleasure for sale!
 SOLDIER 2
 Pay a little extra, get 'em fresh.
 Emerald's eyes connect with Hirokin's. He is sucked into her stare. And she mouths the words...
 HELP US.
 Finally, Hirokin has broken. But it is here, at this very moment where his destiny seems to come to light.

The confluence of the tragedy around him, the shock at seeing his wife with Griffin, his training with Moss, have all contributed to this very moment.

HIROKIN

(sotto)

ENOUGH!!

Hirokin reaches into his pocket and draws the ARADIUM PEBBLE.

And we go SLO-MO and 360 around him as in one fluid movement -

Hirokin draws his BLADE -

VFX -- Hirokin spins around with his sword until it ABSORBS THE ARADIUM WITHIN ITS COMPARTMENT. *

CLICK -- The Aradium LOCKS into place. *

RESUME SPEED -

As HIROKIN UNLEASHES HIS FURY.

This is becoming...

SLASH!

He CUTS one of the men restraining the girls to the ground in one thunderous swoop.

The other GUARD restraining the girls tries to escape but -

He is CUT IN TWO by Hirokin's angry blade.

ANOTHER ANGLE

HONSU

Wow.

BACK TO

Hirokin, BLOOD splattered across his face, looks at Emerald.

HIROKIN

Run.

The young girl looks at him with tranquillity.

EMERALD

Help them.

DEACONS EMERGE from every angle.

Hirokin calmly turns and faces the onslaught.

The rest happens very fast:

With blinding speed, Hirokin cuts down the first Deacon, ducks under the approaching BLADE of another; and counters with a FLYING BLADE, nearly splitting the other in half.

Maren and Honsu join Hirokin. Suddenly, it is CHAOS. A hurricane of blood and metal with our TRIO the eye: death swirling about them.

IN THE BOX

The commotion draws Griffin's attention. He watches the excitement and a true SMILE crosses his face.

IN THE FIGHT

SIX MORE DEACONS join the melee.

We knew Hirokin was good. But fueled by his anger, he now seems otherworldly. Every move is executed with deft quickness; precision. His SWORD juts out from every angle, slingshotting, spinning, slicing, blocking.

Meanwhile - Arid slaves claw at their cages.

Maren and Honsu FIGHT as well. Honsu is a true warrior. Though not of the grace or power of Hirokin, he's an accomplished swordsman and dispatches a pair of attacking Deacons.

Maren too acquits herself well, holding off a Deacon of her own.

Hirokin cuts down another Deacon and turns his sword on Maren's attacker when -

Griffin dispatches Nuran and Terra back to their chambers.

 GRIFFIN (O.S.)

 STOP!

This order seems to echo throughout the HORDE.

And the Deacons obey.

SILENCE.

And all eyes fall on Griffin.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

 Alright, Rebel. You have my attention.
 What is it that you want?

Hirokin's eyes lift to Griffin.

 HIROKIN

 You...DEAD.

GRIFFIN
Who are you, rebel?

Hirokin chooses silence.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
Don't be shy.

The HUMANS IN THE CROWD laugh.

 HIROKIN
I am the one who will end your
tyranny.

Griffin laughs.

 GRIFFIN
Really? And do you have a name?

 HIROKIN
I am Hirokin.

Silence sweeps across battlezone.

 GRIFFIN
(sarcastic)
Sword for the downtrodden?

Whispers ripple through the crowds.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
Well, Hirokin, you should have run
when you had the chance.

 HIROKIN
No more running.

 GRIFFIN
As you wish.

With a subtle signal from Griffin more Deacons arrive behind
Hirokin. Our trio is surrounded now.

 MAREN
Now what?

 HIROKIN
We fight.

 HONSU
Good plan.

And they do.

It's on now, DEACONS: DOZENS of them converge all about.
And with it, the chaos returns.

HIROKIN
 (to Honsu)
 The prisoners! Release them!

AT THE CAGES...

Honsu rushes over, fighting his way to the cages to release the PRISONERS.

The INMATES are itching to explode.

Honsu BREAKS OPEN the gates.

HONSU
 Now you kids play nice nice.

The PRISONERS pour past him and join Hirokin's rebellion.

