

# NATIONAL TREASURE

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**NATIONAL TREASURE**

FADE IN ON:

1 EXT. GEORGETOWN STREETS, 1832 - NIGHT 1

Wet cobblestones are beaten by a heavy rain. A CARRIAGE WHEEL splashes through huge puddles.

MAN'S VOICE

It was 1832...

2 EXT. CARRIAGE, MOVING - NIGHT 2

The carriage races through the darkened streets. A flash of lightning illuminates the coachman. It's a drenched boy, THOMAS GATES.

MAN'S VOICE

...Thomas Gates was ten years old.

Thomas whips the wild-eyed horse and turns a sharp corner.

3 INT. CARRIAGE, MOVING - NIGHT 3

Riding inside is CHARLES CARROLL. He's 96 years old. His weak body wracks with coughs, death closing in.

MAN'S VOICE

Mr. Charles Carroll, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence had asked Thomas to take him to see President Andrew Jackson. He said it was urgent.

4 EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT 4

Through the White House windows, we can see finely dressed GENTLEMEN and WOMEN partying, old-school. Thomas pulls the carriage to a stop, jumps down, and sprints to a DOORMAN.

THOMAS

The President must come quickly!

5 INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT 5

Thomas opens the carriage door, but Carroll sits motionless.

THOMAS

Mr. Carroll?

Carroll peeks open an eye, coughs weakly.

CARROLL

(off Thomas' look)  
He's not coming, is he?

5 CONTINUED:

5

THOMAS

They told me he was busy.

CARROLL

But the treasure! The treasure!

Carroll breaks into a fit of coughs. Thomas looks down and sees that Carroll's handkerchief is stained with blood.

THOMAS

We should've gone to see the doctor.

Carroll suddenly pulls the boy close.

CARROLL

Listen now, or the secret dies with me!

Carroll stares at Thomas, dead serious. Carroll's face is ashen. A desperate look in his eyes. Thomas listens.

MAN'S VOICE

That night, Mr. Carroll told Thomas about a great treasure, the greatest treasure of them all...

FLASH TO:

6 A PYRAMID, EGYPT 2000 B.C. NIGHT. The surrounding city is on fire. 6

7 INT. PYRAMID - NIGHT 7

Carrying torches, SLAVES bust down a stone wall, revealing a DARK ROOM. A slave holds up his torch to see...

A ROOM MADE OF SOLID GOLD, filled with items made of gold and precious stones.

MAN'S VOICE

...a treasure amassed throughout all time...

As the slaves loot the Pharaoh's tomb, we PUSH IN on the golden tomb walls which are decorated with MASONIC SYMBOLS: the ALL-SEEING EYE and the UNFINISHED PYRAMID.

8 EXT. JERUSALEM, 70 A.D. - NIGHT 8

ROMAN SOLDIERS carry treasure out of the burning Temple of Solomon. We recognize the treasure as the same treasure from Egypt, only now it includes more...

COPPER SCROLLS. A GOLD MENORAH. A GOLD BAS RELIEF.

MAN'S VOICE

...a treasure amassed over all continents...

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8 CONTINUED: 8

As the soldiers cart out the treasure, we see the same Masonic symbols on the temple columns, then CUT TO...

9 A TREMENDOUS POUNDING. CLOSE ON men's hands wearing armored gloves. They draw straws. One hand pulls the SHORT STRAW. We WIDEN to reveal we're in... 9

10 INT. CHURCH, 14TH CENTURY FRANCE - NIGHT 10

A group of KNIGHTS wearing Masonic insignia on their armor look to their brother with the short straw. The POUNDING INTENSIFIES. SOLDIERS are banging down the church doors.

MAN'S VOICE  
...a treasure the Knights of the  
Templar found and swore to protect...

The Knight with the short straw surrenders his armor, dons a MONK'S ROBE, and slips out just as SOLDIERS burst through the church doors. The outnumbered KNIGHTS fight bravely.

11 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 11

The knight who got away leads a small caravan through the forest. In the carriages, hidden under tarps...the TREASURE.

12 EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY 12

KING PHILIP OF FRANCE watches emotionless as the Knights who didn't escape are BURNED AT THE STAKE.

MAN'S VOICE  
...even when faced with death. For  
the Knights believed that a treasure  
so great was not meant for any one  
man, king or not.

The knights' screams are drowned out by the sound of the ocean as we CUT TO...

13 EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN, 1492 - DAY 13

A ship laden with the treasure crosses the stormy sea. The ship's name...the SANTA MARIA.

MAN'S VOICE  
...The Templar Knights who escaped  
execution took the treasure to the  
New World...

At the ship's helm is CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. We PUSH IN on a medallion hanging around his neck. On it, the PYRAMID and ALL-SEEING EYE.

MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)  
...The Knights were fugitives and  
developed secret passwords and signs  
of their order...

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13 CONTINUED: 13

We KEEP PUSHING IN on the medallion until the PYRAMID fills the screen. We then transition to...

14 EXT. THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN, 1521 - DAY 14

AZTECS hurriedly unload the TREASURE from the pyramid as Hernando Cortes and his army attack the city.

MAN'S VOICE  
 ...The treasure survived many more wars and was moved many times...

15 INT. CRYPT, 1779 - NIGHT 15

Carrying a lantern, a MAN wearing a tricorn hat closes the stone door on the treasure. The man is COUNT CASIMIR PULASKI, general of the Continental Army.

MAN'S VOICE  
 ...Some believe it was buried in Nova Scotia, but Mr. Carroll told Thomas the treasure had been hidden by the Freemasons, the descendants of the Templar Knights. These descendants included such men as Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington...

16 EXT. BATTLEFIELD, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 1779 - DAY 16

Rallying his troops against the Red Coats, PULASKI takes a musket ball in the chest and falls from his horse.

MAN'S VOICE  
 ...and other soldiers who fought bravely for the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Men like Count Casimir Pulaski who died in the Siege of Savannah...

17 CUT TO LATER. SOLDIERS comb through the battlefield carnage. They find Pulaski's dead body and roll him over. On his finger, we now see he's wearing a silver ring bearing the ALL-SEEING EYE and PYRAMID symbols. 17

MAN'S VOICE  
 ...and took the secret to the whereabouts of the treasure to his grave...

The soldiers search Pulaski but find only a piece of paper with one word written on it: "CHARLOTTE."

FLASH BACK TO:

18 INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT 18

With his last breath of life...

18 CONTINUED:

18

CARROLL

...The secret lies with Charlotte.  
Find her, and you will find the  
treasure. Tell the President.  
Tell no one else.

With that, Carroll dies. We now notice that Carroll is  
also wearing a MASONIC RING.

Suddenly, the carriage door opens to reveal PRESIDENT ANDREW  
JACKSON, a tall man with flowing grey hair. He looks to  
Mr. Carroll, but he's...too late.

PRESIDENT JACKSON

Poor old fool. Coming all the way  
here in the pouring rain.

19 EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

19

President Jackson starts back. Thomas hurries after him.

THOMAS

Wait! Mr. Carroll wanted me to  
tell you something.

PRESIDENT JACKSON

If this is about that damned treasure--

THOMAS

--You know of it?

PRESIDENT JACKSON

He's spoken of it no less than a  
hundred times.

THOMAS

He said Charlotte has it.

PRESIDENT JACKSON

We've been looking for Charlotte  
for years. She doesn't exist.

The president stops and looks at Thomas.

PRESIDENT JACKSON (CONT'D)

Who are you, young man?

THOMAS

Thomas Gates.

PRESIDENT JACKSON

Well, you'd best forget anything  
Mr. Carroll told you. The treasure  
is a legend. Nothing more.

With that, President Jackson turns back to the White House.  
We PUSH IN ON Thomas' face, watching the President go.

19 CONTINUED:

19

MAN'S VOICE

Well, Thomas never forgot...

DISSOLVE TO:

20 INT. RETIREMENT HOME, REC ROOM, 1983 - DAY

20

ELDERLY FOLKS watch current President Ronald Reagan on T.V. while JOHN ADAMS GATES (75) finishes regaling his wide-eyed, 10-year-old grandson BEN FRANKLIN GATES with his tale. (We realize now that the MAN'S VOICE belongs to John.)

JOHN

Thomas looked for Charlotte...

John Gates' face reflects a long life spent challenging the elements. He turns a page in a tattered OLD SCRAPBOOK.

