THE ENGLISH PATIENT
SCREENPLAY BY: ANTHONY MINGHELLA
RED ORIGINAL
EXT. THE SAHARA DESERT. LATE 1942

SILENCE. THE DESERT seen from the air. An ocean of dunes for mile after mile. The late sun turns the sand every colour from crimson to black and makes the dunes look like bodies pressed against each other.

An old AEROPLANE is flying over the Sahara. Its shadow swims over the contours of sand.

A woman's voice begins to sing - Szerelem, szerelem, she cries, in a haunting lament for her loved one.

INSIDE the aeroplane are two figures. One, A WOMAN, seems to be asleep. Her pale head rests against the side of the cockpit. Behind her THE PILOT, a man, wears goggles and a leather helmet. He is singing, too, but we can't hear him or the plane or anything save the singer's plaintive voice.

The plane shudders over a ridge. Beneath it A SUDDEN CLUSTER OF MEN AND MACHINES, camouflage nets draped over the sprawl of gasoline tanks and armoured vehicles. An OFFICER, GERMAN, focusses his field glasses. The glasses pick out the MARKINGS on the plane. They are in English. An ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN swivels furiously.

Shocking bursts of GUNFIRE. Explosions rock the plane, which lurches violently. The fuel tank is punctured. It sprays out gasoline, then erupts in flame engulfing both figures in a fireball.

INT. TRAIN. ITALY 1944. BEFORE DAWN

AN ALLIED HOSPITAL TRAIN ploughs through the night carrying MILITARY WOUNDED back to Naples.

A young French-Canadian nurse, Hana, walks through a long carriage past rows of the injured. She stops at the bunk of A WOUNDED SOLDIER. Hana bends to the boy. He's had shrapnel in his legs and cheek. She speaks softly to him.

HANA
How are you?

BOY
Okay.

HANA
Your leg will be fine. A lot of shrapnel came out - I saved you the pieces.

BOY
You're the prettiest girl I've ever seen.
HANA
(she hears this every day)
I don't think so.

BOY
Would you kiss me?

HANA
No, I'll get you some tea.

BOY
(innocent)
It would mean such a lot to me.

HANA
(tender, believing him)
Would it?
She kisses him, very softly, on the lips.

BOY
Thank you.

He closes his eyes. Hana smiles, continues along the compartment. TEASING VOICES CALL OUT after her.

$1 INJURED MAN
Nurse - I can't sleep.

$2 INJURED MAN
Would you kiss me?

$3 INJURED MAN
You're so pretty!

HANA
(good-naturedly waving away their joke)
Very funny. Go to sleep now.

She opens the door of the next carriage and walks straight into the carnage left by an emergency operation. MARY, another nurse, is removing a blood-soaked bundle from the operating table. Mary grimaces.

MARY
Don't ask.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

THE PILOT HAS BEEN RESCUED BY BEDOUIN TRIBESMEN. Behind them the wreckage of the plane, still smoking, the Arabs picking over it. A SILVER THIMBLE glints in the sun, is retrieved.
Another man comes across a large leather-bound book and takes it over to where the Pilot is being tended to. The book is full of letters and cards and paintings. They're scattering everywhere. The Pilot is terribly burned, barely alive, his face charred. One of the Bedouins covers his face with a makeshift mask made from plaited palm leaves.

EXT. THE DESERT. DUSK

The Pilot is being carried across the desert. The mask covers his face. His view of the world is through the slats of palm. He glimpses camels, fierce low sun, the men who carry him.

EXT. EMERGENCY FIELD HOSPITAL, 1944. LATE DAY

The emergency field hospital is a cluster of tents practically ahead of the front line. Sporadic gunfire, increasingly near, sounds throughout. It's 1944 and the war in Italy is still intense.

INT. MAIN TRIAGE TENT. EMERGENCY FIELD HOSPITAL. NIGHT

Hana and her best friend, Jan, walk through the main triage tent. It's packed with the ruined bodies of the injured, swaddled in bloody bandages.

INT. TRIAGE TENT, EMERGENCY FIELD HOSPITAL. EVENING

HANA IS GIVING BLOOD. She lies in a cot, next to JAN. The shelling sounds closer.

Behind a curtain, OLIVER, a doctor, is working on the most recent patient, a young Canadian soldier who is critically ill - the tubes hanging above him, of plasma and of blood, his stomach a bloody mess. The curtain drawn around him is pulled back to reveal the two nurses in background. The Soldier can just see them. He's going to die any minute.

    CANADIAN SOLDIER
    (whispering to Oliver)
    Is there anybody from Picton?

    OLIVER
    Picton? I don't know.

    CANADIAN SOLDIER
    I'd like to see somebody from home before I go.

Hana can only really hear Oliver's end of this conversation, but the mention of Picton chills her, and she knows, now, not later, that her lover is dead.

    HANA
    (to Oliver)
    Why Picton?
CONTINUED

OLIVER
He's from there - edge of Lake Ontario, right, Soldier?

The boy nods.

JAN
(innocent)
Hey, that's where your sweetie's from? Somewhere near there, isn't it?

HANA
(to Oliver)
Ask him what company he's with?

Oliver leans over, then turns to Hana.

OLIVER
Third Canadian Fusiliers.

HANA
Does he know a Captain McGann?

The boy hears this, whispers to Oliver.

CANADIAN SOLDIER
He bought it. Yesterday. Shot to bits.

The shells are getting closer.

HANA
What did he say?

OLIVER
(can't look at her)
Doesn't know him.

A SHELL suddenly lands on top of the site, perhaps fifty yards from the tent. THE LIGHTS GO OUT. Then ANOTHER lands.

Everybody is on the floor, struggling to get on a helmet.

Hana lies down, the blood still leaving her, her helmet on. Oliver is next to her in the mud. Her heart is breaking.

HANA
He's gone, he's gone, he's gone.

OLIVER
No. He's - no.
HANA
Oh God. Oh God.

The shells pound them, incredibly loud, drowning out her grief, but each explosion illuminates it for a moment.

EXT. AN OASIS. NIGHT.

The SOUND OF GLASS, of tiny chimes. A music of glass.

AN ARAB HEAD floats in darkness, shimmering from the light of a fire. The image develops to reveal a man carrying a large wooden yoke from which hang DOZENS OF SMALL GLASS BOTTLES, on different lengths of string and wire. He could be an angel.

The man approaches the litter which carries The Pilot. He’s still in the protective palm mask, wrapped in blankets. The MERCHANT DOCTOR stands over the burned body and sinks sticks either side of him deep into the sand, then moves away, free of the yoke, which balances in the support of the two crutches. Then he slowly sets about peeling away the layers of oiled cloth which protect the Pilot’s flesh.

The Merchant Doctor crouches in front of the curtain of bottles, then leans back to pluck, hardly looking, certain bottles which he uncorks and mixes. He uses this green-black paste to anoint the burned skin. All the while he is humming and chanting. The bottles continue to jingle.

EXT. BEACH FRONT, ITALY. LATE 1944. DAY

Wounded Soldiers walk with nurses along the beach

EXT. BEACH CABINS, ITALY. LATE 1944. DAY

THIS CONVALESCENCE HOSPITAL HAS BEEN FASHIONED FROM A LONG ROW OF BATHING CABINS ON THE COAST, complete with Campari Umbrellas and metal tables, at which are seated the bandaged and the dying and the comatose, staring out to sea or in slow, muted conversation. A BRITISH OFFICER makes notes. He is talking to a wounded PATIENT, whom we recognize as the burned Pilot.

OFFICER (O/S)
Name? Rank? Serial number?

THE PATIENT (O/S)
No. Sorry. I think I was a pilot. I was found near the wreckage of a plane at the beginning of the war.

Hana walks up to The Patient’s cabin. He is propped up with a view of the sea, which is interrupted by the British Officer. Hana has a blanket and a chart for The Patient’s bed. She busies herself.
CONTINUED

OFFICER
Can you remember where you were born?

THE PATIENT
Am I being interrogated? You should be trying to trick me. Or make me speak German, which I can, by the way.

OFFICER
Why? Are you German?

THE PATIENT
No.

OFFICER
How do you know you're not German if you don't remember anything?

THE PATIENT
Might I have a sip of water?

Hana pours him a glass of water. He notices her.

THE PATIENT
Thank you. (he sips)
I remember lots of things. I remember a garden, plunging down to the sea - nothing between you and France.

OFFICER
This was your garden?

THE PATIENT
Or my wife's.

OFFICER
Then you were married?

THE PATIENT
I think so. Although I believe that to be true of a number of Germans. Look - (makes a small gap with his fingers) I have this much lung...the rest of my organs are packing up - what could it possibly matter if I were Tutankhamen? I'm a bit of toast, my friend - butter me and slip a poached egg on top.
EXT. ITALIAN HILL ROAD. DAY

A CONVOY OF TWENTY TRUCKS - Red Cross vehicles and some supply vehicles - snakes along a bumpy hill road. The war in Italy is largely over and the Allies are moving up the country, the wounded and supply lines slowly following.

EXT. ITALIAN HILL ROAD. DAY

A JEEP pulls out of the line and approaches the Red Cross truck containing Hana and The Patient. The horn blows and Hana looks out to see it contains her friend JAN. TWO YOUNG SOLDIERS sit up front, one driving, both grinning. Jan signals for Hana's attention.

JAN
Hana! Hana! Hana! There's meant to be lace in the next village - the boys are going to take me.

(mischievously)
You don't have any money, do you? Just in case there's silk.

HANA
No!

JAN
Hana, I know you do. Come on. Oh, come on.

(to the soldiers)
She's a softy, she loves me.

Hana leans under the tarpaulin, holding some DOLLARS. The two hands - hers and Jan's - reach for each other as the vehicles bump along side by side. They laugh at the effort. Jan's GOLD BRACELET catches the sun and glints.

JAN
(getting the money)
I love you.

The Jeep accelerates away. Hana sighs to the Patient.

Suddenly AN EXPLOSION shatters the calm as the jeep runs over a MINE. The jeep is THROWN into the air. The convoy halts and there's chaos as soldiers run back pulling people out of the vehicles. Hana runs the other way, toward the accident, until she is prevented from reaching Jan's mangled body by the consoling arms of Oliver.

EXT. ITALIAN HILL ROAD. LATER

- and there's still chaos as two SAPPERS (Bomb Disposal Squad) work on the road ahead. One of them, a SIKH, wears a turban.
EXT. ITALIAN HILL ROAD. DAY

KIP, the Sikh lieutenant, and HARDY, his sergeant, explore the road ahead of the becalmed convoy, using saucer-like METAL DETECTORS and HEADSETS. Kip is young, lithe, contained, utterly focused as they inch along the debris-strewn road. He stiffens as he registers metal. With a bayonet he carefully scrapes at the mud-caked surface. Something GLEAMS. Suddenly, A PAIR OF FEET walk across his vision as HANA HURRIES PAST, walking carelessly up the road. It’s so surreal that neither man registers at first, and then Kip is shouting.

KIP
Hey! Hey! Stop! Hey!

Now Hardy is shouting for her to stop. Hana looks around.

HARDY
Don’t move. Stand ABSOLUTELY STILL!

Hana stops. Hardy gingerly follows her footsteps.

HARDY
(as he approaches)
Good, that’s good, just stay still for me and then we’ll be fine.

He arrives at Hana. Then grabs her. He’d like to slap her face.

HARDY
What are you doing? What the bloody hell do you think you’re doing?

By way of answer she looks at the ground ahead of her feet. Jan’s BRACELET lies in the mud. Hardy bends down and collects the mangled bracelet, presses it into Hana’s hands.

EXT. VILLAGE. DUSK

The CONVOY is threading through A RUINED VILLAGE, passing the souvenirs of war: an overturned vehicle now used as a game by some children, dejected refugees tramping along the side of the road.

INT. RED CROSS TRUCK. CONTINUOUS

Hana sees all this as she sits blankly inside the truck, the Patient swaying alongside her. She puts out her hand to steady him. Tears streak her face.
EXT. CONVOY SITE, ITALY. DUSK

THE CONVOY is making a PIT STOP. The trucks are silhouetted in a line. Hana helps lift The Patient's stretcher onto the ground. She bends to him. Hana gets up to prepare a MORPHINE INJECTION from a small kit. Mary arrives. Touches Hana gently, conscious of her grief for Jan's death.

MARY
Are you okay? Oh god, Hana, you and Jan were inseparable.

HANA
(sighs angrily)
We keep moving him - in and out of the truck. Why? He's dying. What's the point?

MARY
(thrown)
Do you mean leave him? We can't. We can hardly leave him.

Hana has settled down beside The Patient's stretcher. She draws herself up against the night. On the hill above, she can see the outline of A SMALL MONASTERY in the moonlight. She's suffering, her face a frozen mask.

HANA
I must be a curse - anybody who loves me, anybody who gets close to me - or I must be cursed. Which is it?

The Patient laces her fingers into his crabbed hand.

EXT. THE MONASTERY. DAY

Hana is investigating the MONASTERY OF S. ANNA, wandering through its overgrown gardens, past a pond. What sanctuary it seems to offer.

INT. THE MONASTERY LIBRARY. DAY

Hana explores via a gaping hole in a LIBRARY where the walls have collapsed from shelling. The garden intrudes, ivy curls around the shelves. Bloated books lie abandoned, and there's a PIANO tilted up on one side. Hana presses the keys through the filthy tarpaulin which covers it. Everywhere there are signs of a brief German occupation.

INT. THE MONASTERY CLOISTERS. DAY

Past the Library is a CLOISTERS, drenched with silver light.
INT. THE MONASTERY STAIRS. DAY

Hana goes upstairs, negotiating a huge VOID in the stone treads two thirds of the way up.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

She comes across a small CHAPEL with the remains of murals and an altar pressed into service by the Germans as a table. Hana finds an old bed and a mattress.

EXT. CONVOY SITE, ITALY. DAY

The Convoy is in the final stages of loading up. Oliver passes the vehicles, deep in dispute with a determined Hana, who is carrying some sacks of rice.

HANA
When he dies I'll catch up.

OLIVER
It's not safe here. The whole country's crawling with Bandits and Germans and God knows what.

HANA
The war's over - you told me yourself. How can it be desertion?

OLIVER
It's not over everywhere. I didn't mean literally. This is normal - it's shock. For all of us. Hana -

Oliver hovers as Hana adds the rice to a small cache of provisions then lays another blanket over The Patient.

HANA
I need morphine. A lot. And a pistol.

OLIVER
If anything happened to you I'd never forgive myself.


OLIVER
We're heading for Leghorn. Livorno the Italians call it. We'll expect you.
INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY.

TWO SOLDIERS are helping Mary and Hana carry The Patient into what was the chapel. They lower The Patient onto the rusted bed. Hana turns to the SOLDIERS.

HANA
Thank you.

She shuts the door on them, leaving Mary staring aghast at the room, its faded frescoes, its mold, its starkness.

HANA
Good.

She goes to Mary and hugs her.

INT. THE MONASTERY, HANA'S ROOM. DAY

A smaller upstairs room, completely bare. As Hana tugs off her uniform, she looks out of the window to see the departing Convoy. A cotton dress goes on over her head and she emerges looking suddenly younger and rather fragile. Through the damaged floor of her room she has a view of the patient below her. She looks at him. Now she has scissors and starts to cut off her hair, not aggressively, but in a gesture of a new beginning.

INT. THE MONASTERY STAIRS. MORNING

Hana is dropping armfuls of books into the cavities of the damaged stairs while, with others, she is improvising new steps. The heavy volumes are perfect for treading on.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

Hana enters.

THE PATIENT
What was all the banging?
Were you fighting rats or the entire German army?

HANA
I was repairing the stairs. I found a library and the books were very useful.

Hana shrugs. She's attending to him, pulling back the sheets, plumping up the pillows. He's short of breath.

THE PATIENT
Before you find too many uses for these books would you read some to me?
HANA
I think they’re all in
Italian, but I’ll look, yes.
What about your own book?

THE PATIENT
(reluctant)
My book? The Herodotus? Yes,
we can read him.