Maren and Hirokin are side by side fending off DEACONS. The moment one is struck down - another steps in.

While the battle rages, Griffin slips away.

The TRIO fight admirably, but the odds are against them. Just TOO MANY DEACONS.

HONSU (CONT'D)
 We can't hold them back much longer!

Maren reaches out and TOUCHES Hirokin's shoulder.

MAREN
 Hirokin!

Hirokin relents. He lets out a DEMONIC WARCRY...

Then turns with the DOZENS OF ARID REBELS and retreats.

As Griffin enters the darkness of his shelter...

GRIFFIN
 So it begins...At last.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. THE HORDE - DAY

80

The Apostate Transport carries Moss back to the Horde.

CLOSE ON

Moss's weary eyes, watching the Horde grow closer. Despondent, but patient.

DISSOLVE TO

81 EXT. REBEL CAMP 1 - NIGHT

81

Hirokin sits by a FIRE, tormented. He holds Terra's white ribbon in his hand.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Once broken Arid slaves now make camp with HOPE. Dressing wounds, constructing shelters, fashioning weapons. Warriors reborn.

Maren joins Hirokin.

MAREN

We became a people today.

(beat)

Because of you.

Hirokin stirs.

MAREN (CONT'D)

Father was right. Our vision will become our reality. This world belongs to all of us. No more running.

(beat)

No more hiding.

Hirokin's eyes linger on the ribbon.

MAREN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

HIROKIN

They're alive, that's what matters.

(beat)

Time to let go. Time to plan. I don't want to see another child brought to their knees again.

Maren proudly watches the man she loves.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Why me?

MAREN

It's like asking why the sun shines. You are here because of me. And I because of you.

(tender)

I don't understand. And I don't try to. That is the sentient wei. We just accept that it is.

(beat)

I am. I do.

Hirokin thinks.

HIROKIN

Wisdom I may never understand.

Maren smiles. Her face blushes as she leans in for a KISS.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Maren...I...

She pauses for a moment, then boldly continues to lean closer.

MAREN

Do you not favor me?

HIROKIN

Yes. I do.

MAREN

Good.

She leans further...

HIROKIN

You are...beautiful... but...

As Maren's lips are about to meet Hirokin's...

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

I can't.

She pulls back, but only a little. Still hopeful.

MAREN

Why? Because I'm Arid?

HIROKIN

No. I am still bound. I will be for a long time.

Maren smiles, turns away, then turns back...

MAREN

I'll wait. Until you are ready.

...smiling through her heartache. As she does so, Honsu runs over out of breath.

HONSU

Another group just arrived.

Maren attempts to disguise her emotion.

HIROKIN

And Moss?

Silence is his answer.

IN THE BACKGROUND -

The ARID REBEL LEADERS head toward Hirokin; DOZENS of former ARID SLAVES behind them. *

He rises to meet them.

REBEL LEADER #1 *

Let it be known to us and to all,
that Hirokin, for his defiance inside
the Horde's walls today, will be
known from this day forward as Hirokin -
Sword for the Downtrodden!!!

MASSES

HIIRRRROO! HIIRRRROO! HIIRRRROO!

HONSU

May you bear the name forever!

All eyes fall on Hirokin, who is humbled.

HIROKIN

I have done what you have. What I
can.

REBEL LEADER #2 *

From face to foot he was awash with
blood. His every motion was timed
with perfection!

(beat)

He came to confront one man, and
instead, he has painted destiny!

REBEL LEADER #1 *

We are here to fight by your side!
At your command!

They CHEER. After they settle -

HIROKIN

Once, I fought because I had nothing
left to live for...Now, I fight
because I've seen all that's worth
dying for. We have the chance to do
as Moss believed we would. To take
form as a people. To crush our
opponent with devastating might. To
encircle and destroy this tyranny
that has divided our people.

(then)

Here, now, we'll live for hope!!!
WE FIGHT FOR HOPE!!!!

MEN

YEAAAHHH!

HIROKIN

We will fight so that no child will
be torn from her mother again!

HONSU

THE WEI FLOWS FROM YOU UPON US. WE
ARE YOUR ARMY AT THE GATE OF FREEDOM!
WE FIGHT FOR MOSS'S VISION OF A WORLD
UNITED!