CLOSE ON a black and white photo. A grown-up Thomas Gates stands at a excavation site, Aztec ruins in the background. The caption: "Thomas Gates, Teotihuacan, Mexico 1856"

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

...As did his son, George Washington Gates...

John turns the page to another photo of another GATES. All the Gates men bear a strong family resemblance.

JOHN (CONT'D)

...Generation after generation, our ancestors have tried to find Charlotte and failed.

BEN

Maybe Charlotte is an anagram. You know, you rearrange the letters, and it means something else.

John stops. He's never thought of that before.

JOHN

Like "hotel crate."

BEN

That's too many e's. It'd have to be the "hotel cart," or "tear cloth" or "teal torch" or "Rachel Ott."

Ben quickly rattles off the anagrams. John is impressed.

JOHN

Maybe you'll be the one who finally finds her.

BEN

How will I know it's the right Charlotte when I do?

20 CONTINUED:

20

John pulls out a \$1-bill and presses it on his T.V. tray.

JOHN

Because she'll be marked with these.

CLOSE ON the \$1-bill. John's craggy finger points to the UNFINISHED PYRAMID and ALL-SEEING EYE on the back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The unfinished pyramid and the all-seeing eye. The marks of the Knights of the Templar.

Ben studies the dollar-bill with newfound curious awe.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Our founding fathers, the Freemasons, designed our nation's Great Seal and left us all the clues. These symbols are telling us something. I just don't know what.

BEN

Don't worry, grandpa. I'll figure it out, and I'll find her. I swear.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

You swear what?

They turn to find Ben's father PATRICK HENRY GATES (40s). Patrick looks just like his father, albeit decades younger.

BEN

That I'll find Charlotte.

Patrick shoots a baleful look to his dad.

PATRICK

Dammit, dad. How many times have I told you? Ben's not going to waste his time chasing a treasure that doesn't exist.

JOHN

He's a Gates. It's in his blood. Ben's gonna look for it, just like you did and I did.

PATRICK

He's smarter than us. Ben's going to Harvard. He's going to be a lawyer or a doctor. Right, Ben?

Ben looks to his dad, then to his grandpa, then back to his dad as we DISSOLVE TO...WHITE. All we can hear is...

BEEP...BEEP...BEEP. A heart monitor? The beeping fades.



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20 CONTINUED: (2) 20

GROWN-UP BEN'S VOICE  
We're losing her...

We WIDEN to reveal we're in...

21 EXT. SNOWCAT, MOVING - DAY 21

Dressed in heavy arctic gear, intrepid explorer BEN GATES (late 20s, strong family resemblance) monitors a laptop.

ON THE SCREEN, red and blue dots signifying amplitudes make random patterns on a subsurface trace of BEEPING GPR pulses.

BEN  
...Go left.

The driver, RILEY POOLE (25, unkempt), cranks the wheel.

22 EXT. BARREN ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - DAY 22

The SNOWCAT (*The Endeavor*) trundles left, its tractor treads clawing through the ice. The Endeavor also has giant screw-shaped pontoons to propel over water.

23 EXT. THE ENDEAVOR, MOVING - DAY 23

Riley wipes the frost from the window.

RILEY  
Maybe she's not here.

BEN  
She's here.

RILEY  
We've been looking for weeks. You're going on data that's 200 years old.

BEN  
200-year-old data is usually the kind of data you go on when you're looking for something that's been lost for 200 years.

RILEY  
Sailors have a way of exaggerating you know. What if the storm wasn't as big as they said it was? We could be hundreds of miles off.

Ben scans the landscape ahead where the ice ends in a SHEER GLACIAL CLIFF.

BEN  
The Inuits said they could still see the masts poking up through the ice just three generations ago.

23 CONTINUED: 23

RILEY

Were they smoking anything at the time?

BEN

Only for medicinal purposes.

Just then, the GPR BLEEPs loudly. They both look to...

THE COMPUTER SCREEN. We now see that the red and blue dots have taken an unmistakable shape...A BLOB WITH SPLATTERS.

Ben and Riley exchange a look. Hopeful but wary.

RILEY

Could be a frozen whale.

24 CUT TO AN ICE AX. It swings hard, shattering the ice, revealing a WOMAN'S FROZEN FACE. We PULL BACK to reveal... 24

25 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - DAY 25

Ben chips away the ice. AS THE ICE is chipped away, we see the face is CARVED OUT OF WOOD.

BEN

Isn't she beautiful?

Ben grins. When Riley sees the face, he is stunned.

RILEY

I'll radio base camp.

26 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - DAY - LATER 26

Holding a pole (used for measuring snow depth) Ben and Riley watch as three SNOWMOBILES approach and pull to stops.

RILEY

I'd hate to be you right now. A lot of people relying on you. A lot of money riding on this.

BEN

I'd hate to be you right now. All that cholesterol and hair where it's not supposed to be.

A man wearing expensive high-tech gear hops out of a snowcat. This is IAN HOWE (40s, British). A rich adventurer.

IAN

Gates! Where is she?

Ben gestures to the figurehead in the snow. When Ian sees the woman's face, he grins like a kid on Christmas morning.

26 CONTINUED:

26

IAN (CONT'D)

Bloody hell, you found it. You really found it! You're a genius!

RILEY

I told you if you underwrote this expedition, you wouldn't be sorry.

IAN

(calls to his crew)

Shaw! Get the champagne.

Ian drops to his knees and studies the figurehead's face, almost disbelieving.

IAN (CONT'D)

You know how many expeditions I've financed that've turned up nothing?

RILEY

Well now, we're all about to be rich, and it's a beautiful thing.

A solidly built man (SHAW) approaches, without the champagne. Shaw is the type of man who'd do anything for hire.

IAN

Shaw? The champagne?

SHAW

I thought we were looking for a 100-foot frigate.

BEN

We were. She is.

SHAW

Then how come GPR indicates this ship's only 81-feet long?

Shaw hands Ben a GPR printout. Ben reads it.

BEN

Because this is a 2-dimensional rendering of a 3-dimensional object. The image is only 81-feet long because the ship's canted.

SHAW

Canted?

BEN

Tipped. Tilted. Lying at an angle.

IAN

How canted?

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

RILEY

By our calculations, about 35°.  
Which means the stern's about 57  
feet down.

SHAW

57 feet down?! Christ! We'll be  
digging for a week.

BEN

No, we won't.

Ben slams the POLE DOWN INTO the ice, puncturing a small  
hole. WHOOSH of wind blows up on them. Ben shrugs.

BEN (CONT'D)

Air pocket.

27 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - DAY - LATER

27

The Endeavor is now parked next to a newly bored hole into  
the ice. Shaw mans a winch while...

Two more workers direct a steel cable which plays out from  
the Endeavor's front end. These men are SHIPPEN intense,  
ex-Army, and POWELL, brawny, ex-con.

We follow the steel cable down which disappears down into...

28 INT. HOLE IN THE ICE - DAY

28

Daylight illuminates the cylindrical blue walls of this  
narrow opening. Wearing a helmet and headlamp, Riley rides  
down on the cable which is lowering a heavy generator...

29 INT. ICE CAVE - DAY

29

Riley joins Ben and Ian who are staring at something we  
don't immediately see. We REVERSE to reveal...

A nearly perfectly preserved SHIP, tipped 35°, its hull and  
stern frozen in a wall of this vast ice cave.

The ship is wooden with three masts. Its ancient sails are  
wrapped in its frozen casings. Icicles hang from frozen  
ropes. One of the ship's masts is broken. The other two  
tower up until they are swallowed by the cave's ice ceiling.

They all stare at the ship in its ghostlike beauty.

IAN

The frigate Charlotte. Last seen  
leaving port from Maine in 1779.

RILEY

Looks like she ran into some bad  
weather.

29 CONTINUED:

29

We FOLLOW Ben who trudges up the icy incline to the bow. With his glove, he wipes away the snow.

Through a thick layer of ice, we can make out the ship's name..."CHARLOTTE."

BEN

Hello, sweetheart.

30 CUT TO ARC LIGHTS BEING LIT. We PULL BACK to reveal...

30

31 INT. ICE CAVE - DAY - LATER

31

The cave is now illuminated by intense lights powered by generators. A nylon rope ladder and cables dangle down from the hole in the cave's ceiling.