Hana picks up the book from the altar and hands it to him. Then
she starts rummaging in her pockets.

HANA
Oh – I’ve found plums. We have
plums in the orchard. We have
an orchard!

THE PATIENT
Herodotus is the father of
history, do you know that?

HANA
I don’t know anything.

THE PATIENT
Thank you.

She has peeled a plum and now slips it into his mouth. His mouth
works with the pleasure of the taste, a little juice escaping
from his lips. Hana mops it up.

THE PATIENT
It’s a very plum plum.

EXT. THE MONASTERY GARDENS. DAY

Hana sits in the water trough shivering as the cold water
splashes her.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Close on the HERODOTUS. The Patient opens its cover, held
together by leather ties. Loose PAPERS, PHOTOGRAPHS, HAND-DRAWN
MAPS AND SKETCHES are all collected between the charred pages.
He claws at some papers, inspects a letter. Then he loses
control of the papers and the whole parcel SPILLS to the floor
with a crack.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. DUSK

Count Laszlo de Almasy, Hungarian explorer, squats with an
ancient Arab who draws in the sand, talking in some arcane
dialect, scratching out a map. The old man stops speaking and
scours the sky a beat or two before we or Almasy hear the faint
noise of a PLANE. It’s a bright yellow Steerman coming in to
land. Almasy doesn’t look up. The Arab continues to talk. The plane sweeps past the cluster of tents and camels and trucks which constitutes the Base Camp for a team of international explorers, led by Almasy and his colleague, Peter Madox.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. DAY

The expedition team drives over to meet the arrivals. Almasy stays in the car as the others pile out and approach the plane as it taxis alongside an old, battered silver Tiger Moth.

A young couple emerge from the Steerman. They are GEOFFREY AND KATHARINE CLIFTON.

And it’s immediately clear that Katharine is the woman in the plane crash at the beginning of the film.

Madox makes all the introductions, introducing the rest of the team – an Italian, D’Agostino; a German, Bermann; and an Egyptian, Fouad. Hands are shaken, hellos all round, as the couple disembark in their leather flying gear.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. LATE DAY

The party is in the shade of the tents. Geoffrey Clifton produces a bottle of CHAMPAGNE and sets off the cork with a flourish. Almasy joins the group. Madox nods over to the Clifton plane.

**CLIFTON**
To the International Sand Club.

**MADOX**
Marvellous plane. Did you look?

**ALMASY**
Yes.

**CLIFTON**
(beaming at Almasy)
Isn’t it? Wedding present from Katharine’s parents. We’re calling it Rupert Bear. Hello. Geoffrey Clifton.

**MADOX**
We can finally consign my old bird to the scrap heap.

Almasy smiles and walks on towards the others.

**D’AGOSTINO**
Mrs. Clifton – Count Almasy.
KATHARINE
(smiling, offering her hand)
Hello. Geoffrey gave me your monograph when I was reading up on the desert. Very impressive.

ALMASY
(stiff)
Thank you.

KATHARINE
I wanted to meet a man who could write such a long paper with so few adjectives.

ALMASY
A thing is still a thing no matter what you place in front of it. Big car, slow car, chauffeur-driven car, still a car.

CLIFTON
(joining them and joining in)
A broken car?

ALMASY
Still a car.

CLIFTON
(hands them champagne)
Not much use, though.

KATHARINE
Love? Romantic love, platonic love, filial love —? Quite different things, surely?

CLIFTON
(hugging Katharine)
Uxoriousness — that’s my favourite kind of love. Excessive love of one’s wife.

ALMASY
(a dry smile)
Now there you have me.
EXT. BASE CAMP. MORNING

Almasy and Madox head for Madox’s Tiger Moth. They turn the machine around like a toy, pointing it in the right direction for take-off. During this Almasy complains and Madox mediates — there’s a suspicion that this is a familiar dynamic.

ALMASY
They’re tourists.

MADOX
Absolute rot. They come highly recommended from the Royal Geographic. She’s charming and has read everything, he’s meant to be a ruddy good pilot.

ALMASY
We don’t need another pilot.

MADOX
He can make aerial maps of the entire area.

ALMASY
You can’t explore from the air, Madox. If you could explore from the air life would be very simple.

(he primes the propellor)
Contact.

Madox slips on his goggles and turns on the engine.

MADOX
Contact.

Almasy spins the propellor. It flashes into life.

EXT. GILF KEBIR PLATEAU. MORNING.

Both planes are scouting the Gilf Kebir region. Geoffrey flies up alongside Madox and wiggles his wings. Madox waves. They’re flying over a distinctive group of GRANITE MASSIFS, Crater-shaped hills. The broken towers of the Gilf Kebir. Almasy is distracted by them. He turns to Madox and points down, indicating they should explore them.

Madox nods and brings the plane lower and they fly into the mouth of one of the huge craters. The Cliftons’ plane follows them into the black ravines, pitted with signs of scrub.
Almasy gestures to the Cliftons to PHOTOGRAPH the Massifs. A THUMBS UP from Geoffrey, who pulls out his camera and begins shooting.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. MORNING.

Hana changes The Patient’s bed. The light streams in from the open window. She looks up at the green hills rolling away from the Monastery, the village in the distance.

HANA
I should try and move the bed.
I want you to be able to see the view. It's good, it's a view from a monastery.

THE PATIENT
I can already see.

HANA
(bending down to his level)
How? How can you see anything?

THE PATIENT
No, not the window – I can’t bear the light anyway - no, I can see all the way to the desert. Before the war. Making maps.

HANA
I’m turning you.

THE PATIENT
Is there sand in my eyes. Are you cleaning sand from my ears?

HANA
No sand, that's your morphine speaking.

THE PATIENT
I can see my wife in that view.

HANA
Are you remembering more?

THE PATIENT
Could I have a cigarette?

HANA
Are you crazy?
CONTINUED

THE PATIENT
Why are you so determined to keep me alive?

HANA
Because I’m a nurse.

EXT. THE MONASTERY CLOISTERS. NIGHT

It’s dark. Hana is caught by the stray shafts of moonlight. She is SCRATCHING on the flagstones. Her skirt is bunched up around her thighs. She throws something in the air. It lands with a crack. Suddenly she is flying across the space, a hop, a skip, a jump. Then turns at the other end, dips for the stone, then back again, in this blindman’s version of HOPSCOTCH.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

Alone in his room The Patient listens to the erratic rhythm of Hana’s hopscotch. It takes him back to the desert and the sound of Bedouin drums on a night shortly after the arrival of the Cliftons.

EXT. BASE CAMP. NIGHT

The group sits around the campfire at night, supper over, champagne drunk. They’re using the empty bottle to play a game – Spin the Bottle. When the bottle points at you, you’re required to perform a party piece. Clifton sings a version of ‘Yes, We Have No Bananas,’ then is required to translate it into a variety of languages – the others joining in raucously. D’Agostino offers a Puccini aria; Fouad dances, his shawl whirling, the Bedouin onlookers providing a percussive, improvised accompaniment.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

Later, and Hana is reading to The Patient from a story in his Herodotus. As she reads, he listens, eyes closed, still in the desert.

HANA
...the King insisted he would find some way to prove beyond dispute that his wife was fairest of all women. ‘I will hide you in the room where we sleep’, says Candaules –
   (correcting herself)
   - said Candaules.

She stumbles over the word. The Patient corrects her.

THE PATIENT
Candaules.
HANA
Candaules.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. NIGHT

Katharine has her turn at the fire. She is telling the same story. The Patient remembers her.

KATHARINE
Candaules tells Gyges that the queen has the same practice every night. She takes off her clothes and puts them on the chair by the door to her room...

HANA (O/S)
(continuing to read)
...and from where you stand you will be able to gaze on her at your leisure...

KATHARINE
(her story continuing)
And that evening it's exactly as the King has told him. She goes to the chair and removes her clothes one by one until she's standing naked in full view of Gyges, and indeed she was more lovely than he could have imagined. But then the Queen looked up and saw Gyges concealed in the shadows, and although she said nothing, she shuddered. And the next day she sent for Gyges and challenged him. And hearing his story, this is what she said -

CLIFTON
(clowning)
Off with his head!

KATHARINE
- she said, "Either you must submit to death for gazing on that which you should not, or else kill my husband who shamed me and become King in his place."

Clifton makes a face of outrage. For Katharine the story has suddenly collapsed. She feels Almasy's eyes on her.
KATHARINE
So Gyges kills the King and
marries the Queen and becomes
ruler of Lydia for twenty-
eight years.
(an uncomfortable
moment)
Shall I spin the bottle?

The others laugh. Madox beams at Clifton.

MADOX
So Geoffrey - let that be a
lesson to you.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

Hana looks up from the Herodotus, sees The Patient’s eyes
closed. She gently touches his face and whispers.

HANA
Are you asleep?

THE PATIENT
(he isn’t)
Yes. No. Dropping off.

And Hana closes the book, gets up, kisses him good night, and
blows out the lamp.

EXT. THE MONASTERY, HANA’S GARDEN. LATE DAY

Hana has been reviving a vegetable patch. She comes out to
garden. CROWS are feasting. She’s furious, shouts, runs at

EXT. THE MONASTERY, GRAVEYARD. MORNING

Hana appears from the cemetery, dragging A METAL CRUCIFIX. It’s
bigger than she is, and she drags it along towards her garden.
A MAN WATCHES HER FROM A BICYCLE. He’s approaching fifty,
grizzled and attractive, and could be Italian. He wears a pair
of grubby mittens. The man, CARAVAGGIO, chooses this moment to
introduce himself. He drops the bicycle on the ground with a
clatter.

CARAVAGGIO
(very cheerful)
Buon Giorno!

Hana turns, startled and suspicious.

CARAVAGGIO
Hana?
HANA
What do you want?

CARAVAGGIO
I met your friend Mary. She said I should stop and see if you were all right. Apparently, we’re neighbours – my house is two blocks from yours in Montreal. Cabot, north of Laurier. Bonjour.

HANA
(unravelling this information)
Bonjour.

He goes to her and hands her an egg, producing it from a pocket. He beams, as does Hana.

CARAVAGGIO
I’d like to take credit for it, but it’s from Mary. My name’s David Caravaggio, but nobody ever called me David. Caravaggio – they find too absurd to miss out on.

During this he attempts to conjure a second egg from Hana’s ear. THE EGG DROPS TO THE GROUND. Cursing, he gets on his knees and starts to scoop it up, preserving it. There appears to be something wrong with his hands. He grimaces at Hana.

CARAVAGGIO
My stupid hands!

INT. THE MONASTERY KITCHEN. DAY

Hana has taken his eggs and put them into a bowl. She beats them with a knife, picking out the bits of shell. Caravaggio watches, takes in how little food there is otherwise. The table seems useful more as a sewing area than for cooking – it’s strewn with altar cloths being sewn into drapes. On a tray on the table are TWO VIALS OF MORPHINE from The Patient’s room. As Hana turns to the stove, Caravaggio’s moved and covered them with his gloved hands a second later and he’s juggled them into his pocket.

CARAVAGGIO
(of the eggs)
They’re fresh. I haven’t had an egg in...have you noticed there are chickens? In Italy you get chickens but no eggs. In Africa there were always eggs, but never chickens. Who separated them?
HANA
(intrigued)
You were in Africa?

CARAVAGGIO
Yes I was.

HANA
So was my Patient.

CARAVAGGIO
Look, I’d like to stay for a while. I have to do some work here - I speak the language. There are Partisans to be disarmed -

(trrying to paraphrase)
- we embrace them and see if we can relieve them of their weapons, you know - while we hug. I was a thief, so the Army thought I’d be good at it.

HANA
So you can shoot a pistol?

CARAVAGGIO
(showing his hands)
No.

HANA
Do you have a problem with those?

CARAVAGGIO
No.

HANA
I should look at them before you go.

CARAVAGGIO
Look, it’s a big place. We needn’t disturb each other. I’ll sleep in the stable. It doesn’t matter where I sleep. I don’t sleep.

HANA
I don’t know what Mary told you about me, but I don’t need company, I don’t need to be looked after.
INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Hana carries in a tray. There’s OMELETTE on the plate.

HANA
There’s a man downstairs. He brought us eggs. He might stay.

THE PATIENT
Why? Can he lay eggs?

HANA
He’s Canadian.

THE PATIENT
(brittle)
Why are people always so happy when they collide with someone from the same place? What happened in Montreal when you passed a man in the street - did you invite him to live with you?

HANA
He needn’t disturb you.

THE PATIENT
Me? He can’t. I’m already disturbed.

HANA
(she cuts the omelette into tiny pieces)
There’s a war. Where you come from becomes important.

THE PATIENT
Why? I hate that idea.

INT. THE MONASTERY STAIRS. DAY

Caravaggio is in shadows in the hallway. He listens.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Hana, having already replaced the bed linen, is standing on a stepladder trying to hang homemade drapes around the bed as Caravaggio knocks tentatively, then comes in.

CARAVAGGIO
Can I help?

HANA
It’s finished.
THE PATIENT
So you’re our Canadian pickpocket?

CARAVAGGIO
Thief, I think, is more accurate.

THE PATIENT
I understand you were in Africa. Whereabouts?

CARAVAGGIO
Oh, all over.

THE PATIENT
All over? I kept trying to cover a very modest portion and still failed.
(to Hana, who is heading out)
Are you leaving us?

HANA
Yes.

THE PATIENT
Now’s our opportunity to swap war wounds.

HANA
Then I’m definitely going.

And she exits. The men consider her.

CARAVAGGIO
Does she have war wounds?

INT. THE MONASTERY, HANA’S ROOM. DAY

As Hana walks up her stairs she finds herself overhearing their conversation as it threads up through the hole in the ceiling. She strips her own bed of the curtain she uses for a sheet.

THE PATIENT
I think anybody she ever loves tends to die on her.

CARAVAGGIO
Are you planning to be the exception?
THE PATIENT
Me? I think you’ve got the wrong end of the stick, old boy.

(a pause)
So, Caravaggio – Hana thinks you invented your name.

CARAVAGGIO
And you’ve forgotten yours.

THE PATIENT
I said that no one would ever invent such a preposterous name.

CARAVAGGIO
I said you can forget everything but you never forget your name. Count Almasy – that name mean anything to you? Or Katharine Clifton?

EXT. CAIRO MARKET. DAY

A STREET MARKET in full sway, a locals-only affair, blazing with noise and bustle and barter. Emerging from a thicket of women and begging children, KATHARINE CLIFTON carries her purchase of an exotic-looking Carpet. From nowhere she is joined by ALMASY, who nods at the carpet.

ALMASY
How much did you pay?

KATHARINE
(delighted)
Oh, Hello!

ALMASY
They don’t see foreign women in this market. How much did you pay?

KATHARINE
Seven, eight pounds, I suppose.

ALMASY
Which stall?

KATHARINE
Why?
CONTINUED

ALMASY
You've been cheated, don't worry, we'll take it back.

KATHARINE
(bristling)
I don't want to take it back.

ALMASY
This is not worth eight pounds, Mrs. Clifton.

KATHARINE
It is to me.

ALMASY
Did you bargain?

KATHARINE
I don't care to bargain.

ALMASY
That insults them.

KATHARINE
(turning to face him)
I don't believe that. I think you are insulted by me, somehow.

ALMASY
(of the carpet)
I'd be very happy to obtain the correct price for this. I apologize if I appear abrupt. I am rusty at social graces.
(tart)
How do you find Cairo? Did you visit the Pyramids?

KATHARINE
Excuse me.

ALMASY
Or the Sphinx?

He stands as she continues, pushing past him, boiling.

INT. SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL, CAIRO. EVENING

THE LONG BAR. The Exploration Team drinking at a table. They are not entirely off-duty - Almasy and Madox, as ever, ponder the maps.
MADOX
By car? Impossible. If we try and drive north of Kufra by car, we’ll leave our bones in the desert.

ALMASY
Disagree.

MADOX
You’re Hungarian, you always disagree.

Geoffrey Clifton appears.

CLIFTON
Good evening, Gentlemen!