HIROKIN

For Moss.

MASSES

FOR MOSS!!

HIROKIN

SO WE WILL FIGHT?!

MASSES

YES!

HIROKIN

SO WE WILL FIGHT FOR LOST WIVES?!

MASSES

YES!

HIROKIN

FOR THE LOST CHILDREN!

MASSES

YES!!!

Hirokin takes in the resilient faces, determined, empathetic,
expectant.

HIROKIN

Then...make...me...your...sword!!!

MASSES

YAAHHH!

Honsu turns to Hirokin and smiles. Hirokin looks over the
SCRUFFY REBELS.

HONSU

That went well.

HIROKIN

We're gonna need help.

HONSU

That is my specialty.

DISSOLVE TO:

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

SERIES OF SHOTS -

82 EXT. DUNES - MORNING 82

An ARID MESSENGER enters a NOMADIC CAMP, spreading word of the growing rebellion.

The entire camp packs up to join the amassing REBELS.

From every direction, small ARID TRIBES make their way toward Hirokin.

DISSOLVE TO

83 EXT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT - DAY 83

Griffin stares across the plains to Pilot Rock and the fire. He seems unfazed by the event's of yesterday. We FOLLOW GRIFFIN INTO...

84 INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER - DAY 84

A dark room. Inside, Moss sits on his knees, BEATEN and BOUND. Kore stands behind him.

GRIFFIN

"It is better to rule in war than to serve in peace."

(beat)

Well done, Kore.

KORE

My lord.

Griffin walks up to Moss.

GRIFFIN

The Mighty Moss. Leader of the gig Rebellion.

(beat)

Broken.

MOSS

You will never break our spirit.

GRIFFIN

Defiant to the last breath.

Griffin nods to Kore, and Kore smashes Moss across the head.

Moss takes the pain in near silence.

MOSS

It is our way.

GRIFFIN

You have the power to spare the pathetic lives of your people.

MOSS

Life without freedom is the same as death.

Kore hits Moss again.

GRIFFIN

I love it. You are even more selfish than I.

Griffin seems to be enjoying this.

MOSS

We are not so destitute as you say.

(beat)

We will cut you down.

GRIFFIN

You are a fool. The death of your people is now your own doing. Or, rather, undoing.

Griffin turns to Kore.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Keep him alive. Let him be a witness to his glorious life's achievement.

Griffin exits and moves on to...

CUT TO

85 INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER, TERRA'S CONFINES - MOMENTS LATER

85

As Griffin enters, Terra is waiting.

GRIFFIN

Do you know the rebel?

TERRA

No.

Griffin knows otherwise.

GRIFFIN

Are you in the habit of calling out to strangers?

TERRA

If they will kill you. Yes.

GRIFFIN

You're starting to disappoint me,
Terra.

TERRA

You're starting to sound scared,
Viceroy.

GRIFFIN

He's the father, isn't he? He lived?
I don't know how, but he did.

TERRA

Let my son go.

GRIFFIN

Where? To the desert to perish? To
join the rebels and be slaughtered?
(beat)
Nuran needs protecting. I keep him
safe.

Griffin walks over to Terra, forces a KISS onto her lips.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

I keep you safe.

TERRA

I never realized what... Now that I
do, I'm ashamed.

GRIFFIN

Shame is a useless emotion. Like
guilt.

Bored, Griffin turns to exit. As he does so -

TERRA

Release my son, and I'll submit.

Griffin stops in his tracks. Turns.

GRIFFIN

Oh, I require more than your
submission.

And Griffin walks out.

*

DISSOLVE TO

86 EXT. PILOT ROCK - NIGHT

86

Hirokin stands atop Pilot Rock. Honsu enters looking at the
large fire Hirokin tends.

HONSU
This fire is subtle.

HIROKIN
I have a talent for subtlety. *

HONSU
Indeed you do. So, when does this
grand battle of yours begin? *

HIROKIN
I need you to do something for me. *

Honsu is all ears.

CUT TO

87 EXT. GATES - NIGHT

87

Honsu walks to the Gates and sees the two Guards, Airborne and Sevren.