Shaw, Powell, and Shippen finish securing the ship with ropes and spikes while Ben, Riley, and Ian don climbing harnesses and snap ice crampons to their boots.

BEN

Riley, you take the berthing quarters. Ian, check the Captain's cabin. I'll take the cargo hold.

IAN

I'll take the cargo hold.

BEN

Suit yourself.

Ian rises. Moves to the ship. Riley shoots Ben a look.

RILEY

You dog. You wanted the Captain's Cabin.

BEN

Hey, we're all just looking for the same thing.

RILEY

Fine. Then, I want the Captain's Cabin.

BEN

Sure. Whatever you want.

Riley studies Ben. Now completely mind-fucked.

RILEY

OK, forget it. You're trying to trick me, I know it. I got the berthing quarters. You take the crappy Captain's Cabin.

- 32 INT. ICE CAVE, SHIP'S DECK - DAY 32  
 Ian, Ben, and Riley move across the steeply angled deck. Each wears a helmet-lamp and carries a metal detector. The old ship GROANS as the timbers shift under their weight. They cross the deck then move in different directions.
- 33 INT. SHIP, BERTHING QUARTERS - DAY 33  
 Riley ducks his head under frozen hammocks as he moves through the cramped crew's quarters. He sweeps his metal detector over the debris. Nothing.
- 34 INT. SHIP, GUN DECK - CONTINUOUS 34  
 Ian moves through the gun deck. The heavy iron cannons have all slid across the floor and lie piled at the stern.
- 35 INT. SHIP, UPPER COMPANIONWAY - CONTINUOUS 35  
 Ben edges down a tilted staircase.
- 36 INT. SHIP, BERTHING QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS 36  
 Riley's headlamp light plays over the broken shelves, ropes, boxes, then stops on...THREE MEN'S HEADS. Riley lets out a startled GASP.
- 37 INT. SHIP, UPPER COMPANIONWAY - CONTINUOUS 37  
 Ben overhears Riley gasp on his radio headset.  
 BEN  
 Riley...?
- 38 INT. SHIP, BERTHING QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS 38  
 Warily, Riley comes around to find a trio of SEAMEN, bundled in blankets, eerily frozen.  
 RILEY  
 Uh-huh?  
 BEN (VIA MIC)  
 Find something?  
 RILEY  
 Uh-huh.
- 39 INTERCUT Ben. By the sound of Riley's voice, he knows... 39  
 BEN  
 Dead people?  
 RILEY (VIA MIC)  
 (voice cracking)  
 Uh-huh.

39 CONTINUED:

39

BEN  
(laughs to himself)  
What'd you expect? You're in the  
berthing quarters.

Ben wrenches open a closed door. Its frozen hinges SQUEAL.

40 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

40

Ben finds an old oil lantern and lights it with a lighter. We then see the Captain's Cabin. Plush furniture. An ornate desk. Everything covered in a thin layer of ice.

Ben moves to the desk and quickly rifles through it. He finds nothing of value except for an antique POCKET WATCH which he pockets. He then looks down and notices...

DEEP SCRATCHES in the floor by the desk.

41 INT. SHIP, LOWER CARGO HOLD - CONTINUOUS

41

Ian gets a reading on his metal detector. He pushes aside some netting. Finds a TRUNK. He pries it open...DISHES.

42 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

42

Ben pushes the desk aside, revealing a TRAP DOOR underneath. He pulls it open. Peers down to find a dark, hidden room.

43 INT. SHIP, HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

43

Ben jumps down, looks around. The room is crowded with large BARRELS. He pulls one of the plugs, and...

BLACK GUNPOWDER spills out into a pile onto the icy floor.

Ben turns to go then notices...

TWO BOOTS poking out from between a row of barrels. Ben moves to the row and finds...

THE CAPTAIN. Frozen dead. Gun in his lap. Leaning up against one of the barrels.

44 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

44

Riley enters to find Ben nowhere in sight.

BEN (O.S.)  
Down here!

He hurries to the trap door and peers down to see Ben struggling with the barrel of gunpowder.

RILEY  
You found it!

45 INT. SHIP, HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS 45

Riley jumps down into the room as Ben pries open the barrel.

RILEY  
There's gold in there. I can smell  
it.

Excited, Riley watches as Ben lifts the lid to reveal...more  
gunpowder. But Riley is undaunted.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
Maybe it's in another barrel.

But Ben sticks both arms into the barrel he opened.

BEN  
The Captain was guarding this barrel  
for a reason.

As Ben roots around, gunpowder SPILLS ALL OVER THE FLOOR.

After a beat, Ben finally stops. He's found something. He  
exchanges a look with Riley, then pulls out a SMALL BOX.  
It's labeled "Little Hunting Creek, Virginia."

Ben carefully opens it, revealing...AN IVORY PIPE.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Riley. Do you know what this is?

Riley eyes it, disappointed.

RILEY  
I'm hoping a billion-dollar pipe?

46 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS 46

Ian enters as Ben and Riley emerge from the trap door.

BEN  
Ian! Look at this!

Ben shows him the pipe. Ian glances at it, unimpressed.

IAN  
A Meerschaum pipe. 18th Century.  
I have three.

BEN  
This box is marked Little Hunting  
Creek. That's what Mt. Vernon was  
called before George Washington's  
family renamed it.

IAN  
George Washington's pipe. And?



46 CONTINUED:

46

BEN

And it's gonna lead us to the treasure.

IAN

"Lead us?" You said the treasure would be on Charlotte.

BEN

No, I said "the secret lies with Charlotte." This pipe has to be that secret.

Ben strains to make out something on the pipe.

BEN (CONT'D)

There're markings on here. I need some ink.

IAN

I didn't spend a quarter of a million dollars to find a pipe.

Ben finds a quill and a bottle of ink, but the ink is frozen.

BEN

Come on, Ian. This is a treasure hunt. You can't just find it in the first place you look.

IAN

It only took me three weeks to find the Panamanian Galleon wreck with my last so-called expert. I've been funding you for six months.

BEN

Seven.

Ben takes the quill and suddenly stabs his finger with the tip. Riley sees this and winces.

RILEY

What the hell're you doing?

Ben rubs his blood on the pipe, then rolls the pipe over the desktop, revealing...AN IMPRINT IN BLOOD. We recognize the symbols: THE ALL-SEEING EYE and UNFINISHED PYRAMID.

IAN

The Templar symbols.

RILEY

Does it say where the treasure is?

Ben reads from the bloody imprint on the desk.

BEN

"The legend writ, the stain effected  
The key in Silence undetected  
Fifty-five in iron pen  
Mr. Matlack can't offend."

RILEY

I didn't hear the part about "X"  
marks the spot.

IAN

What does it mean?

BEN

It's a riddle. "Key" and "legend."  
It's referring to a map.

RILEY

What map?

BEN

"Undetected" and "in silence" means  
the map is hidden.

IAN

Of course. A hidden map. Where?

Ian picks up the pipe. Studies it.

IAN (CONT'D)

"Iron pen" could mean iron manacles,  
iron bars...55 men in prison! Or,  
no, wait. Perhaps 55 refers to the  
year 1755. Who's "Mr. Matlack"?

BEN

Timothy Matlack. The official scribe  
of the Continental Congress.

(realizes)

"Iron" because they used iron-based  
inks back then.

RILEY

Scribe. A writer?

BEN

No, a calligrapher. He transcribed  
documents for the Continental  
Congress.

RILEY

So, Mr. Matlack made a map. Where  
would he hide it?

IAN

"Mr. Matlack can't offend." Why  
can't he offend it?

46 CONTINUED: (3)

46

BEN

It means he didn't write over the map. It's probably on the back of something he transcribed.

RILEY

What'd he transcribe?

BEN

Lots of things. The most famous document being...

His voice trails off.

RILEY

Being what? The Constitution? The Bill of Rights?

BEN

No.

RILEY

(relieved)  
Thank God.

BEN

The Declaration of Independence.

A beat of incredulity, then Riley scoffs...

RILEY

There's no map on the back of the Declaration of Independence.

Ben gives him a look, like yes there is.

RILEY (CONT'D)

There's a map on the back of the Declaration of Independence?!

IAN

It's brilliant if you think about it. Such an important document insured the map's survival.

BEN

Too bad we'll never see it.

IAN

Nonsense. We get a viewing.