He sits down. Madox hails the waiter.

D’AGOSTINO
How is your charming wife?

CLIFTON
Marvellous. She’s in love with the hotel plumbing. She’s either in the swimming pool – she swims for hours, she’s a fish, quite incredible – or she’s in the bath. Actually, she’s just outside.
(responding to their bewildered expressions)
Chaps Only in the Long Bar.

EXT. SHEPHEARD’S HOTEL TERRACE. NIGHT

The Explorers, embarrassed, march out onto the terrace. Katharine sits, reading, exquisite in her evening clothes. There is dancing inside, and couples walk to and from their tables. Madox approaches to collect her. Katharine manages to produce a dazzling smile which includes everyone except Almasy.

MADOX
Mrs. Clifton, you’ll have to forgive us. We’re not accustomed to the company of women.

KATHARINE
Not at all. I was thoroughly enjoying my book.
CONTINUED

CLIFTON
The team is in mourning, darling.

KATHARINE
Oh really?

MADOX
I'm afraid we're not having much luck obtaining funds for the expedition.

KATHARINE
Oh. What will you do?

MADOX
A more modest expedition, or even wait a year. Remind our families we still exist.

CLIFTON
(astonished)
Good heavens, are you married, Madox?

MADOX
Very much so. We all are, save my friend here.

He nods at Almasy. Clifton appears tremendously relieved.

CLIFTON
I feel much better, don't you darling? We were feeling rather self-conscious. Let's toast, then. To absent wives.

D'AGOSTINO
(toasting Katharine)
And present ones.

KATHARINE
(toasting Almasy)
And future ones.

INT. SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL. NIGHT

THE BALLROOM. A dance finishes. Almasy takes over from D'Agostino to partner Katharine. The others remain on the terrace, deep in conversation.

KATHARINE
(as they dance)
Why did you follow me yesterday?
CONTINUED

ALMASY
What? I’m sorry?

KATHARINE
After the market, you
followed me to the hotel.

ALMASY
I was concerned. A woman in
that part of Cairo, a
European woman, I felt
obliged to.

KATHARINE
You felt obliged to.

ALMASY
As the wife of one of our
party.

KATHARINE
(direct)
So why follow me? Escort me,
by all means. But following
me is predatory, isn’t it?

Almasy, by way of answer, bears down on her. They dance,
fierce, oblivious to everything.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

Hana has fallen asleep on the bed, almost on top of the
Patient. He touches her. He speaks as if each word burns him.

THE PATIENT
Could I ask you to move? I’m
sorry -

HANA
(mortified, moving
quickly)
I’m sorry, of course. I was
dreaming. Awful.

THE PATIENT
It’s just when you move -

HANA
How stupid of me.

THE PATIENT
I can’t really bear the
pressure.

Hana gets up, upset to have hurt him.
INT. THE MONASTERY KITCHEN. NIGHT

Hana comes to the table, carrying a jug of water and a bowl. She's still sad. She unbuttons her dress, pulling it off her shoulder, begins to pour the water to cool herself against the night's pressing heat. She's overwhelmed by memories, by the weight of her curse. Caravaggio comes into the kitchen to find her slumped at the table, her back naked, the jug of water in front of her. She's sobbing, her shoulders heaving. Caravaggio approaches tentatively.

CARAVAGGIO

Hana?

(he touches her shoulder)

Hana? Are you all right?

HANA

(without raising her head)

Don't touch me.

She pulls her dress up around her shoulders. Her face is red with weeping. Caravaggio pours a glass of water and walks to the open window.

CARAVAGGIO

You're in love with him, aren't you? Your poor patient. Do you think he's a saint because of the way he looks? I don't think he is.

HANA

I'm not in love with him. I'm in love with ghosts. So is he. He's in love with ghosts.

CARAVAGGIO

(he holds up his hands)

What if I told you he did this to me?

HANA

(stung)

How could he have? When?

CARAVAGGIO

I'm one of his ghosts and he wouldn't even know it.

HANA

I don't know what that means.
CARAVAGGIO  
(shrugs)  
Ask your saint who he is. Ask him who he’s killed.

HANA  
(furious)  
Please don’t creep around this house!

She leaves, slamming the door behind her. Caravaggio calls after her.

CARAVAGGIO  
I don’t think he’s forgotten anything. I think he wants to forget.

INT. TENT, BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. NIGHT

The group of expeditioners is around the fire. Clifton holds up a glass.

CLIFTON  
Gentlemen, to Map-making!

ALL  
Map-making!

MADOX  
And a special thank-you to Geoffrey and Katharine, without whose fund-raising heroics we’d still be kicking our heels.

CLIFTON  
To arm-twisting.

MADOX  
(to Almasy)  
Did Katharine say? Geoffrey has to fly back to Cairo.

CLIFTON  
Return the favour - take a few photographs of the army.

ALMASY  
What kind of photographs?
CLIFTON
Portraits. The Brigadier, the
Brigadier's wife, the
Brigadier's dogs, the
Brigadier by the Pyramids,
the Brigadier breathing. I
shall of course be bereft,
but finally able to explore
the Cairo nightlife. I shall
produce an authoritative
guide to the Zinc Bars and - I
want to say Harems - are we in
the right country for Harems?

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL. MORNING

As Clifton prepares to leave in the Steerman, Almasy
approaches.

ALMASY
Clifton, safe journey.

CLIFTON
You too. Good luck!

ALMASY
Clifton - it's probably none
of my business - but your
wife, do you think it's
appropriate to leave her?

CLIFTON
Appropriate?

ALMASY
Well the desert is - for a
woman - it's very tough, I
wonder if it's not too much
for her.

CLIFTON
Are you mad? Katharine loves
it here. She told me
yesterday.

ALMASY
All the same, were I you, I
would be concerned -
CLIFTON
I’ve known Katharine since she was three, we were practically brother and sister before we were man and wife. I think I’d know what is and what isn’t too much for her. I think she’d know herself.

ALMASY
Very well.

CLIFTON
(laughing it off)
Why are you people so threatened by a woman?!

Almasy watches him walk toward the plane, then turns to see Katharine, a distant figure, watching. He doesn’t move. She doesn’t move.

INT. MONASTERY LIBRARY. DAY

Hana stands at the PIANO. It’s still lop-sided, propped against the wall. She tries but can’t move it. So she pulls off the dust sheet and, with the instrument still on a tilt, begins to pick out the Aria from Bach’s Goldberg Variations.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

HANA’S PIANO CONTINUES. Upstairs, Caravaggio chats with The Patient while working his arm to RAISE A VEIN, a bootlace tied around it, preparing an injection for himself, tapping the syringe. During this:

THE PATIENT
I have come to love that little tap of the fingernail against the syringe. Tap. Tap. Tap.

INT. MONASTERY LIBRARY. DAY

Hana plays. A GUNSHOT punctuates the music. Her hands falter, she looks up to see A SIKH SOLDIER running past the GAPING HOLE IN THE WALL, his rifle held aloft. He approaches the french doors, his face creased with anxiety, and raps on the shattered frame. It’s KIP, the bomb disposal officer who had cleared the road on which Jan’s jeep had exploded.

KIP
Stop playing! Please, Stop Playing!
HANA
(of the doors)
I don't have the key to that
door.

She watches him walk around from the locked doors and walk
straight through the hole in the wall, oblivious to any irony,
and up to the piano.

KIP
The Germans were here. The
Germans were all over this
area. They left mines
everywhere. And pianos were
their favourite hiding
places.

HANA
I see. Sorry.
(then mischievous)
Then maybe you're safe as
long as you only play Bach.
He's German.

Kip is looking around the piano. Hana giggles.

KIP
Is something funny?

HANA
No, I'm sorry.

KIP
I've met you before.

HANA
I don't think so.

KIP
Look. See. See.

Hana bends to see what Kip's looking at under the piano. Wires
run from the wall to the instrument onto which is taped an
EXPLOSIVE CHARGE. If Hana had succeeded in moving the piano she
would have triggered the charge. Kip looks at Hana, who
conceals her dismay with a shrug.

KIP
(of the piano)
Move that, and no more Bach.

EXT. THE MONASTERY GARDEN. DUSK

Across from the terrace, KIP and his sergeant, HARDY, are
putting up their tents. Caravaggio stands, chatting amiably to
them, holding a haversack, smoking a cigarette.
INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DUSK

Hana looks down from The Patient’s room, watching the tent go up. Kip glances up at the window. Hana, suddenly shy, backs away.

HANA
He wants us to move out, says there could be fifty more mines in the building. He thinks I’m mad because I laughed at him. He’s Indian, he wears a turban.

THE PATIENT
No he’s Sikh. If he wears a turban, he’s Sikh.

HANA
I’ll probably marry him.

THE PATIENT
Really? That’s sudden.

HANA
My mother always told me I would summon my husband by playing the piano.

She bathes The Patient.

HANA
I liked it better when there were just the two of us.

THE PATIENT
(irked)
Why? Is he staying?

HANA
With his Sergeant. A Mr. Hardy.

THE PATIENT
We should charge! Doesn’t anyone have a job to do?

HANA
They have to clear all the roads of mines. That’s a big job.

THE PATIENT
In that case, I suppose we can’t charge.
HANA
No, we can’t.

EXT. THE MONASTERY, HANA’S GARDEN. DAY

HANA IS GARDENING, close to the crucifix, which is now a full-fledged Scarecrow. Broken bottles, fragments of stained glass, and shards from a mirror are hung from the crossbar, syringes too, all jangling and tinkling and catching the sunlight.

Kip and Hardy drive off to work on their motorcycles. She watches them, catching Kip’s careless wave to her. She looks briefly at herself in A PIECE OF MIRROR dangling from the Scarecrow.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

The Patient lies in bed singing to himself in Arabic.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT POTTERY HILL

The THREE FORD CARS leave the campsite, loaded for a scouting expedition. The rest of the party, Bedouin, tents, camels, and Tiger Moth - is left behind.

INT. CAR EN ROUTE TO CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Almasy drives the second car, accompanied by Katharine and Al Auf, who sits on top of the cabin. Almasy sings as they drive. Katharine breaks the long silence between them.

KATHARINE
I’ve been thinking - how does somebody like you decide to come to the desert? What is it? You’re doing whatever you’re doing - in your castle, or wherever it is you live - and one day you say I have to go to the desert - or what?

Almasy doesn’t answer. Katharine, who has looked at him for an answer, looks away. There’s another long silence.

ALMASY
I once travelled with a guide, who was taking me to Faya. He didn’t speak for nine hours. At the end of it he pointed at the horizon and said, “Faya!” That was a good day.

Point made, they lapse again into silence. Katharine boils.
KATHARINE
Actually, you sing.

ALMASY
What?

KATHARINE
You sing. All the time.

ALMASY
I do not.

KATHARINE
Ask Al Auf.

In Arabic, Almasy asks Al Auf, who promptly laughs, nods and sings a snatch of what he thinks is the tune to 'The Darktown Strutter’s Ball'. Katharine, delighted, joins in.

KATHARINE
(sings wickedly)
I’ll be down to get you in the
taxi, honey, you’d better be
ready about half-past
eight...

Al Auf nods and grins furiously, joins in, impersonating Almasy. Almasy makes a face.

EXT. NEAR THE BASE CAMP AT THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DUSK

The group is investigating a cleft in the rocky massif. They climb slowly. Below them, A NEW AND TEMPORARY BASE CAMP.

The group winds around the rock. Almasy turns to offer a hand to Katharine behind him, pulling her up to the next rock slab.

The group stops at a level plateau. The Arabs stand apart and SING THEIR PRAYERS AT DUSK. Al Auf leads the incantations.

AL AUF
Allah Akbar, Allahu Akbar...

The Westerners wait respectfully. As the sun sets in glory, Almasy looks over at the range of rocks. One particular range seems to look exactly like A WOMAN’S BACK. He squints at the rocks, then pulls out his Herodotus to compare his sketch map with the terrain in front of him.
EXT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DUSK

Almasy clambers up the rocks, coming through a narrow crevice to find A NATURAL SHELF. He scrambles up this path, reaching up, only to notice that his hand almost perfectly covers A CARVED HAND on the rock, and as he digests this he realizes he has climbed past what is THE MOUTH OF A CAVE. He disappears inside.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. FLASHLIGHT

A FLASHLIGHT squirts into the cave. Almasy treads cautiously along the narrow winding passage. He comes to an open cavern and takes his flashlight up to a wall. Almasy is astonished by what he sees.

EXT. NEAR THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. EVENING

The others watch as a flashlight bobs and jerks among the rocks and Almasy comes scrambling down, transformed into an excited teenager.

ALMASY
Madox! Madox! Madox, come quickly! Bermann, D'Ag - I've found something.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. FLASHLIGHT

PAINTINGS EMERGE, figures, animals. Ancient pictures. A giraffe. Cattle. Fish. Men with bows and arrows. Almasy has led the whole party into the heart of the cave. Now Madox comes alongside him at the wall, his flashlight joining Almasy's and increasing the visibility of the paintings. A dark-skinned figure, apparently in the process of DIVING into water, comes clearly into view. Then others, supine, arms outstretched.

MADOX
(with audible excitement)
My God, they're swimming!
They're swimming!

The others crowd around. Five excited faces in the green gloom of the cave.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Katharine is painting. She copies the cave paintings with meticulous, almost scientific accuracy.
EXT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

A hive of activity. The team has set up TRESTLES to catalogue the finds as the Bedouin come out with baskets of detritus, which they empty onto a growing heap as the Cave is cleared out. Almasy clambers inside carrying camera equipment.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Inside, Bermann is setting up LAMPS, running wires from a car BATTERY. Kamal is helping him. And as Almasy arrives he catches a tiny moment of tenderness between them. Bermann, seeing him, quickly disengages and busies himself with the lights.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

The CARS are heading back to Base Camp. They bounce over the sand.

INT. BERMANN’S CAR. DAY

Bermann is driving the lead CAR along some STEEP DUNES. Almasy beside him. Bermann is peeling AN ORANGE, a segment of which he holds out of the window. Kamal, riding shotgun, leans down and collects it, his head dipping in to grin at Bermann. Bermann looks uneasily at Almasy. He wants to tell him of his passion, of his absolute love for Kamal, but he daren’t.

BERMANN
How do you explain? To someone who’s never been here? Feelings which seem quite normal.

ALMASY
(compassionate)
I don’t know, my friend. I don’t know.

Bermann holds out another segment of the orange, and watches Kamal bend into view, opening his mouth to be fed another piece, then suddenly fall from the vehicle. THE CAR LURCHES SIDEWAYS AND TOPPLES OVER THE EDGE. D’Ag — following, Fouad beside him — brakes sharply, but can’t stop his own car from being caught in the avalanche of sand, and IT PLUNGES DOWN THE DUNE AND INTO BERMANN’S UPTURNED CAR WITH AN OMINOUS CRUNCH, the radiator exploding. Only Madox, a little way behind, with Katharine beside him, manages to stay clear of trouble. He jumps out of the vehicle and slides down the dune to find pandemonium as the passengers stumble out of the cars, sand flying, smoke pouring from the upright vehicle, the wheels of the overturned car spinning wildly in the air, a puddle of oil spreading ominously.
EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

LATER and the group have cleaned up as best as possible. D'Ag, Bermann, and Fouad are a little worse for wear. Fouad's arm is in a sling, and D'Ag is sporting a bloody head bandage. Bermann has broken a finger and is being attended to by Madox. The luggage, water, and petrol have been stacked up and the men are loading the remaining car.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

Almasy, Kamal and two of the other young Bedouin stand around the mess of the two broken vehicles. The ONE WORKING CAR is loaded with men and provisions. Katharine sits inside, next to Madox. Almasy comes over to her window, to speak past her to Madox.

MADOX
I'll be back as quick as I can. Thirty-six hours at the outside.

ALMASY
Try to get an additional radiator. We can store it between here and Pottery Hill. And a better jack. We planned badly.

MADOX
(nods at Almasy, then shouts over to the wrecked vehicles)
Bermann!