HONSU
Hello, Gentlemen. How is this soft
evening for you?

SEVREN
Oh, no.

AIRBORNE
Five!!

SEVREN
He hasn't asked for anything yet.
(to Honsu)
What do you want?

AIRBORNE
We don't have anything to trade.

HONSU
Ah, well, perhaps we can think of
something else.

AIRBORNE
How does he always know where we
are?

HONSU
I've been watching you for a very
long time.

AIRBORNE
That's pervy.

SEVREN

Real pervy.

HONSU

I have a serious matter I've been meaning to discuss. Mind if I join you.

SEVREN

Oh, sorry, not a lot of room.

AIRBORNE

Space is a wee bit tight.

SEVREN

A wee bit tight.

Honsu looks at the the miles of wall. Room for thousands.

HONSU

Well, I suppose I'll just have to go elsewhere...with my healing elixir of blue tea.

He reveals the blue tea.

SEVREN

Oh.

AIRBORNE

Oh, don't be silly. We're just playing with you, Honsu.

SEVREN

Plenty of room. Just pulling your leg is all.

AIRBORNE

So, about this *serious* matter.

HONSU

Yes...

SEVREN

But...before we start...maybe we start with a little tea.

AIRBORNE

Excellent idea, a little tea to warm up the insides is all.

HONSU

To warm us up?

SEVREN
Before our serious discussion.

DISSOLVE *
TO *

88

88 *

89 EXT. ATOP THE CITY GATES - LATER

89

Honsu, Airborne, and Sevren sit against a wall atop the city gates; Honsu has furnished them with some of their coveted BLUETEA.

AIRBORNE
Life affirming.

SEVREN
Aye, very affirming. *

Airborne and Sevren stare at Honsu.

HONSU
Great. *

AIRBORNE
Sevren?

SEVREN
Aye.

AIRBORNE
If you could have anything what would you have?

SEVREN
A farm.

AIRBORNE
That sounds nice.

SEVREN
You could come.

AIRBORNE
Really?

SEVREN
Really.

AIRBORNE
That's really swell of you.

SEVREN
Now don't go getting all mushy on me now.

AIRBORNE
I'd work real hard.

SEVREN
I know.

Honsu smiles. He's fond of them.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 EXT. PILOT ROCK - DUSK

90

A travel-weary Honsu approaches Maren and Hirokin.

HIROKIN
How'd it go?

Honsu searches for the right word. He smiles.

HONSU
Great.

*

MAREN
(to Hirokin)
Will Griffin attack?

HIROKIN
No telling.

HONSU
Can't turn back now.

HIROKIN
No.

HONSU
Wonder what the reward would be if I
revealed this little band of Rebels?
(off Hirokin)
Just kidding.

CUT TO:

91 INT. GRIFFIN'S POOL - CONTINUOUS

91

Terra is led by her attendant concubines into the beautiful pool. They lower her into the water in a thin shroud and begin washing her hair.

Suddenly, they are joined by....

ORANGE
There really is nothing quite so
satisfying as the conquest of
innocence.

Orange softly presents a PETRIFIED FRUIT.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

I brought this for you. It is exceptionally sweet, so naturally I thought of you.

Orange starts washing Terra's hair.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Sweet indeed.

TERRA

Orange, do something for me.

ORANGE

What, dear?

TERRA

(sincerely)

Take my son. Take him somewhere safe.

Orange takes a moment.

ORANGE

Where do you want me to take him?

TERRA

Anywhere, just away from here.

Orange contemplates Terra's request. She's moved, but tries not to show it.

TERRA (CONT'D)

Please, I'm begging you.

ORANGE

You're a strong gig with a great will to survive. I admire that. Things will get better, I promise.

TERRA

I won't give in to him.

Orange sweeps Terra's wet hair back and pins it up with a SHORT, SLENDER DAGGER.

ORANGE

You have no other choice. No one does.

Terra's eyes widen as she senses the cold metal. Orange then rises to leave.

ORANGE (CONT'D)

Oh, I nearly forgot -- It may help
you to let go by knowing he's found
someone else. A replacement. A gig,
like you. Pretty.