BEN

Nobody gets a viewing. Not even the President.

46 CONTINUED: (4)

46

RILEY

What kind of sick person would put a treasure map on the back of the Declaration of Independence?!

BEN

Could've been a number of people. Nine of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were known to be Freemasons. Ben Franklin, Robert Treat Paine, John Hancock to name a few. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were suspected members of the order. George Washington wasn't a signer, but he had access. He was a 1st Master Mason. He was also a surveyor and map-maker before he was commander of the Continental Army. He's got my vote.

IAN

Well, there is one way to see the Declaration of Independence in person.

RILEY

Really? How?

IAN

We "borrow" it.

Ben laughs, incredulous. Ian pockets the pipe.

IAN (CONT'D)

Come on, Ben. The Lost Treasure of the Knights of the Templar is the treasure of all treasures. Gold from the Temple of Solomon, King Alaric II's ransom of the Athenians, the entire wealth of 5th century Rome, the Sword of Alexander the Great. You've been looking for this treasure all your life. You're not going to let a piece of paper stand in your way, are you?

BEN

You can't be serious.

IAN

What else are you going to do? Go back to working on salvage crews? Comb beaches with a metal detector looking for doubloons? Oh, that's right. You have your PhD in History. Maybe you can teach high school history.

46 CONTINUED: (5)

46

BEN

Forget it, Ian. I won't steal the Declaration of Independence.

IAN

Don't get soft now. You begged me to finance your expedition when everyone else thought you were crazy.

BEN

You financed this expedition because you knew this treasure would make you famous.

IAN

And, it will.

BEN

I won't let you.

IAN PULLS OUT HIS GUN from his belt. Trains it on Ben who is STUNNED.

IAN

Oh, you didn't bring one of these?

BEN

You're not going to shoot me, Ian. Not until you know all that I know about the riddle.

Ian studies Ben. Is he bluffing?

IAN

Such as?

BEN

Put the gun away.

Ian turns his gun on Riley instead.

IAN

Tell me, or I shoot Riley.

RILEY

Wait! How do you know I don't know something else about the riddle?!

Ben and Ian can't help but just give Riley a look, then Ian pulls the trigger...BLAM!

Riley flinches as the glass porthole in the wall just behind him shatters. The old ship GROANS.

RILEY (CONT'D)

Shit. Come on, Ben. Tell him what he doesn't know.

46 CONTINUED: (6)

46

BEN

Okay...

Ben comes up with HIS LIGHTER and flicks it on.

BEN (CONT'D)

...for one thing, the whole room  
below us is full of gunpowder.

Ben holds the flame over the trap door in the floor.

BEN (CONT'D)

You shoot anyone, I drop this, and  
none of us gets out of here alive.

Ian eyes the flame. Ben eyes the gun. A tense stand-off.

RILEY

(incredulous)

Whoa-whoa-whoa! How did we all go  
from wildly rich to dead in a matter  
of minutes? Let's think here.

Just then, the FLAME FLICKERS AND GOES OUT. Ian shrugs.

On reflex, Ben tackles Riley and hurls them both to the  
ground behind the desk as...

Ian OPENS fire on them...BLAM-BLAM-BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

Bullets CHEW UP the desk and walls.

One bullet takes out the GAS LANTERN. It explodes with an  
OIL FIRE, instantly setting the desk ablaze.

47 INT. SHIP, UPPER COMPANIONWAY - CONTINUOUS

47

Ian hurries out of the cabin and battens the door shut.

48 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

48

Flames spill down from the desk and creep across the floor.  
Ben tries the cabin door. It's locked.

RILEY

We gotta put this fire out.

Riley tries to smother the fire. It's hopeless. Ben grabs  
his ax and slams it into the door. Riley joins him.

We PAN DOWN to the burning floor and PUSH through it into...

49 INT. SHIP, HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

49

BURNING EMBERS fall from the ceiling, float to the floor,  
catching a POWDER trail spilled on the ground. It ignites  
and BURNS A PATH toward...the BARRELS OF GUNPOWDER.

50 INT. ICE CAVE, SHIP'S DECK - CONTINUOUS 50

Ian hurries across the tilted deck, calling to his men...

IAN  
Get the hell out of here. It's  
gonna blow!

Ian leaps off the deck, then runs with Shaw to the rope ladders.

SHAW  
I heard gunshots.

IAN  
Gates and Riley tried to kill me.

51 INT. SHIP, HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS 51

The burning trail of gunpowder reaches the first barrel, and the wood barrel CATCHES FIRE.

52 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS 52

Shaw, Powell, and Shippen run like hell to their snowcats. Ian is the last man out of the hole in the ice, and he PULLS UP THE ROPE LADDERS.

Shaw climbs into a snowcat.

SHAW  
Come on!

Ian jumps in with Shaw, and they all take off.

53 INT. SHIP, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS 53

An inferno. Portholes SHATTER as their panes shift. Ben and Riley finally bust through the door and scramble out.

54 INT. SHIP, HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS 54

The BARREL OF GUNPOWDER burns, fully engulfed.

55 INT. ICE CAVE, SHIP'S DECK - CONTINUOUS 55

Ben and Riley emerge from below and look across the way to find that THE ROPE LADDERS are gone! They're trapped.

BEN  
They pulled up the ladders.

Riley regards his surroundings, resigned.

RILEY  
Why do I ever listen to you? I was  
two credits away from graduation.

55 CONTINUED:

55

BEN

That was seven years ago.

Ben spots a SWIVEL CROSS-BOW HARPOON mounted on the deck and hurries to it.

RILEY

Intel offered me a job with my own cubicle.

Ben ties a rope to a spear and loads it into the harpoon.

BEN

Do we have to go over this every expedition?

RILEY

Until I get rich, yes.

Ben wheels the harpoon around and aims it at Riley's head.

BEN

Fine. Now, duck!

Ben releases the harpoon...WHOOSH! The spear ROCKETS over a ducking Riley up to the CAVE's ceiling. THUNK!

Ben grabs the ROPE. Pulls hard. The ice ceiling caves in, opening a hole just above the ship's bow.

56 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

56

Ben and Riley clamber out of the ground just where the lady figurehead pokes through the ice. They race to the Endeavor.

57 INTERCUT: The barrel of GUNPOWDER. It BLOWS...KA-BOOM!

57

58 INTERCUT: The arctic landscape. The ground shakes violently. Ben and Riley dive into THE ENDEAVOR just as...

58

59 INTERCUT: The other barrels BLOW in a chain-reaction series of explosions...BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM!

59

60 EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

60

A FIREBALL ERUPTS from the snow and ice. The CONCUSSION launches THE ENDEAVOR forward off...

61 THE GLACIAL CLIFF! The Endeavor plummets down to...

61

62 EXT. ARCTIC OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

62

The Endeavor HITS THE WATER AND SINKS LIKE A ROCK as a FIREBALL rolls skyward in the background.

Burning SHARDS of WOOD rain down onto the icy waters. A long beat, then...



62 CONTINUED: 62

WHOOSH! The Endeavor POPS BACK UP, floating on its pontoons.

63 INT. THE ENDEAVOR, FLOATING - CONTINUOUS 63

Riley laughs, incredulous.

RILEY

It drives! It flies! It floats!  
(looks around)  
It needs a toilet.

Ben looks at the smoke and fire, solemn.

BEN

Ian's going to steal it.

RILEY

Why do you always have to focus on  
the negative? You found Charlotte.  
That was your life's quest. Be  
happy. I'm the one who should be  
upset. I'm not wildly rich, which  
is my life's quest.

BEN

Riley, it's the Declaration of  
Independence.

RILEY

Do you see an American flag planted  
in my ass? I didn't even vote in  
the last election. I'm in this for  
the money.

BEN

Well, if Ian gets the Declaration  
of Independence, he gets the  
treasure. All of it.

Riley considers that a beat, then...

RILEY

Suddenly I'm feeling very patriotic.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 EXT. THE MALL, WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY 64

The famous green thoroughfare. There's the Lincoln Monument,  
the Washington Monument, the White House. We TRAVEL down  
Pennsylvania Avenue, finally coming to...

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES. A beautiful neoclassical building.

65 CLOSE ON THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. We are tight on 65  
the autograph of JOHN HANCOCK.

We PULL BACK to reveal...

66 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - DAY 66

TOURISTS crowd around the Declaration of Independence exhibit. Riley finishes counting the signatures.