This is Bermann's cue to take leave of Kamal, who is staying behind. Kamal makes a little bow.

KAMAL
(in Arabic)
May God make safety your companion.

Bermann nods and hurries away, squeezing into the car, which jolts off, bouncing over the track.

The vehicle gets about twenty yards, Almasy watching, before it sinks forlornly into the soft sand. It's hopelessly overloaded with people. They all get out.

MADOX
(irascible)
Now what?

KATHARINE
I'll stay behind, of course.
MADOX
Certainly not.

KATHARINE
No, I insist. There clearly isn't room for all of us, I'm the least able to dig, and I'm not one of the walking wounded. It's only one night! Besides, if I remain it's the most effective method of persuading my husband to abandon whatever he's doing and come and rescue us.

It's hard to argue with this logic. Almasy shrugs.

LATER - THE MADOX CAR makes a more effective departure. Almasy watches it disappear then turns, uncomfortable, to see Katharine walk down the steep face of the dune toward the makeshift shelter.

INT. SHELTER. DAY

Almasy sits alone, writing into HIS HERODOTUS, a map folded in front of him, from which he makes notes. Katharine comes across with a clutch of her SKETCHES from the Cave wall. Hands them to him. They're beautiful.

KATHARINE
I thought you might like to paste them into your book.

ALMASY
Well, we took photographs, there's no need.

KATHARINE
No really, I'd like you to have them.

ALMASY
(handling them back)
Well, there is really no need. They're too good. This is just a scrapbook. I should feel obliged. Thank you.

KATHARINE
(exasperated)
And that would be unconscionable, I suppose, wouldn't it, to feel any obligation? Yes. Of course it would.
She's already turning, heading back up the slope, leaving the perimeter of the shelter.

EXT. THE DESERT. NIGHT.

Katharine sits alone on top of the Dune, smoking, surveying the landscape. Below her the camp - a fresh wind flicking at the tarpaulin, The deep tracks of Madox's car stretching off towards civilization. Almasy heads up towards her.

ALMASY
You should come into the shelter.

KATHARINE
I'm quite all right, thank you.

ALMASY
Look over there.

Katharine turns, scans the horizon.

KATHARINE
What am I looking at?

ALMASY
Do you see what's happening to them - the stars?

KATHARINE
They're so untidy. I'm just trying to rearrange them.

ALMASY
No, no, over there. In a few minutes there will be no stars. The air is filling with sand.

On the distant dunes an ominous, boiling cloud.

EXT. VEHICLES. NIGHT

The team hurries around salvaging gasoline drums, water cans, bringing anything loose or light inside the vehicles. The WIND is whipping up, the air busy with sand. Chaos as they struggle in ever-worsening conditions, their heads wrapped in blankets, flashlights useless. They seek safety in two groups, the tribesmen to the cabin of the overturned car, Katharine and Almasy to the upright one.
INT. CAR. NIGHT

Inside the cabin, the sand swirling around them, Katharine and Almasy sit without speaking. He pours a little water so that they can wash out their eyes and noses and mouths. She takes her silk scarf, wets it, presses it to her face.

KATHARINE
This is not very good, is it?

ALMASY
No.

KATHARINE
Shall we be all right?

ALMASY
Yes. Yes. Absolutely.

KATHARINE
Yes is a comfort. Absolutely is not.

EXT. THE DESERT. NIGHT

The sand is piling up against the two cars, the tent is swept from its moorings, the water cans are hurled up, too, and then plunge ominously into sand drifts as if going under an ocean.

ALMASY (O/S)
...let me tell you about winds. There is a whirlwind from Southern Morocco, the Aajej, against which the fellahin defend themselves with knives. And there is the Ghibli from Tunis which rolls and rolls and rolls and produces a rather strange nervous condition...

And we hear Katharine’s laugh.

INT. CAR. NIGHT

Almasy sits alongside Katharine, whose head is against his shoulder. He continues his story of winds.

ALMASY
...and then there is the Harmatton, a red wind which Mariners call the sea of darkness. Red sand from this wind has flown as far as the south coast of England apparently producing showers
CONTINUED

ALMASY (cont’d)
so dense they were mistaken
for blood...

KATHARINE
Fiction. We have a house on
that coast, and it has never,
ever rained blood.

ALMASY
No, it’s all true.
(teasing her)
Herodotus, your friend -

KATHARINE
(laughs)
My friend!

ALMASY
- he writes about it and he
writes about a wind, the
Simoon, which a nation
thought was so evil they
declared war on it and
marched out against it in
full battle dress.

He’s touching Katharine’s hair, he can’t help it. She is
paralysed by his touch, then puts out her hand and traces
across the window, now entirely silted up with sand.

INT. PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT.

The Patient remembers. He feels Katharine’s fingers tracing
across his face.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

MORNING. The sand has almost COMPLETELY ENGULFED the car on the
exposed side, covering the windscreen like snow, and
encroaching onto the door of the protected flank.

INT. CAR. DAY.

Almasy is awaken by the sound of A DISTANT ENGINE. He jerks up,
waking Katharine in the process, and heaves against the door.

ALMASY
Quick. Katharine. Quick, wake
up! I can hear a car. Let me
out.

(he stumbles out of
the car, up the dune,
then stops and flies
back to the car)

The flare!
CONTINUED

ALMASY (cont’d)
(berating himself)
Idiot! To fall asleep.
Unforgiveable.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

MADOX’S CAR IS ROARING ALONG THE HORIZON. Almasy runs back into the car, finds his flaregun, and SENDS A FLARE high into the sky. Katharine is with him now, and they watch, helplessly, as the car bounces away from them, Madox a man on a mission. Katharine panics, THE SAND HAS ERASED ALL TRACE OF THEM. Katharine waves her arms frantically.

KATHARINE
Here! We’re here! Stop!

ALMASY
Madox! Madox!

KATHARINE
Our tracks have disappeared.

ALMASY
Madox will calculate how many miles; he’ll soon turn around.

Katharine is frightened. He looks at her.

ALMASY
Could I ask you, please, to paste your paintings into my book? I should like to have them. I should be honoured.

A car horn leaks into their conversation. Almasy can’t place it at first – he’d assumed it was Madox. Now he realises it’s coming from the floor of the sand dune. He suddenly turns and charges away from Katharine.

ALMASY
The others!

Katharine, horrified, follows him towards the mound of sand which has completely buried the other vehicle.

KATHARINE
Awful. We must get them out!
How awful.

Almasy is preoccupied. He’s gone back to their vehicle and returns with a shovel, STARTS TO DIG FRANTICALLY. Katharine kneels beside him and helps to shovel away the sand. During this:
KATHARINE
Am I a terrible coward to ask
how much water we have?

ALMASY
(shovelling hard)
We have a little in our can,
we have water in the radiator
which can be drunk. It’s not
cowardly at all, it’s
extremely practical.
(anxious at not
uncovering the boys,
egging himself on)
Come on, come on!
(then back to
Katharine)
There’s also a plant - I
believe you can cut a piece
the size of a heart from this
plant and the next morning it
will be filled with a
delicious liquid.

KATHARINE
Find that plant. Cut out its
heart.

They hear NOISES, scrabbling, faint thumps. Almasy scrapes at
the sand and they find the glass of the car. The angle of the
cab, tilted up to the sky, has made it impossible for the
trapped boys to lever it open. Their oxygen is rapidly
deteriorating. Almasy pulls on the door and it cranks open. The
boys, dazed, gulping in the fresh air, clamber out.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

Katharine sits in the car, putting her pictures into the
Herodotus. It’s full of ALMASY’S HANDWRITING, PHOTOGRAPHS, SOME
PRESSED FLOWERS. She deciphers a page of his words and
drawings. It’s almost exclusively about her, the lines studded
with Ks. She reads, astonished, then looks at him as he and two
of the three Bedouin circle the area of the cars in ever-
widening circles, like water-diviners, like Kip searching for
mines. Almasy suddenly drops to his knees and begins to shovel
into the sand. He pulls out A CAN OF WATER. Turns to Katharine
and holds it triumphantly in the air.

INT. THE DESERT. NIGHT

A red umbrella of light as Almasy fires the last flare into the
black night. Katharine comes up beside him. They wait in
silence, hope fading with the flare.
KATHARINE
(blank)
Geoffrey's not in Cairo.
(Almasy looks at her)
He's not actually a buffoon.
And the plane wasn't a
wedding present. It belongs
to the British Government.
They want aerial maps of the
whole of North Africa. So I
think he's in Ethiopia. In
case you were counting on his
sudden appearance.

ALMASY
And the marriage - is that a
fiction?

There's a beat. Katharine has a hundred answers.

KATHARINE
No, the marriage isn't a
fiction.

The light from the flare fades on them and they stand in the
dark. Suddenly on the far horizon, behind their heads, an
answering flare fireworks into the sky.

KATHARINE
Thank God. Oh thank God.

There's excited shouting from the boys. Then a distant reply.
Almasy laughs with relief.

ALMASY
It's Madox.

He turns to Katharine. She shudders.

KATHARINE
Am I K in your book? I think I
must be.

Almasy turns to her. He runs the blade of his arm across her
neck.

INT. THE MONASTERY, UPSTAIRS LANDING. DAY

Hana walks along the landing with a tray. There's a message on
several doors in the corridor from Kip: SAFE, then a couple
with the warning: DANGER. She hears noise from The Patient's
room. Listens for a second before going in. Kip is reading to
The Patient.
KIP (O/S)

(reading)
"He sat, in defiance of municipal orders, astride the gun Zamzammah on her brick platform opposite the old Ajaib-Gher."

(he breaks off)
I can't read these words. They stick in my throat.

THE PATIENT (O/S)
Because you're reading it too fast!

KIP (O/S)
Not at all.

THE PATIENT (O/S)
You have to read Kipling slowly! Your eye is too impatient—think about the speed of his pen.

(quoting Kipling to demonstrate)
What is it? "He sat" comma "in defiance of municipal orders" comma "astride the gun Zamzammah on her brick"... what is it?

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

During this, Hana comes through with the tray, finds Kip perched on the window, relishing his skirmish with The Patient, who has condensed milk dribbling down his neck.

KIP
"Brick platform opposite the old Ajaib-Gher."

THE PATIENT
"- The Wonder House" comma "as the natives called the Lahore Museum."

KIP
It's still there, the cannon, outside the museum. It was made of metal cups and bowls taken from every household in the city as tax, then melted down. Then later they fired the cannon at my people comma the natives. Full stop.
THE PATIENT
So what is it you object to -
the writer or what he’s
writing about?

KIP
What I really object to,
Uncle, is your finishing all
my condensed milk.
(snatching up the
empty can)
And the message everywhere in
your book - however slowly I
read it - that the best
destiny for India is to be
ruled by the British.

THE PATIENT
Hana, we have discovered a
shared pleasure - the boy
and I.

HANA
Arguing about books.

THE PATIENT
Condensed milk - one of the
truly great inventions.

KIP
(grinning, leaving)
I’ll get another tin.

Hana and The Patient are alone.

HANA
I didn’t like that book
either. It’s all about men.
Too many men. Just like this
house.

THE PATIENT
You like him, don’t you? Your
voice changes.

HANA
I don’t think it does.
(a beat)
Anyway, he’s indifferent to
me.

THE PATIENT
I don’t think it’s
indifference.

Kip comes bounding in with a fresh can.
THE PATIENT
Hana was just telling me you were indifferent -

HANA
(appalled)
Hey! -

THE PATIENT
- to her cooking.

KIP
(oblivious)
Well, I'm indifferent to cooking, not Hana's cooking in particular.
(stabbing at the tin with a bayonet)
Have either of you ever tried condensed milk sandwiches?

EXT. CAIRO. DAY

ANOTHER WORLD as a honking TAXI containing Almasy and Katherine negotiates the pell-mell bustle of Cairo.

EXT. SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL. DAY

Almasy, still in the same clothes, and evidently weary, emerges from the cab, and pulls Katharine's belongings from the trunk, then holds open the door for her. As she walks toward the hotel, he hands her bag to a porter. Katharine is stung.

KATHARINE
Will you not come in?

ALMASY
No. I should go home.

KATHARINE
Will you please come in?

ALMASY
(a beat)
Mrs. Clifton -

Katharine turns, disgusted.

KATHARINE
Don't.

ALMASY
I believe you still have my book.
Katharine fishes the book from her knapsack, shoves it at him, then disappears.

INT. ALMASY’S ROOM. DAY

Almasy lying on a camp bed, face down. The walls are covered with maps, enlargements of photographs. A fan whirs over his kit which is spread, unravelled but ordered, on the stone floor. An ineffably male room, the shutters closed, just the thinnest shaft of light piercing the gloom. Almasy hasn’t even removed his clothes, his boots kicked off below his jutting feet.

There’s a KNOCK at the door. Almasy sleeps. Another. A third. He’s roused from the dead.

It’s Katharine. She’s bathed, luminous, stands backlit by the afternoon sun - an angel in a cotton dress. He walks towards her and she slaps him shockingly hard. He KNEELS before her, head at her thighs. Katharine beats on his head and shoulders, violently, then stops, her face expressionless.

KATHARINE
You still have sand in your hair.

He pulls back, to look at her. She kneels and covers his face with kisses. He pulls blindly at her dress and it RIPS across her breasts.

INT. BATHROOM. DAY

Almasy is in the bath. Katharine, wearing his dressing gown, pours in a jug of steaming water. Almasy leans over the rim of the bath. He’s singing and sewing, carefully repairing the torn dress.

KATHARINE
I’m impressed you can sew.

ALMASY
Good.

KATHARINE
You sew very badly.

ALMASY
You don’t sew at all!

KATHARINE
A woman should never learn to sew, and if she can she shouldn’t admit to it. Close your eyes.
CONTINUED

ALMASY

(laughs)
That makes it harder still.

She pushes the sewing from his hands, then pours water over his head, then begins to shampoo his hair.

Almasy is in heaven. The biggest smile we have seen from him. She continues to massage his scalp.

ALMASY
When were you most happy?

KATHARINE
Now.

ALMASY
When were you least happy?

KATHARINE
(a beat)
Now.

ALMASY
What do you love?

KATHARINE
What do I love?

ALMASY
Say everything.

KATHARINE
Let me see... I love water, the fish in it. Hedgehogs! I love hedgehogs.

She rinses his hair, then slips off the robe and CLIMBS IN BESIDE HIM, covering his neck and shoulders in kisses.

ALMASY
And what else?

KATHARINE
Marmite - I'm addicted! Baths - but not with other people! Islands. Your handwriting. I could go on all day.

ALMASY
(kissing her)
Go on all day.

KATHARINE
(a beat)
My husband.
Almasy looks away.

ALMASY
What do you hate most?

KATHARINE
A lie. What do you hate most?

ALMASY
Ownership. Being owned. When you leave, you should forget me.

She freezes, pushes him away, pulls herself out of the bath.

She picks up her dress, the thread and needle dangling from it, and walks, dripping, out of the room.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

Hana sits reading from the Herodotus. She pulls out a photograph of a small child.

HANA
Who is this?

THE PATIENT
Don't you recognize me?

HANA
(laughs)
Is it you? So fat!

Next she shows The Patient the page where a CHRISTMAS CRACKER WRAPPER covered in handwriting has been glued in.

THE PATIENT
That's a Christmas cracker. It was a Christmas cracker. A firecracker.

HANA
This isn't your handwriting, is it?

THE PATIENT
Yes, it is.

HANA
(she reads what he's written)
"December twenty-second — Betrayals in war are childlike compared with our betrayals during peace. New lovers are nervous and
HANA (cont’d)
tender, but smash everything
- for the heart is an organ of
fire...for the heart is an
organ of fire..."
(she looks up)
I love that, I believe that.
(to him)
K. Who is K?

THE PATIENT
K is for Katharine.