(studying her)

Only...younger.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

92 EXT. PILOT ROCK - DAY

92

The Rebels fabricate WEAPONS designed to overtake the
transport. Honsu walks over sensing the tension amidst his
comrades.

HONSU

You know how many disappointed ladies
are back at the Horde right now?

MAREN

You mean relieved?

HONSU

They would be if I was there.

MAREN

Feel free to go back anytime.

HONSU

(re:Hirokin and Maren)

Oh, but who would take care of you
two?

REBEL LEADER #2

How did a Human come to fight for
the Arid cause?

*

Honsu laughs.

HONSU

You people. It amazes me how many
of you fail to understand your own
sentient wei.

The Leader throws a puzzled look at Maren. Hirokin smiles at
Maren. She returns the smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

93 EXT. PILOT ROCK -- PRE DAWN

93 *

In the coldest part of the early hours, Honsu walks through
the camp. Slumbering Rebels lay by smoldering campfires.

Honsu comes upon Maren, sitting alone, looking out.

HONSU
Where is Hirokin?

Maren continues looking out.

MAREN
Gone.

Off of Honsu's look...

CUT TO:

94 EXT. HORDE GATES -- MORNING (PRE-DAWN)

94 *

Airborne and Sevren stand shivering outside Griffin's shelter.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sevren points --

SEVREN
Look.

HIROKIN. Alone. Approaching the Horde.

AIRBORNE
Do you think we should go through
with it?

SEVREN
I'm kinda getting tired of all this.

AIRBORNE
All this? Or, all this?

SEVREN
This.

AIRBORNE
This. It's a little boring.

SEVREN
Wouldn't be if we did it.

AIRBORNE
I like doing it.

SEVREN
We'd have the whole blue tea plant.

AIRBORNE
Aye.

SEVREN
That comes with seeds.

AIRBORNE

Does it?

SEVREN

Aye, we wouldn't need to trade for it anymore. We could have it anytime we want.

AIRBORNE

We could even trade it ourselves.

SEVREN

Oh, I'd like trading it.

AIRBORNE

Probably, make a fine living at it.

SEVREN

It's really a great product.

AIRBORNE

We're doing it.

SEVREN

Yes. Let's do it!

Hirokin walks up -- the boys smile.

CUT TO:

95 INT. GRIFFIN'S SHELTER, TERRA'S CONFINES - EARLY MORNING

95

Griffin enters. Terra keeps her back to him.

GRIFFIN

Your rebel annoys me.

Terra smiles.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

I have his people. I have his son. And I have his wife, and yet he hasn't attacked yet.

TERRA

You don't have me.

Suddenly, Terra SPINS and LUNGES at Griffin with the dagger from her hair.

He pulls back, but she SCRATCHES his side.

GRIFFIN

"Have." Such a simple term.

Griffin WRENCHES the blade from Terra and effortlessly THROWS her on the bed.

She STRUGGLES FEROCIOUSLY as he CALMLY BUT FORCEFULLY begins to undress her.

ORANGE (O.S.)
Viceroy.

GRIFFIN
Leave. Now.

ORANGE
Something of great importance.

Griffin quietly seethes.

GRIFFIN
(to Terra)
Hold that thought.

Griffin exits.

Before Orange follows, she turns to Terra...

A SMILE. True. Genuine.

Orange exits.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. HORDE GATES -- MORNING 96 *

AIRBORNE *
Welcome back. *

SEVREN
You may not like what you find tho.

Hirokin - big breath - draws his weapon and enters the... *

97 EXT. HORDE CITY -- MORNING 97 *

Hirokin enters to find two dozen deacons and nine Apostate. *

Griffin holds hirokin's son Nuran in front of him atop his box seat. Like a HUMAN SHIELD. *

98 INT. GRIFFIN'S BOX SEAT -- MORNING 98 *

GRIFFIN
What's the key to success Kore? *

KORE

Timing.

GRIFFIN

Timing.

(beat)

You didn't think I wouldn't be ready --
for you?

HIROKIN

No.

GRIFFIN

So, you've come to surrender?

HIROKIN

Give the people their freedom, and I
surrender.

GRIFFIN

You're hardly in a position to make
demands.

HIROKIN

Aren't I?

Hirokin is silent. Griffin nods toward a DEACON opens a
door REVEALING...