RILEY  
54...55...56.  
(looks up, confused)  
I don't get it. There are 56  
signatures. The riddle said "55 in  
iron pen."

BEN  
The 56th signature, Thomas McKean's,  
wasn't added until 1781, two years  
after the Charlotte disappeared.

Riley looks to the document again, then shrugs...

RILEY  
Well, it's still here. Looks like  
Ian came to his senses.

GUARD (O.S.)  
What're you doing?

They turn to find a GUARD standing behind them. He gestures to the line of TOURISTS which snakes through the Rotunda.

GUARD (CONT'D)  
You're holding up the line.

67 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - DAY 67

Ben and Riley exit the building.

RILEY  
So, we're back. Let's go say "hi"  
to your dad. Tell him that your  
treasure hunting days are over.

Just then, Ben grabs Riley and pulls him behind a column.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
All right. I'm sorry. I know I'm  
not supposed to talk about your dad.

Ben motions with his head, and Riley follows his gaze to...

ACROSS THE STREET where Ian and Shaw climb into a SEDAN and drive away. Riley watches them go, incredulous.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
No way. They can't be doing this.  
This isn't some liquor store. It's  
the National Archives. It's  
impossible to break in.

67 CONTINUED: 67

BEN  
Nothing's impossible. Ian will  
hire an expert. Or pay off somebody  
on the inside. Or both.

68 CLOSE ON the remains of a SHIPWRECK submerged in murky 68  
water. A giant fish darts into frame. A goldfish. We  
WIDEN to see we're in...

69 INT. BEN'S LOFT APARTMENT - DAY 69

A studio loft crowded with books, maps, a computer, SCUBA  
gear, and many historical items, like a "Don't Tread on Me  
Flag" which is framed but not hanging on the wall.

Keys jingle at the door, and it opens to Ben and Riley.

RILEY  
I don't think we're safe here.

BEN  
Ian thinks we're dead.

Suddenly, there's a noise outside the door. Ben grabs a  
spear gun, and Riley whips open the door to reveal...

...a LADY. Actually, it's the LANDLADY (mid 50's) who greets  
the spear gun pointed at her with a bored smile.

LANDLADY  
This is why you can't keep a  
girlfriend.

They sigh, relieved. Ben lowers the spear gun.

RILEY  
Hello, Mrs. Doyle.

LANDLADY  
Did you find it?

BEN RILEY  
Yes. No.

She looks at Ben.

LANDLADY  
You know when you talk about  
Charlotte all the time, it scares  
the girls away. That last girlfriend  
you had was really nice too.

BEN  
Don't worry. I won't be talking  
about Charlotte ever again.

69 CONTINUED:

69

LANDLADY

Does that mean you're settling down now?

RILEY

Yes.

BEN

No.

Ben digs into his pocket and comes up with the antique pocket watch he found on the Charlotte.

BEN (CONT'D)

Here. I got something for you...

The Landlady inspects the watch, amazed.

BEN (CONT'D)

...It's 18th Century. French. 14K gold key. Very rare.

LANDLADY

It's beautiful. Thank you.

Ben kneels down and starts rifling through his stacks of books and maps and charts. She watches him.

LANDLADY (CONT'D)

You know, Ben, what you need to do is stop reading so much, and go out and have some fun.

BEN

You're right. We will.

Ben stands, holding a stack of books, and we CUT TO...

70 CUT TO CLOSE ON the books, which are now strewn across a cherry wood desk. We WIDEN to reveal we're in...

70

71 INT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, READING ROOM - DAY

71

This 19th Century building is the grandest library in all America. Ben and Riley study a SCHEMATIC at a table.

BEN

Every night, the Declaration of Independence is lowered down into the vault room which is directly below the Rotunda...

CLOSE ON A BLUEPRINT of the National Archives. We FOLLOW Ben's finger as it traces the path down through the Rotunda floor and to the Vault Room right below.

BEN (CONT'D)

...where it's locked up in a specially designed, impenetrable, (MORE)

71 CONTINUED:

71

BEN (CONT'D)

50-ton, steel vault where it's protected from heat, cold, even a thousand years of nuclear winter. The entire process takes just two minutes, but during those two minutes, the Declaration of Independence is vulnerable.

RILEY

So that's when Ian's going to do it?

BEN

Doubt it. A better time would be to create a situation wherein the Declaration would be automatically lowered into its vault when the guards aren't there.

RILEY

Well, Ian'd have to create some external chaos because there's no way he can hack in.

BEN

Why not?

RILEY

Because most of these old government facilities use the old Data-Link encryption-based security system. Once you're in, you can do whatever you want, but only a handful of people know how to get in.

BEN

And would one of those people happen to be someone who gave up a good life at Intel to help save his country?

RILEY

Could be.

BEN

Then, it looks like we have the edge.

RILEY

--Whoa-wait-whoa! Holy shit!

Riley's "holy shit" ECHOES LOUDLY through the room. ALL HEADS turn to glare at them. Riley lowers his voice.

RILEY (CONT'D)

You just said "we."

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

BEN

Yeah. As in me and you.

RILEY

No. Nuh-uh. Bad idea.

BEN

What's bad? We take it first so Ian can't steal it.

RILEY

You're right. That's not a bad idea. It's an extremely-horrible-get-your-ass-reamed-for-life-in-prison idea.

BEN

It's the only way to protect it.

RILEY

How did we go from "let's stop Ian" to "let's take it ourselves"?

BEN

You got a better idea?

RILEY

As a matter of fact, I do.

72 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

72

Ben and Riley wait. "DR. ABIGAIL CHASE, CHARTERS OF FREEDOM CUSTODIAN" is stenciled on the office door.

BEN

You want me to do the talking?

RILEY

No, this is my idea. You'll try to make it sound crazy.

Just then, a bookishly beautiful DR. ABIGAIL CHASE (26) opens her office door. She sees Ben and Riley.

ABIGAIL

Good afternoon, gentlemen. Please come in.

Ben and Riley exchange a look. She's prettier than they expected her to be.

73 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, OFFICE - DAY

73

Abigail moves to her desk as Ben and Riley enter her office which is decorated with colonial art and Revolutionary War era artifacts.

73 CONTINUED:

73

RILEY

Thanks for seeing us on such short notice, Dr. Chase.

ABIGAIL

So, what can I do for you today?

Ben eyes Riley like, "go on."

RILEY

Okay. This is going to sound crazy, but somebody's going to steal the Declaration of Independence.

She regards them disdainfully. She gets this all the time.

ABIGAIL

All terrorist threats must be reported directly to the FBI. Let me get you their number.

She goes to get the number but is stopped by...

RILEY

This isn't a terrorist threat. The people behind it are treasure hunters.

ABIGAIL

And they want to steal the Declaration of Independence because...?

Riley looks to Ben, but Ben looks away to a framed antique button collection hanging on the wall.

RILEY

(reluctantly)  
Because there's a treasure map on the back.

ABIGAIL

Is this a joke?

RILEY

We just found proof in a ship that was wrecked over 200 years ago.

ABIGAIL

I see. Well, I've seen the back of the Declaration of Independence, and I assure you, there is no map.

RILEY

Really? You sure?

ABIGAIL

Absolutely. I've seen it many times.

73 CONTINUED: (2)

73

BEN

Have you ever touched it?

ABIGAIL

Of course not. No one touches it. It's hermetically sealed in a bullet-proof, thermopane case.

BEN

That must frustrate you. Seeing something everyday and not being able to touch it.

There's an undeniable charm about Ben, but Abigail does her best to shrug it off.

ABIGAIL

I touch the case every day, which is closer than most people will ever get to it. Which makes me the expert in this room about there being or not being a map on the back. Which there is not.

BEN

That's because it's invisible.

RILEY

It is?

BEN

Invisible inks were common back then. They were used by both the British and American armies to send secret spy letters during the Revolutionary War.

Abigail studies Ben, interest piqued.

BEN (CONT'D)

Or, the parchment could have been palimpsest. Animal skin paper wasn't exactly easy to make and was--

ABIGAIL

--often cleaned and reused. I know what palimpsest is.

BEN

Of course, you do.

ABIGAIL

So, do you have any proof? About this "invisible map"?

RILEY

It was in a riddle on an old pipe.



73 CONTINUED: (3)

73

ABIGAIL

May I see the pipe?