EXT. AMBASSADOR’S RESIDENCE, DECEMBER 1938. DAY

A CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR THE TROOPS. The incongruous attempts to
create a traditional Christmas in the dusty heat of Cairo. The
Party is in the courtyard of the Moorish Palace, which serves
as the private residence of the British Ambassador, SIR RONNIE
HAMPTON. Lots of wives, including LADY HAMPTON and Katharine,
help serve tea and cake to the SOLDIERS who sit at rudimentary
tables with paper plates and paper hats. A man dressed as SANTA
CLAUS is giving out presents - PENGUIN PAPERBACKS, CHOCOLATE.
Christmas carols leak from a loudspeaker. Officers and
Civilians walk the perimeter. One of these, arriving, is
Almas. He sits in the shade, catches Katharine’s attention.
Katharine brings him over a cup of tea and a plate with
Christmas cake on it.

ALMASY
Say you’re sick.

KATHARINE
What? No!

ALMASY
Say you’re feeling faint -
the heat.

KATHARINE
(but a frisson)
No.

ALMASY
I can’t work. I can’t sleep.

Lady Hampton calls impatiently.

LADY HAMPTON
Katharine!
KATHARINE
Coming.
(to Almasy)
I can’t sleep. I woke up
shouting in the middle of the
night. Geoffrey thinks it’s
the thing in the desert, the
trauma.

ALMASY
I can still taste you.

KATHARINE
(waving at another
woman who pushes a
trolley with teapots)
Philippa, this is empty.

ALMASY
I’m trying to write with your
taste in my mouth.
(as she leaves)
Swoon. I’ll catch you.

Almasy sits watching the party. The Santa Claus is dragged
outside by some excited Children. Almasy picks at his cake,
removing the thick marzipan icing. He’s writing on A CHRISTMAS
CRACKER WRAPPER, smoothing it out – “December 22nd. Betrayals
in war are childlike compared with our betrayals du –”

Katharine, attending to a table, suddenly sags at the knees,
and SWOONS. People rush to her.

LADY HAMPTON
Katharine!

KATHARINE
I’m fine. No, I’m fine. How
silly.

OFFICER’S WIFE
(helping her to sit
down)
It’s the heat.

LADY HAMPTON
(to the others)
She’s quite all right.
(solicitous)
Are you pregnant?

KATHARINE
I don’t think so.
LADY HAMPTON
(squeezing her arm)
How romantic. With Fiona I fell over every five minutes. Ronnie christened me Lady Downfall.

KATHARINE
Do you know, I think I might go inside and sit down for a few minutes.

LADY HAMPTON
I'll come with you.

KATHARINE
No, please. You stay. I shall be absolutely fine.

INT. STOREROOM. AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. DAY

A small STOREROOM inside the Palace - Brooms, Mops, Cleaning Equipment. Outside, the party is visible as opaque shadows through the bevelled glass of the ornate window. The sound of carols sung by the enlisted men gives way to a version of "SILENT NIGHT" played on a solitary bagpipe. Inside, Almasy and Katharine make love in the darkness. It's as if the world has stopped and there's only their passion, overwhelming reason and logic and rules.

INT. CORRIDORS, AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. DAY

A CORRIDOR. Almasy appears and almost immediately collides with the man dressed as SANTA CLAUS.

CLIFTON
Have you seen Katharine?

ALMASY
(taken aback)
What?

CLIFTON
(pulling down his beard)
It's Clifton under here.

ALMASY
Oh, no, I haven't, sorry.

INT. SIDE ROOM IN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. DAY

Geoffrey continues scouring the warren of tiny rooms that run off the central courtyard. He finds Katharine sitting in one, smoking, surrounded by oppressive and elaborate tiling. Clifton wonders briefly how Almasy had missed Katharine.
CLIFTON
Darling, I just heard. You poor sausage, are you all right?

KATHARINE
I'm fine. I'm just hot.

CLIFTON
Lady H said she thought you might be pregnant.

KATHARINE
I'm not pregnant. I'm just hot. Too hot. Aren't you?

CLIFTON
I'm sweltering, actually.
(taking off his hat and beard)
Come on, I'll take you home.

KATHARINE
(close to tears)
Can't we really go home? I can't breathe. Aren't you dying for green, anything green, or rain. It's Christmas and it's all - oh, I don't know - if you asked me I'd go home tomorrow. If you wanted.

CLIFTON
Darling, you know we can't go home, there might be a war.

KATHARINE
(poking at his costume)
Oh, Geoffrey, you do so love a disguise.

CLIFTON
I do so love you.
(he kisses her head)
What do you smell of?

KATHARINE
(horrified)
What?

CLIFTON
Marzipan! I think you've got marzipan in your hair. No wonder you're homesick.
INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. EVENING

The Patient lies alone in his room. Then something distracts him. Caravaggio is standing over him, staring, intense.

CARAVAGGIO

Is it you?

THE PATIENT

What?

CARAVAGGIO

If I said Moose.

THE PATIENT

Moose? Who the hell's Moose?

Caravaggio comes close, scrutinizing the face, trying to repair the features. Exasperated.

CARAVAGGIO

I look different, why shouldn't you?

THE PATIENT

I heard your breathing, I thought it was the rain. I'm dying for rain. I'm dying anyway, but I long for the rain on my face.

CARAVAGGIO

(a different tack)
First wedding anniversary - what do you call it?

THE PATIENT

I don't know. Paper. Is it? (sharp, not wanting to think)
I don't know. Paper.

INT. OFFICE, BRITISH HQ, CAIRO. DAY

A SMALL OFFICE, shared by two men, and a mountain of filing cabinets and paper. There are AERIAL MAPS all over the walls. Clifton is on the telephone, while his colleague, RUPERT DOUGLAS, works at the desk.

CLIFTON

(into the phone)
Darling, it's me, I'm sorry, something's come up.

KATHARINE (O/S)

Oh no.
CLIFTON
Don't sulk - I'll be back tomorrow evening. I promise.

KATHARINE (O/S)
I'm going to sulk. I'm going to sit here and sulk until you get back.

CLIFTON
(pleased)
Good. Okay my sausage, I love you.

Rupert makes a face at his friend's sentimentality. Clifton beams.

RUPERT
I didn't know you were going anywhere?

CLIFTON
I'm not. I'm going to surprise her. It's our anniversary. She's forgotten, of course. What's the symbol of your first anniversary? I should get something. Is it cotton or paper?

RUPERT
First anniversary? I thought you two had been married for donkey's years?

CLIFTON
We've been friends for donkey's years. Best friends. She was always crying on my shoulder about somebody - until I persuaded her to settle for my shoulder. Stroke of genius.

  (he calls through the partition into the next office)
Moose, you there? First anniversary - is that cotton?

A man walks into the office, his code name is MOOSE. We know him as CARAVAGGIO. He has fewer grey hairs, AND THUMBS.

CARAVAGGIO
Is what cotton?
CONTINUED

CLIFTON
First wedding anniversary.

CARAVAGGIO
Your first anniversary is
Paper.

EXT. CAIRO STREET, O/S SHEPHEARD’S HOTEL. DAY

The approach to the Shepheard’s Hotel. Geoffrey Clifton in a
TAXI, champagne between his knees.

The car ahead of them SCREeches TO A HALt as a WOMAN hurries
across the street. The driver honks his horn angrily. The woman
puts up a hand in apology as she skips across the street to
another taxi. IT’S KATHARINE - she asks the driver for an
address in the old town.

Geoffrey, at first excited, is troubled by Katharine’s
expression. Then he sees her skip and his whole being
punctures.

Katharine’s cab roars off. His own car jerks forward.

CLIFTON
Stop! Stop here.

CABBIE
Please? Yessir.

Geoffrey sits in the cab. Fifty yards short of the hotel. The
world rushes by.

INT. ALMASy’S ROOMS. LATE DAY

Katharine is in bed. Almasy has just put A RECORD on. It’s the
folk song heard at the beginning of the film. He slips back
under the covers. Their clothes are scattered around the room.
He lies over a happy Katharine. She listens.

KATHARINE
This is - what is this?

ALMASy
It’s a folk song.

KATHARINE
Arabic?

ALMASy
No, no, it’s Hungarian. My
daijka sang it to me when I
was a child in Budapest.
KATHARINE
(as they listen)
It's beautiful. What's it about?

ALMASY
(as if interpreting)
Szerelem means love...and the story - there's this Hungarian count, he's a wanderer, a fool. For years he's on some kind of a quest, for - who knows what? And then one day he falls under the spell of a mysterious English woman - a harpy - who beats him and hits him and he becomes her slave and sews her clothes and worships the hem of her-

Katharine had thought for a few seconds he was serious, then she catches on and starts to beat him.

ALMASY
(laughing)
Ouch! See - you're always beating me...!

KATHARINE
You bastard, I was believing you! You should be my slave.

They embrace, he lies over her, considering her naked back.

ALMASY
I claim this shoulder blade - no, wait - I want - turn over - I want this!

He turns her over, kisses her throat, then traces the hollow indentation.

ALMASY
This place, I love this place, what's it called - this is mine!

(Katharine doesn't know)
I'm going to ask the King permission to call it the Almasy Bosphorous.
KATHARINE
(teasing)
I thought we were against ownership?
(Almasy acknowledges the irony)
I can stay tonight.

The luxury of this makes them both sad. The duplicity. Almasy rolls away onto his back.

ALMASY
Madox knows, I think. He keeps talking about Anna Karenina. I think it's his idea of a man-to-man chat. It's my idea of a man-to-man chat.

KATHARINE
This is a different world - is what I tell myself. A different life. And here I am a different wife.

ALMASY
Yes. Here you are a different wife.

INT. CAB, CAIRO STREET, O/S SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL. NIGHT

The CAB DRIVER is asleep. In the back of the car Geoffrey has opened the champagne. He lets it overflow, then takes a swig. He fusses with the tissue paper from the bottle, unravelling it, revealing a chain of hearts.

EXT. ALMASY'S HOUSE, OLD CAIRO. DAWN

Almasy and Katharine wander out of his building and into the early morning streets, hand in hand.

EXT. SPICE MARKET, CAIRO. DAWN

The MORNING PRAYERS rise out from the city's three Minarets. They stop at a stall, which is just preparing to open for the day. Katharine examines the collection of silver thimbles, picks one up.

KATHARINE
These are darling. What are they, thimbles?
CONTINUED

ALMASY
Yes. It's full of saffron,
just in case you think I'm
giving it to you to encourage
your sewing.

He points it out to the merchant who gives him a price. Without
comment, Almasy produces the money and, beaming, hands the
thimble to Katharine.

ALMASY
I don't care to bargain.

KATHARINE
That day, had you followed me
to the market?

ALMASY
Yes, of course.

KATHARINE
(loving him, but
frightened)
Shall we be all right?

ALMASY
Yes. Yes.
(shrugs)
Absolutely.

EXT. CAIRO STREET. DAWN

Katharine takes leave of Almasy on the street corner away from
the hotel entrance. They don't kiss. There's a moment when
their hands brush, linger, then she leaves him at the top of
the stairs and disappears.

INT. CAB, CAIRO STREET, O/S SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL. DAY

Geoffrey, unshaven, slumped in the taxi, watches as Katharine
crosses the street and heads towards the hotel. His expression
is terrible, trying to smile, his face collapsed.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. MORNING

"Cheek to Cheek" leaks into the room from a GRAMOPHONE that
Caravaggio stands over proudly. The Patient opens his eyes - is
confused, dislocated - stares blankly at Caravaggio.

CARAVAGGIO
(grinning)
Thought you'd never wake up!
THE PATIENT
What?

Hana comes in, sleepily, frowns at the gramophone.

HANA
Where did you find that?

CARAVAGGIO
I liberated it.

HANA
I think that’s called looting.

CARAVAGGIO
(relaxed)
No one should own music. The real question is, who wrote the song?

THE PATIENT
Irving Berlin.

CARAVAGGIO
For?

THE PATIENT
Top Hat.

CARAVAGGIO
Is there a song you don’t know?

HANA
(speaking for him)
No. He sings all the time.

She goes over to The Patient and kisses him gently.

HANA
Good morning.
(of his singing)
Did you know that? You’re always singing.

THE PATIENT
I’ve been told before.

HANA
Kip’s another one.

She goes to the window, looks over to where the tents are pitched, sees Hardy shaving and Kip in the process of washing his hair, his turban hanging like a ribbon between two trees to dry. He’s perched a bowl and is dipping his long coal-black
hair into it. As Hana watches Kip, Caravaggio changes the
record. The Patient identifies it immediately.

ALMASY
"Wang Wang Blues."

CARAVAGGIO
You’re incredible!

EXT. MONASTERY GARDEN. MORNING.

Hana walks towards the tent, and passes Hardy. She’s carrying a
small cup, which she’s a little furtive about. He’s carrying a
whole armada of OIL LIGHTS. He nods upstairs.

HARDY
Good morning, miss.

HANA
Hello. You saved my life. I
haven’t forgotten.
(Hardy waves that
away)
I thought you were very very
tall. You seemed so big and –
a giant! – and I felt like a
child who can’t keep her
balance.

HARDY
(does a little mime)
A toddler.

HANA
(smiles)
A toddler.

She goes on outside, and tentatively approaches Kip, who’s
still working at his hair.

HANA
My hair was long. At some
point. I’ve forgotten what a
nuisance it is to wash.

He continues to wash. She holds up the cup of oil.

HANA
Try this. I found a great jar
of it. Olive oil.

KIP
Thank you.

She stands for a second, just wanting to be close, then shyly
walks away. Kip examines the oil, calls after her.
KIP
Is this for my hair?

HANA
(turning, smiling)
Yes, for your hair.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. EVENING.

Caravaggio is with The Patient. They sit lost in the jazz they're listening to. The Patient regards Caravaggio.

THE PATIENT
There was a general who wore a patch over a perfectly good eye. The men fought harder for him. Sometimes I think I could get up and dance.

Caravaggio doesn't respond.

THE PATIENT
What's under your mittens?
(still nothing from Caravaggio)
What's under your mittens?

Caravaggio stands, goes to him, removing his mittens.

INT. BRITISH HEADQUARTERS, TOBRUK, JUNE 1942. DAY.

Caravaggio, thumbs intact and wearing a crumpled linen suit, walks through the mangled corridors of British HQ. Smoke is rising from buildings, the ominous scream of Stuka dive-bombers in the distance as the harbour is pounded, the steady thud of explosions. TOBRUK IS UNDER SIEGE. BHQ is a place in the throes of dismantling itself. SECRETARIES are visiting braziers manned by ARAB BOYS who stoke the fires as boxes of restricted papers are fed into them. ASHES hover in the air.

INT. BHQ. TOBRUK DAY.

Caravaggio walks through a large room crowded with desks. From one of them, a young woman, AICHA, frowning at the chaos and the shelling, approaches him. AICHA is Caravaggio's sometime lover.

AICHA
He's waiting for you. I'll see you tonight?

INT. CORRIDOR OF BRITISH HEADQUARTERS, TOBRUK. DAY

Penelon-Barnes and Caravaggio make their way down the stairs and to the entrance. Aicha passes them on the stairs, looks anxiously at Caravaggio.
FENELON-BARNES

Look, Moose, we need you to stay in Tobruk. I know it's a bit of a short straw but the thinking is we'll be back - I mean, we will, we will be back - but we need eyes and ears on the ground. Jerry's got our maps, you know. Swine. Before the war we helped them run about the desert making maps - and now they're getting spies into Cairo using our maps, they'll get Rommel into Cairo using our maps. The whole of the desert's like a bloody bus route and we gave it to them. Any foreigner who turned up - "Welcome to the Royal Geographic, take our maps." Old Madox went mad, you know - did you know Peter Madox? - magnificent explorer - after he found out he'd been betrayed by Almasy, his best friend. Absolutely destroyed the poor sod. I'd love to get that bastard Almasy. Settle the score.

EXT. TOBRUK. DAY

The Germans invade Tobruk. They drop to the ground in cluster of parachutes. The harbour rocks with explosions.

EXT. TOBRUK DOCKSIDE. DAY

A GERMAN TROOP CARRIER rumbles forward passing a line of BEDRAGGLED BRITISH POWS as they're marched along the side of the harbour; passing a dock in which the mangled carcasses of boats send up plumes of ugly smoke.