Terra and Moss, each held by a Deacon.

Moss is BADLY BEATEN. Inches from death.

Terra looks at Hirokin with wounded eyes.

Hirokin takes a deep breath. He stands firm on his mark.

GRIFFIN

Surrender, and I will be merciful.

Hirokin does not answer. His eyes connect with Terra's. She
nods.

HIROKIN

Without freedom, we are already dead.

GRIFFIN

Think carefully. For at the end of
your life, you will be remembered by
this moment... *Hirokin.*

*

Hirokin locks eyes with Griffin.

HIROKIN

We choose life - without fear.
Without you.

*

*

(MORE)

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Free.

BEHIND GRIFFIN

ORANGE

He's fearless.

GRIFFIN

You mean dead. *

He signals the Apostate who engage.

Terra looks up to her frightened and confused son.

TERRA

(sotto)

I love you, my son.

Behind Hirokin steps in Maren and Honsu and the rebels. *

MAREN *

You didn't think you'd have all the
fun for yourself did you? *

An electrical storm rumbles outside.

GRIFFIN

"The stars shall be turned into
darkness, and the ether into blood,
before the great and terrible day."

Hirokin draws his weapon...

HONSU *

Great battles define great men.

MEANWHILE *

Griffin holding Nuran. *

NURAN

What are you doing?

GRIFFIN

(off the boy's fear)

We're going to play war. *

BACK TO HIROKIN, MAREN, AND HONSU

Maren sees her father broken, battered -- but alive.

KORE *

KILL EVERYONE.

And a furious battle begins.

THE APOSTATE practically FLY onto the Rebels.

Hirokin SLICES through the Deacons on the ground, fighting his way toward Moss and Terra.

Despite the odds, MAREN, HIROKIN, HONSU courageously fight on.

MOSS lunges into his DEACON freeing himself and grabbing the Deacon's blade...

...Terra picks up a sword and begins fighting.

FROM GRIFFIN'S PERCH

Griffin watches with Orange beside him, Nuran still in his arms.

GRIFFIN

They're quite determined.

ORANGE

It's who they are.

Nuran begins to cry.

GRIFFIN

(growing frustrated)

Calm down, son. This won't last much longer.

CLAAAAASH!

The resolute Arid Rebels fight impossible odds.

Hirokin LOSES his footing against an Apostate. He sees Terra LOSING her battle against a Deacon.

PANIC.

Moss slices down a Deacon then pauses, turning toward Hirokin.

MOSS

(low)

Your vision creates your reality.

ALL THE SOUNDS FADE...

*

SPIN FULL CIRCLE AROUND HIROKIN.

The background BLURS into a MYSTICAL LIGHT.

Everything momentarily FREEZES. And Hirokin UNFOLDS time.

PUSH IN ON HIS DILATED EYES.

He SEES AND FEELS ALL THAT SURROUNDS HIM.

HIROKIN'S POV

The camera pushes out from Hirokin's eyes and moves in SLOW MOTION through the FROZEN BATTLE. All has become BLACK AND WHITE.

When the camera pushes in on a moment, ONLY THAT MOMENT BECOMES COLOR:

-- Maren and Honsu, LOSING to another Apostate.

-- Terra ABOUT TO BE CUT DOWN.

-- His SON in Griffin's arms.

-- THE APOSTATE BEFORE HIM.

PUSH BACK INTO HIROKIN'S EYES.

Hirokin can now SEE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS ACTIONS.

His eyes gain a look of COMPLETE PEACE.

Exhale.

TIME UNFREEZES and Hirokin's peaceful look turns to one of CONFIDENT DETERMINATION.

Hirokin MOVES LIKE LIGHTNING, a STEP AHEAD of the Apostate.

In an instant he gains the upper-hand and...

SLASHES the Apostate down.

THE SURROUNDING APOSTATE AND DEACONS PAUSE.

When the sliced Apostate hits the ground -

Its cloak FALLS back, revealing AN ASTOUNDINGLY BEAUTIFUL FEMALE WARRIOR.

Splattered with BLOOD. Perfectly EMOTIONLESS. Her palm, UNLINED.

ARID.

Griffin and Hirokin's eyes CONNECT.