Ben and Riley exchange a look, then grudgingly...

RILEY

We don't have it.

ABIGAIL

Did Bigfoot take it?

RILEY

I told you it would sound crazy.

Ben straightens the framed collection.

ABIGAIL

Don't touch that, please.

Ben refers to an empty space in the button collection.

BEN

1789 George Washington Campaign Buttons. All you need is the silver-plated Inaugural Button to complete the set. I found one of those once, digging in a back yard in Maryland. You know, they're worth about five thousand dollars.

ABIGAIL

(realizes)

You're treasure hunters as well.

BEN

Formerly. Now, we're more like treasure protectors.

ABIGAIL

Well, Mr...?

Ben reaches out and shakes her hand.

BEN

Brown. Paul Brown. And this is my friend, Tom Jeffries.

She shakes his hand.

ABIGAIL

Well, Mr. Brown and Mr. Jeffries, let me assure you that the Declaration of Independence is safe. We have a very sophisticated security system designed to stop crazy people like yourselves from getting near it.

74 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, CORRIDOR - DAY

74

Ben and Riley move down the corridor.

RILEY

Paul Brown and Tom Jeffries?

BEN

When the Declaration of Independence turns up missing, the Feds'll go after anyone who reported it was about to be stolen. Those are common names. They should keep them busy for a while. Buy us some time.

RILEY

So, we're really going to do it?

BEN

I am. I could use your help.

Ben pulls out a handkerchief and starts wiping his hand.

RILEY

Once we get it, what are we going to do with it?

BEN

Look at the back.

RILEY

We would?

BEN

Of course. If we don't look at the back, we'll never find the treasure. If we don't find the treasure, someone will always come looking for the map, which means the Declaration of Independence will always be in danger until we find the treasure.

Riley nods, liking Ben's reasoning.

RILEY

Then, we have to look at the back. It's our duty. As Americans.

Now, Riley notices Ben wiping his hand.

RILEY (CONT'D)

What's on your hand?

BEN

Ultra-violet ink. Dr. Chase has daily access to the vault. I shook her hand.

74 CONTINUED:

74

RILEY

You knew we were going to do this  
all along, didn't you?

BEN

I was hoping she would believe us  
so we wouldn't have to.

RILEY

Yeah. Me too.

75 CLOSE ON a woman's fingers as they quickly punch in a  
passcode into a keyboard. A beat, then CLUNK. The  
solenoid lock releases. We WIDEN to reveal...

75

76 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, CORRIDOR - DAY

76

Abigail stands at the security entrance to the VAULT ROOM  
with DR. STANLEY HERBERT (40s, suave intellectual).

DR. HERBERT

So, you need a ride tomorrow night?  
I could swing by. Pick you up.

He pushes through the heavy security door leading into...

77 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, VAULT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

77

A high-tech room of concrete and steel.

In the middle of the room, a 50-ton Mosler vault stands  
open. A scissor-jack extends out of it and up to a steel  
SLOT in the ceiling. Abigail and Dr. Herbert enter.

ABIGAIL

Dr. Herbert, if you came by to pick  
me up, and we went to the gala  
together, that would be like you  
and me going on a date.

DR. HERBERT

It's more like car-pooling.

ABIGAIL

It's more like a date. And I don't  
date co-workers.

DR. HERBERT

I'm not a co-worker. I'm your boss.

78 GRAINY SURVEILLANCE VIDEO OF THE SAME. We WIDEN to reveal  
we're in...

78

79 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - DAY

79

GUARDS study a bay of monitors which flip through a rotation  
of surveillance images covering every inch of the archives.

79 CONTINUED: 79

The head guard JOE WOODRUFF (50s, career government employee) ZOOMS IN on the VAULT ROOM, then leans into a microphone.

WOODRUFF

Good evening, Dr. Chase. Dr. Herbert.

80 INTERCUT Abigail and Dr. Herbert in the vault room. 80

ABIGAIL

Hi, Joe.

She opens a drawer, grabs a hand-held GAS CHROMATOGRAPHER.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Ready whenever you are.

81 INTERCUT Woodruff. He grabs a key on the console... 81

WOODRUFF

This is why they pay me the big bucks.

He turns the key, and...

82 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, VAULT ROOM - CONTINUOUS 82

The scissor-jack springs to life and starts to retract...

83 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - DAY 83

Two GUARD patrolling the empty Rotunda watch as...

The DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE is lowered in its case from its exhibit. We PUSH IN on it and FOLLOW it as...

84 THE SCISSOR-JACK retracts, pulling the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE through a steel slot in the FLOOR and into... 84

85 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, VAULT ROOM - CONTINUOUS 85

As the scissor-jack retracts, the Declaration of Independence descends in its case from the slot in the ceiling.

Abigail steps up to the document and waves the gas chromatographer along the thermopane case's edges. The instrument whizzes and hums, all apparently normal noises.

ABIGAIL

You ever wonder if there was something on the Declaration of Independence that might have been overlooked?

DR. HERBERT

That document's been examined more than a corn farmer on an alien space ship.

85 CONTINUED: 85

ABIGAIL

Everything we know of early  
Archimedes came from palimpsest  
overlooked for centuries.

The Declaration reaches the vault, then tips backwards.

DR. HERBERT

If you're angling for a grant, you're  
going to have to come up with some-  
thing better than that. You don't  
want people to think you're crazy.

The Declaration lies back in the vault, then the 5-TON STEEL  
VAULT DOORS slide closed with a LOUD THUNK as we CUT TO...

86 EXT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY STATION - DAY 86

Directly across the street from the National Archives.

87 INT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY STATION - DAY 87

Carrying a briefcase, Ben and Riley descend on an ESCALATOR  
into this modern, spacious station.

The platforms are crowded with COMMUTERS.

Ben and Riley step off the escalator and move through the  
throng to the far end of the platform. Ben waits for the  
train to pull away, then...

JUMPS DOWN ONTO THE TRACKS. Riley reluctantly follows.

88 INT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS 88

Ben and Riley hurry along the tracks. The dim glow of a  
flashlight lights only a few yards ahead of them.

They finally come to a door bolted closed with a heavy lock  
and stop. Ben pulls some bolt cutters out of the briefcase.

89 INT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY, UTILITY ROOM - LATER 89

Ben and Riley work in this cramped public works substation.

Using a HAND-HELD ELECTRICAL SAW with a 2" circular blade,  
Ben finishes cutting a hole in one of the many PVC pipes  
that run along the ceiling of the substation.

Riley opens the briefcase and pulls out...

A TOY TRACTOR TRUCK, actually a sophisticated remote-operated-  
vehicle (ROV) with a camera taped to the hood. We CUT TO...

90 GOD'S EYE VIEW OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. EVENING. 90

People, Cars. Buses. The National Archives on one side of  
the street. The Green Line Subway Station on the other.

National Treasure, 4/9/03 37.

90 CONTINUED: 90

We PUSH down toward the pavement. Closer, closer, until we butt up to it, then SEAMLESSLY MOVE through the pavement...

91 UNDERGROUND. We TRAVEL vertically through the layers of concrete, rocks, dirt, concrete again. It opens up into... 91

92 A LABYRINTH OF PIPES, FIBER-OPTICS, GAS, ELECTRIC. We PUSH INTO one pipe and MOVE seamlessly inside... 92

93 THE PIPE. We're moving in the direction of the National Archives, finally catching up to the ROV. Its motor whirs. Its headlights play on a turn in the pipe ahead. 93

94 INT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY, UTILITY ROOM - LATER 94

Riley navigates the ROV with a JOYSTICK and a LAPTOP which plays back what the ROV is seeing.

RILEY  
What time is it?

BEN  
Around five. Why?

RILEY  
I'd be getting off work about now.  
At Intel.

ON THE SCREEN, the ROV arrives at an intimidating MATRIX OF CONDUIT wrapped in a bunch.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
There it is.

He punches a key on the laptop. Maneuvers the joystick.

95 IN THE PIPE. The ROV stops, extends a MECHANICAL ARM, finds a red wire, and CLIPS ON TIGHT. With a WHOOSH... 95

96 We RUSH into the wire and TRAVEL, light-speed to... 96

97 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 97

GUARDS monitor the surveillance bay. ON ONE MONITOR, we see video of the VAULT ROOM.