EXT. TOBRUK SQUARE. DAY

A crowd of Tobruk CIVILIANS - French and Italians among the MOSTLY ARAB FACES. Their papers are being thoroughly checked by officers sitting at open desks. In a line, wearing his shabby suit, is CARAVAGGIO. AN ARAB WOMAN in front of him is arguing over the identity of her ominous CAUCASIAN-LOOKING BABY. An INTERPRETER mediates. The OFFICER doesn't believe the woman. She's getting frantic at the possibility of losing her child.

Suddenly there's a disturbance as a WOMAN is dragged along the line by her hair. She's bloodied, and has been tortured, and it's hard to recognize her as the pretty AICHA. She is forced to consider some horrified members of the line, shakes her
head, moans, falls to her feet. Caravaggio doesn’t look, stares straight ahead. An officer watches him as he turns briefly and helplessly out of concern for her. Their eyes catch for an instant and the officer sees it.

Caravaggio slowly walks away from the line. A soldier shouts to halt, the crowd ducks for cover. Caravaggio puts up his arms in surrender.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, TOBRUK. DAY

Caravaggio is slumped at a table, HIS HANDS MANACLED TO ITS THICK WOODEN LEGS. There’s A TELEPHONE at another table in the corner of the room attended by a CLERK with A STENOGRAPHER working next to him. The room has stone walls which appear damp, and no windows. SOLDIERS stand guard at the door. It’s a horrible room. Caravaggio is trying to sleep, he’s unshaven and pasty-looking. His interrogator, MULLER, seems incredibly tired and aggravated. He approaches the table carrying a collection of photographs which he lays down on the table in front of Caravaggio.

MULLER
David Caravaggio.

CARAVAGGIO
No.

MULLER
(of the photographs)
This was taken in Cairo at British Headquarters - July '41. And so was this - August '41. And this - February '42.

CARAVAGGIO
It’s possible. I was buying or selling something. I’ve been to Cairo many times.

MULLER
You are a Canadian spy working for the Allies. Code name Moose.

THE PHONE rings again, is answered. The Clerk calls to Muller who gets up, irritably. Caravaggio addresses the room.

CARAVAGGIO
Could you get me a doctor? I’m sick, I’m leaking blood.

Nobody responds. Muller is irascible on the phone, checking his watch, negotiating time. The call finishes.
CLERK
(in German)
He’s asking for a doctor.

MULLER
(to Caravaggio)
You want a doctor?

CARAVAGGIO
I’ve been asking for weeks, months, I don’t know -

MULLER
We don’t have a doctor, but we do have a nurse.

CARAVAGGIO
(taken aback)

Muller nods at the Clerk, who instantly gets up. Just then the telephone rings again. He hesitates.

MULLER
(in German)
Leave it and get the nurse!

The Clerk exits.

MULLER
(turns to Caravaggio)
Look - give me something. A name. A code. So we can all get out of this room.
(wiping his face)
I’m sick of this heat. It’s too hot.

CARAVAGGIO
I slept with a girl. I’ve got a wife in Tripoli. A girl comes up and points at you, you only see trouble.

The NURSE comes in. She is Arab, unbearably young, pure. Her head is covered.

MULLER
I’ll tell you what I’m going to do. This is your nurse, by the way. She’s Moslem, so she’ll understand all of this. What’s the punishment for adultery? Let’s leave it
MULLER (cont’d)
at that. You’re married and
you were fucking another
woman, so that’s – is it the
hands that are cut off? Or is
that for stealing? Does
anyone know?

There’s a silence. Muller turns to Caravaggio.

MULLER
Well, you must know. You were
brought up in Libya, yes?

CARAVAGGIO
Don’t cut me.

MULLER
Or was it Toronto?

Now the phone starts again. The CLERK picks it up, there’s a
terse exchange, he puts the receiver on the desk, waits for the
moment to interrupt Muller.

MULLER
Ten fingers. How about this?
You give me a name for every
finger – doesn’t matter who.
I get something, you keep
something. I’m trying to be
reasonable.

CARAVAGGIO
(ashen)
Don’t cut me. Come on.

MULLER
(pauses, suddenly
puzzled)
Are thumbs fingers?
(in GERMAN to the
others)
Is a thumb a finger?

No response. Muller opens his palms to Caravaggio.

MULLER
I get no help from these
people.

Muller slams down the telephone receiver. An AIR RAID SIREN is
going off somewhere, and now the faint sound of explosions is
also discernable, but all muffled in this room along with the
steady tap-tap of the STENOGRAPHER. At that moment, Muller
suddenly becomes aware of what is happening. He turns on the
Stenographer.
MULLER
(in German)
What are you doing?

STENOGRAPHER
(awkward, in German)
The Geneva Convention. I'm -

Muller peremptorily rips out the paper, throws it on the floor.

MULLER
The Geneva Convention! Ach!

CARAVAGGIO
Hey - Come on! You can't do that!

DURING THIS Muller's gone to the table, pulled out a drawer, and produced A CUT-THROAT RAZOR. He hands it to the Nurse, makes a line across his own left thumb and jerks his head towards Caravaggio. The Nurse is extremely reluctant. Muller claps his hands, pushes her towards Caravaggio.

MULLER
Go! Hey! Go!

Caravaggio is in terror.

CARAVAGGIO
I'll give you names. I'll give you names. What names did you say? I've forgotten the names. Tell me the names and I'll agree.

The guards come away from the door and press down on Caravaggio's shoulders to prevent him from moving. The Nurse, grim-faced, approaches, kneels at the table, takes the blade from Muller, takes gentle hold of Caravaggio's hand.

CARAVAGGIO
(as she prepares to cut)
Please - please - oh please - oh please - I promise. What name did you say? I knew them!

MULLER
(jabbing at the Nurse)
Come on!

And then Caravaggio SCREAMS AND SCREAMS. The AIR RAID is continuing outside, the PHONE IS RINGING. Muller watches as Caravaggio is mutilated, his cries continuing, his whimper horrible.
INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Caravaggio, his hands revealed, thumbless, advances on the Patient, his cries still ringing in the room.

CARAVAGGIO
The man who took my thumbs, I found him eventually - I killed him. The man who took my photograph, I found him too - that took me a year. He's dead. Another man helped get that man across the desert to Cairo. I've been looking for him.

INT. LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EGYPTOLOGY. DAY

Madox and Almasy are camped in one corner of the LIBRARY, hunched over their maps and papers and journals and clashing furiously over the site of the next part of the expedition.

MADOX
(pushing away his charts)
You can't get through there.

ALMASY
I was looking again at Bell's maps. If we can find a way to cross the wadi we can drive straight up into Cairo...
(he points at a map)
- and this whole spur is a real possibility...

MADOX
So - on Thursday you don't trust Bell's map - "Bell was a fool, Bell couldn't draw a map" - but on Friday he's suddenly infallible?

Almasy is surprised by Madox's anger.

MADOX
And where are the Expedition Maps?

ALMASY
In my room.

MADOX
Those maps belong to His Majesty's Government. They shouldn't be left lying...
MADOX (cont’d)
around for any Tom, Dick or
Harry to have sight of.

ALMASY
What on earth’s the matter
with you?

MADOX
Don’t be so bloody naive. You
know there’s a war breaking
out.

(he tosses a slip of
paper onto the map,
recites its message)
This arrived this morning. By
order of the British
Government - all
International Expeditions to
be aborted by May 1939.

EXT. CAIRO SOUK. LATE AFTERNOON

Almasy and Madox walk through the souk, the bars filling up as
the stalls are closing. Both of them are sombre.

ALMASY
What do they care about our
maps?

MADOX
What do we find in the desert?
Arrowheads, spears. In a war,
if you own the desert, you own
North Africa.

ALMASY
(contemptuous)
Own the desert.

Almasy hesitates at a junction, clearly about to take his leave
of Madox.

ALMASY
Madox - that place, that
place at the base of a woman’s
throat? You know, the hollow,
here - does it have an
official name?

Madox looks at him.

MADOX
For God’s sake, man - pull
yourself together.
INT. OPEN-AIR CINEMA, CAIRO. EVENING

The OPEN-AIR CINEMA is just beginning its evening programme.

PATHE NEWS BEGINS and we date the event to April 1939. Stories of imminent war jostle with images of Merrie England. Village greens, sporting victories, record sunshine on the Isle of Wight. Alone among the necking couples - mostly soldiers with their Egyptian girlfriends - sits Katharine. She's waiting for Almasy. Katharine is wretched. She sits, head down, hardly watching the screen, marooned in her despair about duplicity, sordid assignations.

Almasy arrives, slides in beside Katharine, his shadow momentarily large across the screen.

    ALMASY

    Sorry.

They watch the screen. Katharine is weeping. Almasy doesn't understand. He puts his arm around her.

    KATHARINE

    I can't do this, I can't do this anymore.

INT. OPEN-AIR CINEMA, CAIRO. EVENING

LATER and Katharine and Almasy sit stiffly under the bleachers while the main feature - a Busby Berkeley revue - plays in the background. Finally, Katharine gets up.

    KATHARINE

    I'd better go now. Say goodbye here.

    ALMASY

    I'm not agreeing. Don't think I'm agreeing, because I'm not.

They stand, awkward. Katharine rehearses her position.

    KATHARINE

    Any minute now, he'll find out, we'll barge into someone - it will kill him.

    ALMASY

    Don't go over it again, please.

He takes her hands, lays his cheeks into them. She pulls her hand away as she makes for the exit. He calls after her.
CONTINUED

ALMASY
Katharine -

He looks toward her, his smile awful.

ALMASY
I just wanted you to know. I’m not missing you yet.

She nods, can’t find this funny.

KATHARINE
You will. You will.

She turns sharply from him and BANGS her head against the bleacher support, staggers at the shock of it, then hurries away.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

The patient’s stertorous breathing, each intake accompanied by a small noise, a note, suddenly stops. Then it steadies again. He appears to be alone. Caravaggio lies under his bed, smoking, a vigil.

INT. AMBASSADOR’S RESIDENCE, CAIRO, 1939. NIGHT

Last seen at the troops’ Christmas party, the INNER COURTYARD has been transformed into an elegant outdoor banquet, with a small band providing entertainment. The Almasy/Madox team is assembled for A FAREWELL DINNER. They are waiting for Almasy to arrive, his seat conspicuously empty. He is very late. And then he’s there, dangerously drunk, terribly dashing. He practically dances to his chair which he drags violently away from its position opposite Katharine. He bows to Lady Hampton.

ALMASY
I believe I’m rather late.

MADOX
(ignoring the drama of this entrance)
Good, we’re all here? A toast, to the International Sand Club - may it soon resurface.

THE OTHERS
The International Sand Club!

ALMASY
(raising his glass)

74
CONTINUED

The others drink, trying to ignore his mood.

ALMASY
Oops! Mustn't say
International. Dirty word.
Filthy word. His Majesty! Die
Fuhrer! Il Duce!

CLIFTON
Sorry, what's your point?

ALMASY
(not responding)
And the people here don't
want us. You must be joking.
The Egyptians are desperate
to get rid of the
Colonials...
(to an embarrassed
Fouad)
Isn't that right, Fouad? Some
of their best people down on
their hands and knees begging
to be spared a knighthood...
(to his host, Sir
Hampton)
Isn't that right? Isn't that
right, Sir Ronnie?

Ronnie Hampton shrugs. They're all very uncomfortable. Almasy
turns to Clifton.

ALMASY
What's my point?
(standing up)
Oh! I've invented a new dance
- anybody up for it - it's
called - it's called - the
Bosphorus Hug. Madox?
Bermann? You'll dance with
me... D'Ag? Come on D'Aggers.

D'AGOSTINO
Let's eat first. Sit down.

The Band is now playing 'Manhattan' Almasy, without missing a
beat, begins to sing, replacing the words with alternatives he
knows. He lurches around. Katharine can't look at him.

ALMASY
'... We'll bathe at Brighton,
the fish you'll frighten when
you're in - your bathing suit
so thin, will make the
shellfish grin, fin to fin.'
They're playing it far too
ALMASY (cont'd)
slowly, but these were the
words, actually, before they
were cleaned up. Might be a
song for you, Mrs. Clif —

Madox gets up and pulls Almasy into his chair, taking charge.

MADOX
(whispering sharply)
Look, either shut up, or go
home. You're completely
plastered! Now sit down.

ALMASY
(loudly)
Absolutely right, shut up,
shut up. Sorry. I'm so sorry.
I can't think what came over
me. Lashings of apologies —
all round.

EXT. AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. NIGHT

Later, and now MOST OF THE GROUP ARE DANCING. We see Katharine
dancing with Rupert Douglas, enjoying herself. Bermann is there
and even Madox - jogging and grinning foolishly. Clifton looks
at Katharine who, as the dance ends, excuses herself to go to
the cloakroom. Almasy hovers in the shadows, unseen.

INT. AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. NIGHT

Katharine comes along the familiar warren of rooms and
corridors and is suddenly confronted by Almasy, tortured and
out of control.

ALMASY
Why were you holding his
collar?

KATHARINE
What?

ALMASY
(mimicking her
inflection)
What? That boy, that little
boy, you were holding his
collar, you were gripping his
collar, what for? Is he next?
You going to drag him into
your little room? Where is
it? Is this it?

KATHARINE
Don't do this.
CONTINUED

ALMASY
(pressing her against
the wall)
I've watched you - I've
watched you at garden
parties, on verandahs, at the
Races - how can you stand
there? How can you ever
smile? As if your life hadn't
capsized?

KATHARINE
You know why. You know why.

He tries to hold her. She resists. They're both in torment.

ALMASY
Dance with me.

KATHARINE
No.

ALMASY
(tracing her shoulder
blade)
Dance with me. I want to touch
you. I want the things which
are mine. Which belong to me.

KATHARINE
(sobbing)
Do you think you're the only
one who feels anything? Is
that what you think?

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. NIGHT

Hana sits with the patient. His eyes are full of tears. He
opens them, sees her watching over him. He's embarrassed.

THE PATIENT
Why don't you go? Get some
sleep.

HANA
Would you like me to?

He nods. She gets up from her sewing, then leaves.

INT. THE MONASTERY, LANDING AND STAIRS. NIGHT

Hana leaves the room, then turns and sees a tiny lamp on the
floor. It's made from a snail shell filled with oil. She bends
to it curiously, then sees a second lamp half-way down the
stairs, then a third further down. She smiles in the light,
then follows the trail.
EXT. THE MONASTERY CLOISTERS. NIGHT

In the cloisters the trail of shell lamps continues, like tiny
cat's eyes. As they reach the hopscotch chalk marks, they
outline the squares. Hana hopscotches and then follows the
lights, disappearing around a corner.

INT. THE MONASTERY STABLES. NIGHT

Hana comes through into the stables. The lamps lead her, then
they stop. She peers into the shadows.

KIP (o/s)

Hana

She turns to the voice. He steps out of the darkness.

HANA
(happy)
Kip.

And he goes to her.

EXT. AREZZO. DUSK

Kip, Hana clinging onto him, steers the motorbike in the
deserted PIAZZA. They dismount and walk up to the doors of the
CHURCH.

INT. CHURCH. DUSK

They enter the Church. It's in almost total darkness. Kip
circles Hana with the rope, MAKING A SLING across her waist and
shoulder. He lights a small flare and hands it to her before
disappearing into the gloom.

Hana stands holding the flare.

Kip runs up a hill of sandbags, right up into the rafters. He
collects the other end of the rope which is attached to Hana.
Holding on to it, he just STEPS OFF INTO THE DARKNESS.

SIMULTANEOUSLY HANA IS SWUNG UP INTO THE AIR, her startled yelp
echoing around the Church. Kip touches ground, while Hana
swings through space, coming to rest about three feet from the
FRESCOED WALLS, painted by Piero Della Francesca. Hana's flare
makes a halo around her head.