Griffin betrays the first glimmer of FEAR.

HIROKIN
Life without honor. Death without
honor.

The battle RESUMES FULL FORCE.

Maren and Honsu's Apostate and another Apostate SLASHED DOWN by Hirokin.

Terra, and Moss break the circle that surrounds them. Moss looks to -

Kore. His eyes narrow.

Timing. KORE

Exactly. MOSS

Like two SAMURAI, the enemies BATTLE. *

There moves are perfectly fluid. But Kore is no match for Moss. He SLICES KORE DOWN. *

MOSS (CONT'D)
Your time...is now. *

ANOTHER ANGLE

Maren SEES her father take Kore down.

A smile fills her spirit. Her eyes volley to Hirokin.

He battles two Apostate simultaneously, but a THIRD is swooping in from behind.

Maren sees her fate. In a flash, she BOLTS for the third Apostate.

She SLICES the Apostate across the back, DEFLECTING its attention.

The Apostate turns on her. She fights gloriously, but after a few moments...

SLASH!

The Apostate's blade CUTS HER across the stomach.

Maren looks down at her wound. Accepting her fate.

The world goes completely silent.

Hirokin finishes cutting down his two Apostate.

He senses Maren's plight and turns to see...

HIROKIN

NO!!!

Moss follows Hirokin's eye-line to Maren.

Moss rushes to his daughter.

A Deacon tries to block his path, and Moss SLICES the Deacon down WITH EASE. His eyes never leave his daughter.

Hirokin, without a care to the battle surrounding him, kneels down beside her.

Terra stands ten feet behind. Moss reaches them -- he stops at Terra's side -- guarding.

HIROKIN (CONT'D)

Maren.

MAREN

It's okay.

Hirokin places his hand on Maren's fading heart.

Maren smiles. She rests her hand on top of Hirokin's.

As her eyes fade...

Maren's eyes shut.

Moss watches his daughter. His eyes move to Hirokin.

Hirokin gently lowers Maren's head, resting it on the ground.

Accepting her sacrifice.

HIROKIN STANDS.

HIROKIN

NOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Taller than all the forces assailed against him. His focus now clearer than it has ever been.

His eyes find Griffin, atop his perch.

Griffin watches the battle with a SMILE.

Victory is imminent.

Nuran sobs in his arms, ruining Griffin's glorious moment.

GRIFFIN
 (to Nuran)
 STOP. CRYING.

Nuran continues to sob. Defiance in its most innocent form.
Without thinking, Griffin hands Nuran over to Orange.

 GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
 SHUT THIS CHILD UP!

As Griffin begins to hand Nuran over, leaving himself
exposed...

An Apostate SURGES upon Hirokin.

PUSH INTO HIROKIN'S EYES.

The camera moves more quickly this time through the FOLDS OF
TIME:

-- The descending blade of the Apostate before Hirokin --
Griffin's exposed side

CUT TO HIROKIN'S DETERMINED EYES.

HE SEES WHAT MUST HAPPEN.

Hirokin SPINS and LAUNCHES HIS BLADE as...

The APOSTATE'S BLADE SLICES, CUTTING THE CORD OF HIROKIN'S
SWORD.

HIROKIN'S BLADE FLIES FREE.

The Apostate's blade continues to FALL and CUTS HIROKIN ACROSS
THE STOMACH.

MEANWHILE - Orange TAKES Nuran.

 ORANGE
 (to Griffin)
 Obedience to your word...

Griffin's eyes WIDEN. He understands. FEAR FILLS HIS EYES.

Griffin TURNS back to face Hirokin...

...Just as HIROKIN'S BLADE PIERCES HIS STOMACH.

 GRIFFIN
 (sotto)
 Is your freedom.

 ORANGE
 Precisely.

Moss CUTS DOWN the Apostate that attacked Hirokin.

Silence.

The BATTLE OVER.

Terra runs to Hirokin's side. He cringes with pain, then raises his eyes to Griffin.

ATOP HIS PERCH

Griffin lifts his head, SPITS BLOOD. He looks to Hirokin.

He PULLS Hirokin's blade from his own stomach and throws it aside.

GRIFFIN

Your vision creates your reality.
That is the sentient wei. *Right,*
Moss?