98 INTERCUT THE LAPTOP SCREEN on which the same surveillance video plays. We're back in... 98

99 INT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY, UTILITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS 99

Ben and Riley study the surveillance feed of the vault room on the laptop screen. The vault stares back at them.

100 EXT. GREEN LINE SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT 100

Ben and Riley exit the station.

100 CONTINUED:

100

RILEY

So, when are we doing this?

BEN

If we're going to beat Ian, we've got to do it tomorrow night during the gala.

Ben gestures across the street to the National Archives. Red-white-and-blue Banners hang between the fluted columns, announcing its 75th Anniversary Gala tomorrow night.

RILEY

There'll be hundreds of people there.

BEN

Hundreds of very important people. Any glitch in the system, and the guards will have their hands full protecting the dignitaries.

Riley considers that, then...

RILEY

I suppose while I'm hacking into the Archives Security System, you'll be needing me to get you on their guest list as well.

BEN

You're talents would've been wasted at Intel.

101 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - NIGHT

101

Pennsylvania Avenue is lined with limos and luxury sedans as tuxedo'd MEN and WOMEN in designer gowns arrive.

102 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, NORTH FOYER - NIGHT

102

GUESTS pass through metal detectors at the check-in.

103 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - CONTINUOUS

103

A small STRING ORCHESTRA plays while hundreds of GUESTS mingle in the Rotunda. Looking stunning in her sparkly formal gown, Abigail stands with Dr. Herbert.

ABIGAIL

What do you think Thomas Jefferson would say if he were here?

DR. HERBERT

He'd say, "Abigail, you need to find a man of whom you are as passionate about as you are of me... who's not dead."

103 CONTINUED: 103

We TRAVEL through the throng and come to a HEAVY-SET SENATOR sipping wine. We CUT TO...

104 VIDEO SURVEILLANCE OF THE SAME. We WIDEN to reveal... 104

105 INT. VAN - NIGHT 105

Riley sits in the back of this van, sipping coffee and watching surveillance feeds on his laptop.

ON THE SCREEN, he ZOOMS IN ON the FAT SENATOR.

RILEY  
(sings to the tune of *Santa Claus is coming to Town*)  
"He sees you when you're drinking..."

He pans to a smarmy MAN flirting with a pretty LADY.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
"He knows when you are cheating..."

He ZOOMS in until the pretty lady's butt fills the screen.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
"...He knows when you left your  
panties at home..."

As Riley zooms in on the butt, we transition to...

106 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 106

The same LADY live in the Rotunda with the smarmy man. We PAN across the crowd and finally find...

BEN, wearing a tuxedo and staring at the Declaration of Independence.

MAN (O.S.)  
Sir?

Ben turns to find a WAITER with a tray of champagne.

WAITER  
Champagne?

Ben smiles and takes a glass of champagne. He then looks to a SURVEILLANCE CAMERA mounted on the wall...

107 INT. VAN - NIGHT 107

ON THE LAPTOP SCREEN, Ben is looking right at Riley. He tips his glass to him as he talks under his breath...

BEN (ON SCREEN)  
Here's to freedom.



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107 CONTINUED: 107

Riley holds up his coffee cup and leans into a microphone.

RILEY  
Our last night of it.

108 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 108

They toast. Ben looks to the Declaration of Independence.

BEN  
Maybe this is a bad idea.

RILEY (VIA MIC)  
No, it's a good idea.

109 INTERCUT Riley. He studies the laptop screen. 109

BEN (VIA MIC)  
We don't know about Ian. Not for sure.

Riley spots something on the screen. Not good news.

RILEY  
Yes, we do. He's here.

ON THE LAPTOP SCREEN, we now see Ian and his men unloading a catering truck near the back entrance to the Archives.

110 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 110

Ben moves purposefully across the Rotunda.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)  
What are you doing here?

Ben turns and sees Abigail. Tonight, she's simply captivating. She takes Ben's breath away.

BEN  
Dr. Chase...

ABIGAIL  
Mr. Brown, I don't remember seeing your name on the guest list.

BEN  
I made a last minute donation.

111 INTERCUT Riley in the van, watching Ben and Abigail. 111

ABIGAIL (VIA MIC)  
Shouldn't you be out robbing graves or desecrating something?

RILEY  
No time for mingling.

112 ON Ben and Abigail.

112

BEN

The night's still young.

Abigail can't help but smile at that. She eyes him.

ABIGAIL

So, I've been wondering...what did the riddle say?

BEN

The riddle?

ABIGAIL

On the pipe that Bigfoot took.  
Your friend said there was a riddle.  
What did it say?

Just then, Dr. Herbert arrives with two glasses of champagne.

DR. HERBERT

Abigail, your drink.

Dr. Herbert hands Abigail a glass, not happy she's already hooked up with somebody at the party.

DR. HERBERT (CONT'D)

Who's your friend?

Ben reaches to shake his hand.

BEN

Paul Brown. And you must be Dr. Herbert.

DR. HERBERT

You know me?

BEN

I referenced your paper on Feudalistic Influence in the Southern Colonies in my thesis.

DR. HERBERT

Oh, you're an academic?

BEN

Was.

113 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT

113

Woodruff and the GUARDS watch the surveillance bay.

We PUSH IN ON A MONITOR with a feed of the back service entrance where the catering workers unload foodstuffs from a truck. The POV pans back and forth as we CUT TO...

114 AN ARMOR DOME CAMERA doing its sweep. We WIDEN to see... 114

115 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 115

Shaw waits for the camera to pan away, then aims a tricked-out HV TASER GUN and FIRES...

BOOOSH! Two electrodes attached to insulated wires shoot out of the gun at 100mph, latch onto the camera dome, then pump 100,000 volts into the camera.

The camera sputters and sparks, shorted out.

116 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 116

The monitor CUTS TO SNOW. Woodruff gets on his radio.

WOODRUFF

Ferguson?

117 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT 117

A GUARD patrolling the service corridor gets on his radio.

GUARD FERGUSON

Yeah?

WOODRUFF (VIA MIC)

We lost perimeter camera seven. Go check it out.

118 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 118

Ben stands with Abigail and Dr. Herbert. Ben looks around, anxious.

DR. HERBERT

So, Mr. Brown, what brings you here tonight?

BEN

High treason.

They regard Ben, curious.

BEN (CONT'D)

That's what the 56 men, by signing the Declaration of Independence, were committing. Had we lost the war, they'd have been hanged, beheaded, drawn and quartered, or my personal favorite, had their entrails cut out and burned while they were still alive.

Ben grabs a drink off a passing tray and holds it up.

118 CONTINUED:

118

BEN (CONT'D)

In fact, let's toast them. To the brave men who did what was considered wrong in order to do what they knew was right.

Dr. Herbert toasts enthusiastically. So does Abigail, although more guardedly.

BEN (CONT'D)

Now, if you'll excuse me.

Ben leaves. Abigail watches him go, suspicious.

DR. HERBERT

Charming man. I liked him.

119 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

119

Guard Ferguson arrives at the back service entrance, stops, and keys in his passcode.

120 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

120

Guard Ferguson pushes open the door and is greeted by...

BOOOOSH! The probes hit him square in his chest, and then a surge of high voltage knocks him on his ass.

IAN and HIS MEN enter, stepping over the unconscious guard.

Ian shuts the service entrance. Shaw opens a BLACK DUFFEL BAG. Grabs some duct tape and nylon rope.

121 INT. VAN - NIGHT

121

The same snowy surveillance feed plays on Riley's laptop.

RILEY

Ian took out the service entrance camera. Ten-to-one he's inside already. We should've done this last night.

122 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, RECORD OF AMERICA - NIGHT

122

Ben heads down the museum walkway, which is crowded with gala guests. He talks sotto into his hidden mic.

BEN

Last night, the building was locked down, like it is every night. That's why we're doing it tonight.

RILEY (VIA MIC)

That's why Ian's doing it tonight too.

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122 CONTINUED: 122

BEN  
It's OK. I can beat him there.

Ben stops. Around the corner is a set of elevators. A surveillance camera monitors the elevator foyer.

123 INTERCUT RILEY watching the feed of the elevator foyer. 123

BEN (VIA MIC)  
Go.

On cue, Riley presses a key, and ON THE SCREEN, a new window opens, so that there are two windows on the screen. Both show an EMPTY elevator foyer.