Now Kip, on the ground, still holding the rope, walks forward
and causes Hana to SWING to the right. She lets out a giddy
laugh, exhilarated and nervous, and she flies, illuminating -
en passant - faces, bodies, angels. Kip guides the rope as if
they were making love, which in a way they are.
Hana arrives, hovering, in front of THE QUEEN OF SHEBA TALKING TO SOLOMON. She's overwhelmed. She reaches out to touch the giant neck of the sad Queen.

INT. KIP'S TENT. NIGHT

Hana lies over Kip in the stable, a naked white body plaited into a brown one.

HANA
If one night I didn't come to see you, what would you do?

KIP
I try not to expect you.

HANA
Yes, but if it got late and I hadn't shown up?

KIP
Then I'd think there must be a reason.

HANA
You wouldn't come to find me?
(Kip shrugs)
That makes me never want to come here.
(Kip still won't respond)
Then I tell myself he spends all day searching, in the night he wants to be found.

Then Kip turns, rolling over to face her.

KIP
I do. I do want you to find me. I do want to be found. I do.

EXT. THE MONASTERY STABLES. EARLY MORNING

Hardy knocks cautiously on the door of the stables. Eventually Hana opens the door.

HARDY
Ah, I was looking for Lieutenant Singh.

HANA
He's sleeping.

HARDY
Only we've got to go to work.
CONTINUED

HANA
I'll tell him. What is it? Is it a mine?

HARDY
It's a bomb. Up by the Viaduct.

She closes the door, then reappears.

HANA
Does he have to go?

HARDY
Pardon me?

HANA
What if you couldn't find him...?
(Hardy's bewildered)
Sergeant, not today, please. Not this morning.

Kip comes to the door, winding his turban.

KIP
What's happening? Am I needed?

HARDY
I'm afraid so, sir.

Kip hurries to his tent. Hana follows him.

HANA
Don't go. I'm frightened.

KIP
This is what I do. I do this every day.

EXT. A VIADUCT NORTH OF THE MONASTERY. DAY

Kip is lowered by a pulley into the shaft the sappers have made around the bomb. Hardy supervises. The bomb's huge - 2,000 pounds - and protrudes ostrich-like from the pit, its nose sunk into a pool of sludge at the base of the viaduct.

Kip steps off and sinks knee-deep in mud, grunting in disgust. Warily, he touches his huge opponent, feeling the condition of the case. He wipes the metal. Reveals a serial number, calls it out to Hardy, who's perched on the bank.
CONTINUED

KIP
Serial number - KK-IP2600.

Kip stares at the number. A bomb with his name on it.

HARDY
(noting it down)
KK-IP2600 Sir! I'll get the oxygen.

EXT. ROAD APPROACHING VIADUCT. DAY

Hana cycles along on Caravaggio’s bicycle. A TANK comes roaring up behind her, then a second and third, loaded up with people — citizens and soldiers, and children — waving flags and gesticulating. She lets the metal circus go by.

INT. BOMB SHAFT. DAY

Back in the shaft, Kip works away, his fingers shaking with the cold from the oxygen he’s using to freeze the fuse. Suddenly there’s a VIOLENT TREMOR. The ground is SHUDDERING, and Kip’s tools are falling into the sludge.

KIP
Hardy! What’s happening?!

EXT. VIADUCT. DAY

The TANKS are rumbling towards the Viaduct. HORNS start sounding. Hardy, below, bellows at his men above for explanation.

HARDY
Corporal!?

DADE
(leaning over the parapet of the viaduct)
Tanks, sir. Don’t know what it’s about.

HARDY
(incredulous)
Stop them!

KIP
Hardy!

HARDY
What is this - a bloody carnival? Stop them!

KIP
The fuse has snapped!
Two Sappers run across the bridge towards the oncoming procession. They wave their orange flags, the tanks wave back with their flags - Stars and Stripes, Union Jacks. Now SHOTS are ringing out. In the shaft, oblivious, Kip slides out from under the bomb, the oxygen spurting everywhere, all over his clothes, hissing on the surface of the water. Hardy bends into the shaft, heedless of his own safety.

**HARDY**
You've got to cut, sir, that frost won't last.

**KIP**
Go away.

**HARDY**
Yessir.

**KIP**
This is making me incredibly angry.

**HARDY**
I know, sir.

Kip rubs his hands to warm them up, locates his needle pliers, and slips them through the tiny gap. His hand touches the casing and the freeze BURNS his hand. He jerks back, DROPPING THE PLIERS into the watery sludge, cursing.

Above them the tanks are rumbling over the bridge, sending drizzles of dust onto them from the fragile structure. The cheering continues, oblivious to the crisis below.

Now Kip's on his hands and knees in the sludge, trying frantically to find the pliers. Hardy looks at his watch, he can't help. The seconds run out as Kip grovels in the mud.

**HARDY**
Can you feel them?

Then, suddenly Kip emerges with the pliers, soaked, shuddering. He doesn't know where to cut.

**HARDY**
Cut it sir, you've got to cut it!

He goes straight to an exposed loop, no finesse, and cuts. There's a snip. Then nothing.

**EXT. VIADUCT. DAY**

Kip and Hardy emerge from their ordeal to join what appears to be a party. There are wine bottles and embraces. They're bewildered.
CONTINUED

HARDY
Get a blanket!
(not getting
attention)
Spalding - get a blanket for
the Lieutenant!

DADE
It’s over, Sir! It’s over.
Jerry’s surrendered.
(to Kip)
Well done, well done, Sir!

And now they’re all shaking hands and slapping backs, and the
SOLDIERS FROM THE TANKS are there and the victory celebrations
begin. Kip’s blank, drained, not taking anything in, as Dade
wraps a blanket around his shoulders.

Hana arrives on the bicycle and she and Kip embrace privately
amidst the celebrations. A different kind of victory for them.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

Thunder breaks over the Monastery. Hana suddenly comes to the
door of the room. She looks mischievous.

HANA
It’s raining.

And then she bursts out laughing.

EXT. THE MONASTERY CLOISTERS. MORNING

A whoop precedes THE HEADLONG RUSH OF KIP, HARDY, and
CARAVAGGIO as they cart The Patient across the Cloisters like
manic stretcher-bearers. Hana is with them, checking on The
Patient who bounces uncomfortably. He is nervous, a little
giddy, but laughing. He tries to say something.

CARAVAGGIO
What’s he saying?

HANA
He’s saying it’s wonderful.

The rain buckets down as they circle the pond, Hana’s umbrella
threatening to lift her into the air.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. NIGHT

A VICTORY CELEBRATION PARTY.

The gramophone plays. Kip sits in the window, the shutter open,
the village lit up behind his head, nodding to the music,
sucking out of his condensed milk. Elsewhere there is an open
bottle of cognac, some wine. The Patient has a beaker of wine. Caravaggio is dancing with Hana.

HANA
Kip - come and dance with us.

KIP
(a sly wobble of the head)
Later.

HANA
Oh, come on.

The Patient watches, his head nodding to the music.

THE PATIENT
Yeah!

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE. NIGHT

A tiny PIAZZA where the Sappers and the Villagers are having their own, more raucous, Victory Feste. There are accordions, there's dancing, and there's HARDY, stripped to some exotic underpants, clambering up the STATUE OF A FIRST-WORLD-WAR SOLDIER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FOUNTAIN. It's currently sporting a German Helmet and Hardy has a British replacement in his hands. He also has a UNION JACK FLAG between his teeth. He's extremely drunk and extremely happy.

The rest of the Bomb Squad and the other party-goers roar their approval.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. NIGHT

Hana and Caravaggio are still dancing.

There's a muffled thud in the distance. Kip's ears prick up. He glances for an instant out of the window.

HANA
(anxious, of the noise)
What was that?

She is spinning with Caravaggio. When she comes around again, Kip has gone.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE, ITALY 1945. NIGHT

Kip's motorbike skids into the tiny PIAZZA.

A MILITARY AMBULANCE IS ALREADY THERE. The shattered fountain, the sluiced flagstones, shining wet and slick, give some clues as to what's happened, as do the elderly standing in the shadows, the distressed girls, arm in arm. ONE GIRL, young and
quite striking, is particularly inconsolable, her grief sobbed out at the doors of the ambulance.

SPALDING salutes Kip, who waves his salute away, just wanting to know what happened.

SPALDING
Booby trap. Sergeant Hardy was running up the Union Jack, sir, up off that statue it just went off, sir.

DADE
Sergeant Hardy climbed up, sir, just for a lark. Should have been me, it was my idea.

Kip goes to the ambulance. Spalding tries to stop him.

SPALDING
Sir – you don’t want to look.

Kip steps into the back of the ambulance, bends over both bodies, does look, then comes out, past the weeping girl.

KIP
Who’s that girl?

DADE
His fiancee, sir.

KIP
(confused)
Hardy’s?

DADE
He kept it a bit dark.

EXT. THE STABLES. LATE DAY

Hana approaches. Kip is inside the stable, the door latched. He sits, impassively, still shocked, as Hana tries to make contact.

HANA
Kip. Kip. It’s me. I’m so sorry about what happened.
(no response)
Can I talk to you?
(no response)
Why won’t you talk to me? I don’t understand. Let me come in.

She kicks at the door in her frustration. Kip doesn’t move, doesn’t appear to hear.
HANA
Please, Kip, please!

Kip doesn't respond. Hana is at a loss.

INT. PATIENT'S ROOM. EVENING

The Patient listens as Hana comes back into the monastery, climbs the stone steps to her room. He doesn't know what's happening. Feels desperately isolated.

THE PATIENT
Hana? Hana?

INT. HANA'S ROOM. EVENING

Later, and Hana sits in her room, despondent, lost in her thoughts. Then she is distracted by conversation in The Patient's room below.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. NIGHT

The Patient's eyes open to see Caravaggio at the morphine.

THE PATIENT
Hana tells me you're leaving.

CARAVAGGIO
(preparing the injection)
There's going to be trials, they want me to interpret, don't they know I'm allergic to courtrooms?

He delivers the injection into The Patient's arm. The Patient sighs. Caravaggio takes off his jacket. A pistol is stuck in his waistband, and he places it ominously on the altar. The Patient sees it.

CARAVAGGIO
So, I come across the Hospital Convoy -
(holds up the syringe)
- I'm looking for this stuff, and this nurse, Mary, tells me about you and Hana, hiding in some monastery, in -
(retreat -)
(he administers his own injection, using his teeth to grip the sleeve)
- how you came out of the Desert and you were burned and you didn't remember your
CARAVAGGIO (cont’d)
name but you knew the words to
every song that ever was and
you had one possession – a
copy of Herodotus – and it was
filled with letters and
cuttings and then I knew it
was you.

(he glares at The
Patient)
I saw you writing in that
book. At the Embassy in
Cairo, when I had thumbs and
you had a face and a name.

THE PATIENT
I see.

Upstairs, sitting on her bed, Hana listens with increasing
concern.

CARAVAGGIO
Before you went over to the
Germans, before you got
Rommel’s spy across the
desert and inside British
Headquarters. He took some
pretty good photographs – I
saw mine in that torture room
in Tobruk, so – they made an
impression.

THE PATIENT
I had to get back to the
desert. I made a promise. The
rest meant nothing to me.

CARAVAGGIO
What did you say?

THE PATIENT
The rest meant nothing to me.

CARAVAGGIO
There was a result to what you
did. It wasn’t just another
expedition.

(holds up hands)
It did this. If the British
hadn’t unearthed that
photographer, thousands of
people could have died.

THE PATIENT
Thousands of people did die,
just different people.
CARAVAGGIO
Yes, like Madox?

THE PATIENT
What?!

CARAVAGGIO
You know he shot himself - your best friend? When he found out your were a spy.

THE PATIENT
(appalled)
No. Madox thought I was a spy?
No. No. I was never a spy.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. 1939. DAY

The Expedition Team is packing up the Base Camp. Madox and Almasy are walking together towards the plateau where FOUAD, AL AUF, and others work at the cars.

MADOX
It’s ghastly, it’s like a witch hunt - anybody remotely foreign is suddenly a spy, so watch out.

ALMASY
Right.

MADOX
We didn’t care about countries. Did we? Brits, Arabs, Hungarians, Germans. None of that mattered, did it? It was something finer than that.

ALMASY
Yes. It was.

MADOX
When’s Clifton picking you up?

ALMASY
Tomorrow afternoon. Don’t worry, I’ll be ready.

MADOX
I’ll leave the plane in Kufra Oasis. So if you need it...hard to know how long one’s talking about. We might all be back in a month or two.
CONTINUED

Madox kneels and takes A HANDFUL OF SAND, puts it into his pocket. Almasy puts out a hand. This is a moment of great emotional weight for them both, conducted as if nothing were happening.

    MADOX
    I have to teach myself not to read too much into everything. Comes of too long having to read so much into hardly anything at all.

    ALMASY
    Goodbye, my friend.

They shake hands.

    MADOX
    (in Arabic)
    May God make safety your companion.

    ALMASY
    (a tradition)
    There is no God.
    (smiles)
    But I hope someone looks after you.

Madox clammers up the hill, then remembers something, jabs at his throat.

    MADOX
    In case you’re still wondering - this is called the suprasternal notch.

Almasy nods.

    MADOX
    Come and visit us in Dorset. When all this nonsense is over.
    (then shrugs, thick with feeling)
    You’ll never come to Dorset.

Almasy watches Madox leave.

INT. PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

The Patient is still digesting the news of Madox’s suicide. Caravaggio is a little surprised at his response.
CARAVAGGIO
You didn’t know Madox killed
himself? And you didn’t kill
the Cliftons?

THE PATIENT
No. No.
(now he is overwhelmed
by the pain of his
memory)
She...she...
then suddenly he’s
clear)
Well, maybe I did. Maybe I
did.

Unseen to either of them Hana listens, full of emotion, as the
story unfolds.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. 1939. DAY

Almasy sits on a ridge transferring map information from his
Herodotus onto a sheet of paper. He looks up at the sound of
Clifton’s approaching Steerman. It passes fast and horribly
close to his head.

THE PATIENT (O/S)
I was packing up the Base Camp
at the Cave of Swimmers.
Clifton had arranged to fly
down from Cairo to collect
me. He flew like a madman, so
I didn’t take much notice...

Clifton is flying towards the landing strip. From the air it’s
possible to make out Almasy scrambling down from the ridge
towards where stones indicate a landing area, carrying the last
of the materials from the Cave of Swimmers.

EXT. BASE CAMP AT THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Almasy watches as the plane drops toward him, shielding his
eyes against the sun. He stoops to gather up his luggage.

Almasy looks up to see the plane swerve, now suddenly HEADING
STRaight towards him. He’s completely vulnerable, nowhere to
run. He dives at the ground. THE PLANE SMASHES AGAINST AN
INVISIBLE RIDGE AND TURNS OVER AND OVER, the wings snapping off
like twigs as it hurries past the prostrate Almasy. He gets to
his feet and starts to run towards the wreckage.

A blue line of smoke is uncoiling from the plane, but no fire.
Almasy pulls away the debris to find GEOFFREY – SLUMPED, NECK
BROKEN, BLOODY. He tries to move him, and in the process
reveals, to his ABSOLUTE horror, KATHARINE, STARING GRIMLY
AHEAD, UNABLE TO MOVE. He’s frantic.
ALMASY
Katharine! Oh dear God,
Katharine - what are you
doing here?

KATHARINE
(eyes rolling, an
incredible weariness)
I can't get out. I can't move.

Almasy starts to pull at the wreck around her. DURING THIS -

KATHARINE
'A surprise' he said.
(she can hardly talk)
Poor Geoffrey. He knew. He
must have known all the time.
He was shouting - "I love you,
Katharine, I love you so
much." Is he badly hurt?

ALMASY
I have to get you out.

Almasy puts his arms around Katharine to try and pull her
clear. She can't stand the pain.

KATHARINE
Please don't move me.

ALMASY
I have to get you out.

KATHARINE
It hurts too much.

ALMASY
(can't bear to hurt
her)
I know, darling, I'm sorry.

He pulls - hard - the pain from which causes Katharine to gasp,
then pass out. He lifts her gently into his arms and carries
her from the danger of the place.