*

Griffin gracefully LEAPS FROM HIS PERCH TO THE GROUND. He lands solidly, FIFTY FEET from Hirokin.

A bleeding Hirokin watches Griffin approach.

Griffin seems to gain strength with each step.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Moss here dreamed of peace. But look around!

(beat)

A strong will must exert itself over the weak. That is reality.

Griffin draws his blade. Terra hands Hirokin her sword.

GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

The way of my world.

The two men CHARGE.

A MONUMENTAL BATTLE. Each FORESEES the attacks of the other.

They move like LIGHTNING. They roar like THUNDER.

Until finally...

The tip of Hirokin's blade SLICES Griffin's tibial artery, then his Achilles tendon...

CRIPPLING Griffin.

He hits the ground with one knee...

Griffin LOOKS OVER the frozen battle.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Honsu climbs up to Griffin's perch.

CLOSE ON Griffin's eyes, taking in the scene.

HIROKIN

The way of our world.

Hirokin SAILS into the air...

SPINS...

And SLICES GRIFFIN'S HEAD OFF.

Thump, thump, thump.

Griffin's head rolls.

EVERYTHING GOES DEADLY SILENT.

All the Deacons stand paralyzed.

The impossible has taken place.

The remaining Apostate LOWER THEIR WEAPONS.

ATOP THE PERCH

Orange stands alone.

Terra runs toward Hirokin.

Hirokin glances down at his gaping wound.

It now has the better of him. The adrenaline can no longer sustain his life-force.

Hirokin falls to his knees.

TERRA

Hirokin!

Everything starts to get blurry.

Terra catches Hirokin before his body falls to the ground.

TERRA (CONT'D)

Hirokin.

Hirokin smiles. Terra kisses Hirokin.

For a second, Hirokin looks at Maren -- fallen. A dream.

IN THE BACKGROUND

Honsu returns to the ground with Nuran in his arms. He sets the boy down, and Nuran runs to Hirokin. He sees his father's wounds, recoils. Hirokin smiles at his son.

HIROKIN
Come here, Nuran.

Slowly, Nuran approaches.

NURAN
Ava.

HIROKIN
Promise me something.

Nuran is silent. Hirokin touches his face.

HIROKIN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Promise me you will always take care
of your mother.

NURAN
I promise.

HIROKIN
And promise you'll only fight...

NURAN
For freedom?

Hirokin smiles. His son will be a better man than he ever could be.

HIROKIN
For freedom.

Nuran hugs his father. Hirokin FADES.

His eyes shut, and his body goes limp.

TERRA
Hirokin. No! Hirokin! Fight, Hirokin!
Fight for me!

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER THE BLACK:

MOSS (V.O.)
Life or death. We all must choose.

99A P.O.V. HIROKIN -- CONTINUOUS

99A

Hirokin's eyes flutter open. He sees Terra kneeling over him.

TERRA
I thought I'd lost you.

Moss and Honsu stand in the background.

HONSU
I'm telling you. He's like a bloody sandroach!

Moss laughs.

Hirokin weakly smiles. He strokes Terra's face.

100 EXT. HORDE - SUNSET

100

The day after the battle.

Ruin and destruction. The ugly stains of war.

ACROSS THE DESERT...

Hirokin (SHOOT WITH AND WITHOUT HIROKIN), Moss, Honsu, Terra, and Nuran stand before a solitary Tree draped in WHITE RIBBONS.

A few DOZEN other Arid people stand behind.

Among them, Emerald.

Moss smiles at the young girl.

MOSS
Strange, what vision death gives life.

Hirokin (MOSS) walks slowly, weakly forward and ties a WHITE RIBBON to the tree.

For Maren. Terra watches him with steady eyes. When Hirokin returns to his wife's side, she offers him a smile.

In the distance...

Cain watches the memorial, hidden from view.

The weary group turns and leaves the symbol of hope amidst desolation.

PULL BACK ON...

The open desert...

The Horde...

And all that has taken place...

...and all that is yet to come.

NURAN (V.O.)

There is a dream we often hear of, a
dream of a place where everyone is
free. What a dream. Oh, what a dream.

FADE OUT