EXT. THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Almasy has WRAPPED KATHARINE IN THE SILK FOLDS OF HER PARACHUTE
and emerges from near the familiar cleft in the rock,
struggling with the exertion of the climb as they approach the
Cave of Swimmers. He has a large water bottle slung around his
neck and a haversack, and is loaded like a pack horse.
Katharine opens her eyes.
KATHARINE
(whispering)
Why did you hate me?

ALMASY
What?

KATHARINE
Don’t you know you drove everybody mad?

ALMASY
Shhhh. Don’t talk.

KATHARINE
(gasping)
You speak so many bloody languages and you never want to talk.

They stagger on. He suddenly notices a stain of gold at her neck. It’s saffron, leaking from a silver THIMBLE which hangs from a black ribbon.

ALMASY
(overwhelmed)
You’re wearing the thimble.

KATHARINE
Of course. You idiot. I always wear it. I’ve always worn it. I’ve always loved you.

Almasy CRIES as he walks - huge sobs, no words - convulsed with the pain of it. They approach the Cave.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Almasy comes through in shadows, carrying Katharine, blocking out the light that pours into the entrance of the cave. Once inside, he sets her down incredibly gently, makes a bed of blankets and the parachute. He turns on his flashlight.

KATHARINE
It’s so cold.

ALMASY
I know. I’m sorry. I’ll make a fire.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. TORCHLIGHT

As he makes the fire, the light sends his shadow flitting across the walls.
KATHARINE
Did you get Geoffrey from the plane?

ALMASY
(reluctant)
Yes.

KATHARINE
Thank you.

ALMASY
(as he works)
Listen to me, Katharine. You’ve broken your ankle and I’m going to have to try and bind it. I think you’ve also broken your wrist - and maybe some ribs, which is why it’s hurting you to breathe. I’m going to have to walk to El Taj. Although given all the traffic in the desert these days I’m bound to bump into one army or another. And then I’ll be back and you’ll be fine.

The fire is lit and he comes over to her, kneels beside her.

KATHARINE
Do you promise? I wouldn’t want to die here. I don’t want to die in the desert. I’ve always had rather an elaborate funeral in mind, with particular hymns. Very English. And I know exactly where I want to be buried. In our garden. Where I grew up. With a view of the sea. So promise me you’ll come back for me.

ALMASY
I promise I’ll come back. I promise I’ll never leave you. Now, you have plenty of water and food.

He kisses her tenderly. Pulls out his HERODOTUS and lays it beside her. Then he puts down the FLASHLIGHT.
ALMASY
And a good read.
(of the flashlight
battery)
Don’t waste this.

KATHARINE
Thank you.
(clouds over)
Will you bury Geoffrey? I
know he’s dead.

ALMASY
I’m sorry, Katharine.

KATHARINE
I know.

He’s tearing strips from the parachute with his knife.

ALMASY
Every night I cut out my heart
but in the morning it was full
again.

He leans over her, desperately worried for her. She smiles.

KATHARINE
Darling. My darling.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAWN

Almasy’s walking. He’s singing to keep awake. Darktown
Strutter’s Ball. – ‘I’ll be down to get you in the taxi,
honey...’

EXT. THE DESERT. NIGHT

Almasy trudges on.

THE PATIENT (O/S)
I stopped at noon and at
twilight. ‘Three days there’,
I told her, ‘then three hours
back by car. Don’t go
anywhere. I’ll be back.
I’ll be back’.

EXT. THE DESERT. DUSK

Almasy continues, his journey taking him through miles of
undulating dunes.

EXT. EL TAJ. DAY

Finally Almasy arrives at the outskirts of El Taj. He staggers
towards this ancient Trading Post. A British Sentry watches his approach with interest.

**EXT. SQUARE AT EL TAJ. DAY.**

The Sentry, a CORPORAL, brings Almasy into a square. A young OFFICER sits at a table in the shadows of his office. His STAFF CAR is parked in the shade.

**OFFICER**
Good morning!
(the Corporal has a water bottle, hands it to Almasy)
So, golly, where have you come from?

**ALMASY**
(gulping the water, trying to summon his thoughts)
There's been an accident. I need a doctor - to come with me. And I need to borrow this car. I'll pay, of course, and I need, I need morphine and -

**OFFICER**
May I see your papers, sir?

**ALMASY**
What?

**OFFICER**
If I could just see some form of identification?

**ALMASY**
(brain racing)
I'm sorry, I'm not making sense, forgive me, I've been walking, I've - there's a woman badly injured at Gilf Kebir, in the Cave of Swimmers. I am a member of the Royal Geographical Society.

**OFFICER**
Right. Now, if I could just take your name.

**ALMASY**
(trying to control his feelings)
Count Laszlo de Almasy.
The Officer is writing this down. A glance at his Corporal.

OFFICER
Almasy - would you mind
spelling that? What
nationality would that be?

ALMASY
Look, listen to me. A woman is
dying - my wife! - is dying. I
have been walking for three
days! I do not want to spell
my name, I want you to give me
this car!

OFFICER
(writing)
I understand you are agitated
- perhaps if you'd like to
sit down I could radio back to
HQ - ?

ALMASY
(snapping)
No! No! Don't radio anybody,
just, just give me the
fucking car!

Almasy sets on the Officer, hauling him by the lapels, but then
immediately loses his balance. As he stumbles up he gets the
stock of the Corporal's RIFLE across his head, KNOCKING HIM TO
THE GROUND.

INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. TORCHLIGHT

Katharine has been writing in the Herodotus. The torchlight
FLICKERS as it illuminates some words - 'Drag myself outside'
is legible, then 'We die, we die' - She shakes the torch. It
FLICKERS again. Then goes out. Absolute BLACKNESS. The sound of
her trembling breath, of her terror.

EXT. EL TAJ STREET. DAY

Almasy, head pounding, is in the back of the jeep, chained to
the tailgate. He's desperate. The Corporal is driving.

ALMASY
(shouting, hoarse)
Stop the car. Please. A woman
is dying!

CORPORAL
Listen, Fritz, if I have to
listen to another word from
you I'm going to give you a
fucking good hiding.
CONTINUED

ALMASY
Fritz? What are you talking about? Fritz?

CORPORAL
That's your name innit? Count Fucking Arsehole Von Bismarck? What's that supposed to be then, Irish?

Almasy, berserk, starts to yank at his chains, screaming.

ALMASY
Please! You have to listen!
please, listen to me -
Katharine! Katharine!

EXT. A TRAIN, THE DESERT. DUSK

A TRAIN scuttles through the desert.

INT. TRAIN, THE DESERT. DUSK

Almasy is HANDCUFFED to the metal grille of the goods compartment. He's lying down among a bunch of other prisoners and their little bundles of possessions in this makeshift cell - some Arabs, some Italians.

A SERGEANT pushes a lavatory-bound prisoner along the corridor, leaving behind A YOUNG PRIVATE who sits on a packing case, with a rifle across his lap, reading a Penguin edition of Gulliver's Travels. Almasy is in complete despair to be on the train. He tries to move, but he's locked tight to the grille. He rattles the cuffs against the metal.

ALMASY
Excuse me.
(the Soldier looks up)
I also need to use the lavatory.

SOLDIER
You'll have to wait.

ALMASY
It's urgent.

SOLDIER
(calls up the corridor)
Sarge! Jerry wants to use the lav - says it's urgent.

ALMASY
Where are we going, please?
CONTINUED

SOLDIER
Up North, to the coast.
Benghazi. Soon be there. Get you a boat back home.

Almasy can't bear this news. The SERGEANT returns, considers the request.

SERGEANT
Go on then - you take him.
I've been up and down this bloody train all day.

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR, THE DESERT. DAY

The Soldier pushes Almasy along the corridor. They arrive outside the lavatory. The Soldier is distracted for a split second. Enough for Almasy to ELBOW HIM savagely in the stomach, winding him, before battering his with his fists. He wraps his cuffs around the Soldier's neck and - yanking them together and twisting - proceeds to strangle the young soldier.

INT. TRAIN, THE DESERT. EVENING

Almasy clambers over the guardrail and leaps off, tumbling into the desert sunset.

EXT. RAILWAY TRACK, THE DESERT. EVENING

Almasy, silhouetted against the evening sky, hobbles back down the track, THREE HUNDRED MILES AWAY from the dying Katharine Clifton, no way now of saving her. He is a tiny speck in the vast desert. His heart broken. He sinks to his knees in despair.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. NIGHT

The Patient is exhausted. He has said aloud what has tortured him. His failure to save Katharine. He looks at Caravaggio.

THE PATIENT
So yes. She died because of me. Because I loved her. Because I had the wrong name.

CARAVAGGIO
And you never got back to the cave?

EXT. KUFRA OASIS. DAY

Almasy is uncovering the tarpaulin which has been protecting Madox's TIGER MOTH. Around him are German soldiers, two of whom are bringing cans of gasoline towards the plane.
THE PATIENT (O/S)
I did get back. I kept my promise. I was assisted by the Germans. I had our expedition maps. And after the British made me their enemy, I gave their enemy our maps.

Almsay carries a mapcase and hands it over to the German officer, who salutes him and walks toward his car. Almsay turns to the plane, rips off a sign Madox has pinned to a wing. It reads SEE YOU IN DORSET.

THE PATIENT (O/S)
So I got back to the desert and to Katharine in Madox’s English plane with German gasoline. When I arrived in Italy, on my medical chart, they wrote ‘English Patient’. Isn’t that funny, after all that I became English.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Caravaggio is looking out the window, his mind racing, his resolve evaporating.

CARAVAGGIO
You get to the morning and the poison leaks away, doesn’t it? Black nights. I thought I would kill you.

THE PATIENT
You can’t kill me. I died years ago.

CARAVAGGIO
No, I can’t kill you now.

Above them, in her room, Hana stands, having heard it all, the whole story; the whole puzzle finally in place.

EXT. THE MONASTERY. APPROACHING DAWN

Kip has pulled out all of Hardy’s gear. Now he starts on the tent, kicking at the pegs, collapsing it. Hana comes out into the garden, to join him. She says nothing.

KIP
We’ve been posted. North of Florence.
Now he's trying to fold a shirt. Hana takes it from him. She folds it.

**KIP**

I was thinking yesterday - yesterday! - the Patient, and Hardy: they're everything that's good about England. I couldn't even say what that was. We didn't exchange two personal words, and we've been together through some terrible things, some terrible things.

(still incredulous)
He was engaged to a girl in the village! - I mean -

(looks at Hana)
- and us - he never once... He didn't ask me if I could spin the ball at cricket or the Kama Sutra or - I don't even know what I'm talking about.

**HANA**

You loved him.

**EXT. (NEAR THE) BASE CAMP AT THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. 1942. DAY**

The familiar cleft in the rocks. The Tiger Moth lands.

**INT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. TORCHLIGHT**

A flashlight flickers in the cave. ALMASY APPEARS.

KATHARINE'S CORPSE lies where he left her - a ghost on a bed of silk and blankets. The chill of the cave has preserved her. She could be asleep.

**ALMASY**

Katharine.

He sobs, whispering to her. He's terribly cold, exhausted. He slips underneath the covers to be next to her, and closes his eyes.

**INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. MORNING**

Hana sits with the English Patient - the room shuttered against the morning light. His breathing is noticeably worsening, a shudder of a breath, the shallow rise and fall of his chest hardly perceptible. Hana frets, touches his wrist, feeling for the pulse.
THE PATIENT
I’m still here.

HANA
You’d better be.

THE PATIENT
Don’t depend on it. Will you?
That little bit of air, in my lungs, each day gets less and less, which is all right, which is quite all right.
I’ve been speaking to Caravaggio, my research assistant. He tells me there’s a ghost in the cloisters. I can join him.

Hana is distracted by the sound of Kip’s motorbike.

KIP (o/s)
(distant)
Hana.

THE PATIENT
It’s the boy.

EXT. THE MONASTERY. DAY

Kip sits on the motorbike, waiting for Hana. She goes to him, stands, fastens the top button of his coat. You feel she might just climb on the seat behind him. But she doesn’t. Neither of them can think what to say.

HANA
I’ll always go back to that church. Look at my painting.

KIP
I’ll always go back to that church.

HANA
So one day we’ll meet.

He nods, winds up the throttle, and is gone. Hana walks back to the Patient’s room.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Hana picks up the hypodermic to prepare his injection. She takes a vial. The Patient is watching her. He reaches out and pushes two more vials toward her. Their eyes meet, then he shovels another, then all of them. She looks at him. It’s a massive lethal dose.
Hana decides, starts to prepare the injection, her eyes filling with tears. The Patient nods, smiles, whispers.

THE PATIENT
Thank you.

She holds the loaded syringe up to the light. She’s sobbing violently. The Patient’s expression is full of peace.

THE PATIENT
Read to me, will you? Read me to sleep.

INT. THE PATIENT’S ROOM. DAY

Hana lies beside The English Patient. She has the Herodotus and is reading to him from the passage Katharine had written as she waited for him in the Cave of Swimmers.

HANA
(reading)
‘My darling, I’m waiting for you. How long is a day in the dark? or a week? The fire is gone now and I’m horribly cold.’

The reading continues, but sometimes it’s Katharine’s own voice that’s heard.

HANA
‘I really ought to drag myself outside – but then there would be the sun. I’m afraid I waste the light on the paintings and on writing these words. We die, we die rich with lovers and tribes, tastes we have swallowed... bodies we have entered and swum up like rivers, fears we have hidden in like this wretched cave...’

INT. THE CAVE OF SWIMMERS. TORCHLIGHT

Almasy smudges Katharine’s pale face with saffron from the thimble. He presses his cheek to hers, smooths her hair, with incredible tenderness.

KATHARINE (O/S)
...I want all this marked on my body. We are the real countries, not the boundaries drawn on maps with the names of powerful men...
EXT. CAVE OF SWIMMERS. DAY

Almasy comes out of the cave, carrying the bundle of Katharine in his arms, wrapped in the silks of her parachute. He’s shuddering in the throes of his grief, but there’s no sound.

KATHARINE (O/S)
... I know you will come and carry me out into the palace of winds... That’s all I’ve wanted - to walk in such a place with you, with friends, an earth without maps.

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

The Patient is slipping away as Hana reads the last of Katharine’s message.

HANA
'The lamp's gone out... and I'm writing in the darkness.'

She looks up from the book. His eyes roll, his breathing quiets, then stops.

EXT. LANE OUTSIDE THE MONASTERY GARDEN. DAY

Caravaggio is at the gate to the Monastery. A TRUCK is waiting with him. A family sits in the back of the truck. Caravaggio stands with a young woman. He shouts into the garden.

CARAVAGGIO
Hana!

INT. THE PATIENT'S ROOM. DAY

Hana lingers in the empty room. The mattress stripped bare. No sign of their stay.

CARAVAGGIO (O/S)
Hana, come on! Hana!

Hana makes to leave, then sees the Herodotus lying on the bedside cabinet, and scoops it up.

EXT. LANE OUTSIDE MONASTERY GARDEN. DAY

Hana comes out to the truck, carrying the small bundle of her belongings. Caravaggio makes some introductions, beginning with the woman driver, Gioia. She and Caravaggio smile like lovers.

CARAVAGGIO
Hana - this is Gioia.

Gioia smiles, shakes Hana’s hand.
CONTINUED

HANA
Buon giorno.

CARAVAGGIO
She'll take you as far as Florence.

HANA
I can get in the back.

And she clambers up, sits down between the children. They exchange some small stiff, shy smiles, and then the truck bounces away. Hana takes one final look at the Monastery as it disappears around the bend and then turns and confronts the life insisting noisily in the truck.

INT. TIGER MOTH. DAY

INSIDE THE COCKPIT: THE COUPLE AS AT THE FRONT OF THE FILM. Almasy, obliterated by goggles and helmet, Katharine ahead of him, slumped forward as if sleeping. The plane banks over the dark ravines of the Gilf Kebir, and then suddenly, the rocks have gone, giving way to the earth without maps - the desert - stretching out for mile after mile. Almasy, the English Patient, looks down on it.

THE END