RILEY  
Zap! You're the Invisible Man.

He types a command and presses ENTER.

124 We RUSH in on the ENTER key. Move light-speed, through the 124  
computer, out the USB cable, up the antenna and into...

125 The tiny ANTENNA on the ROV which is still parked inside 125  
the PIPE and patched into the security system...

126 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 126

GUARDS monitor the surveillance bay. There is a tiny hiccup, barely noticeable, as the video of switches over.

WOODRUFF  
Has Ferguson checked back in yet?

We PUSH IN on the empty foyer video and TRANSITION to...

127 INT. VAN - NIGHT 127

RILEY'S LAPTOP SCREEN, the same video plays in one of the windows. It's a previously recorded loop of the EMPTY foyer. In the window, the loop is labeled "PLAYBACK."

In the other window, the real surveillance feed of Ben in the foyer plays. This feed is labeled "LIVE."

128 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR - NIGHT 128

Ben steps onto the elevator, punches the "B" for basement call button, and the elevator starts to descend.

BEN  
You see Ian anywhere?

129 INTERCUT Riley checking surveillance feeds on his laptop. 129

RILEY  
No.

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129 CONTINUED: 129

BEN (VIA MIC)  
Let's do this.

Riley keys in a command on his keyboard.

RILEY  
OK. On my go, you have exactly--

130 INTERCUT Ben, setting the timer on his wristwatch. 130

BEN  
--Two minutes. I know.

131 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL ACCESS - SIMULTANEOUSLY 131

Ian, Shaw, Powell, and Shippen move down a corridor to a stairwell access door. On it, a sign reads, "ALARMED ENTRY. AUTHORIZED ACCESS ONLY." Ian looks to his men.

IAN  
Time to take history.

He pulls out a REMOTE. Presses a button. A red light FLASHES as we CUT TO...

132 INT. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE - NIGHT 132

A STEEL TRANSFORMER BOX across the street from the National Archives EXPLODES, showering the street in SPARKS and FIRE.

133 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 133

In the Rotunda, the lights flicker and go out. The PARTY GUESTS all react to the power outage.

134 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR - NIGHT 134

The elevator lights also flicker and go out, and the elevator suddenly...JERKS TO A STOP!

135 INTERCUT RILEY in the van. ON HIS LAPTOP, the video feeds 135  
all cut to snow.

RILEY  
Shit-shit-shit! That wasn't me.

136 INTERCUT BEN in the elevator. He punches all of the call 136  
buttons, but the elevator is stuck.

BEN  
Ian blew a transformer.

137 INTERCUT Riley, realizing... 137

RILEY  
A power outage will trigger the emergency protocol.

138 INTERCUT Ben. He starts his stopwatch. 138

BEN

That means the Declaration is on  
its way down already.

He tries to pull open the elevator doors to no avail. He  
looks around, mind ticking.

BEN (CONT'D)

Trigger the alarms. We gotta stop  
Ian.

139 INTERCUT Riley. He stares at his laptop screen filled with 139  
flashing security messages.

RILEY

The power outage already tripped  
all the alarms. Everything's going  
off. Guards won't know what's Ian  
and what's not.

140 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 140  
ON THE SURVEILLANCE BAY, every light is indeed blinking.

GUARD #1

Sir, we've lost surveillance and  
main power.

GUARD #2

Emergency protocol's been initiated.

WOODRUFF

Switch to auxiliary, then reboot  
and run a systems check.

141 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 141

Murmurs sweep across the crowd of politicians as the  
Declaration of Independence exhibit is automatically lowered  
into the Rotunda flooring.

142 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 142

The guards frantically try to get their systems back up.

WOODRUFF

I want every available body on the  
floor. Let's make sure our party  
guests are safe.

143 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 143

Auxiliary power kicks in, and the lights come back on. A  
GUARD steps in to calm the crowd.

- 143 CONTINUED: 143
- GUARD
- We just had a little power outage,  
but everything's under control.  
You'll notice the documents are  
being lowered into their vaults,  
but this is just standard procedure.  
They will be back shortly...
- Abigail and Dr. Herbert exchange concerned looks.
- 144 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR - NIGHT 144
- Ben slides a ceiling tile aside, but just then, the elevator powers back up and starts descending again.
- 145 INTERCUT Riley in the van. He checks the stopwatch. 145
- RILEY
- 96 seconds.
- 146 CUT TO CLOSE ON a THERMIC LANCE burning at 7000°F, cutting 146  
through solid steel. We WIDEN to reveal...
- 147 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL ACCESS - NIGHT 147
- Shaw cuts through the SECURITY DOOR with the thermic lance. Ian checks his watch. A beat, Shaw finishes cutting through the steel dead bolts, and the DOOR RELEASES...
- 148 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT 148
- The orchestra starts playing again, and the waiters start serving drinks, quelling the crowd.
- Abigail watches the Declaration of Independence disappear from its exhibit. Her spider-senses are tingling.
- 149 INTERCUT THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, moving by scissor 149  
jack into the sub-flooring.
- 150 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL - NIGHT 150
- Ian and his men charge down the stairs.
- 151 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, INNER CORRIDOR - NIGHT 151
- The elevator DINGS open, and Ben slips into this long corridor. Ben moves quickly to...
- The huge steel VAULT ROOM DOOR at the end of the hall. There is a keyboard pad here, the same one Abigail punched her passcode in earlier.
- 152 INTERCUT Riley in the van, watching the time tick down. 152
- RILEY
- 57 seconds...



153 INTERCUT BEN. He pulls what looks like a THIN SLIDE VIEWER 153  
out of his jacket pocket. He holds it over the keypad and  
switches on its blue light...

THROUGH THE VIEWER GLASS, certain letters on the keypad  
GLOW with ULTRAVIOLET FINGERPRINTS. Ben reads them...

BEN  
A-E-F-G-L-O-R-V-Y.

154 INT. VAN - NIGHT 154

Riley keys the letters into an ANAGRAM GENERATOR on his  
computer. The results scroll across the screen: A GLOVE  
FRY, A VERY GOLF, A GROVE FRY, FARGO LEVY, GRAVY FLOWE.

RILEY  
(reads from the screen)  
"A glove fry, a very golf, Fargo  
levy, gravy flowe, valey frog."  
Any of these make any sense?

155 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, INNER CORRIDOR - NIGHT 155

Ben stares at the letters, realizes...

BEN  
It's Valley Forge. She pressed "L"  
and "E" twice.

He dons a WHITE GLOVE, then punches in the code, "Valley  
Forge." A beat, then the VAULT ROOM DOOR unlocks with a  
series of CLUNKS.

156 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL - NIGHT 156

Sweating, Shaw is now cutting through a second security  
door with the thermic lance.

SHAW  
How much time?

Ian checks his watch.

IAN  
We're right on schedule.

157 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, VAULT ROOM - NIGHT 157

Ben jumps up on the vault. The scissor jack has completely  
retracted, and the vault doors are starting to close. No  
time to hesitate...

Ben lifts the Declaration of Independence (in its thermopane  
case) out of the vault just as the steel doors close with a  
loud THUNK.

158 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 158

The surveillance bay is aglow with flashing lights as the system runs through its automatic checks. All the surveillance screens are still snow.

159 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL - NIGHT 159

Shaw finishes cutting through.

160 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, INNER CORRIDOR - NIGHT 160

Carrying the Declaration in its case, Ben races back to the elevator. He pushes the call button just as...

The stairwell access door OPENS, and through it emerge IAN, SHAW, POWELL, and SHIPPEN. They surprised to see Ben's not only alive, but he's got their quarry.

IAN

He's alive.

SHAW

Not for long.

SHAW OPENS FIRE on Ben with an automatic gun and silencer...

Ben whips the Declaration of Independence around, and USES IT AS A SHIELD to protect himself.

The Declaration of Independence is ABSOLUTELY RIDDLED WITH BULLETS! BLAM-BLAM-BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

But the bullets BOUNCE OFF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE'S THERMOPANE CASE which is made of bullet-proof glass.

The force of the bullets knocks Ben into the ELEVATOR as it DINGS OPEN...

Ian suddenly grabs Shaw's arm. His shots go astray, raking the metal elevator doors which finally close.

IAN

What's the matter with you?! You'll damage the map!

161 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS 161

Ben falls inside, then bangs on the call-button panel.

162 INTERCUT Riley in the van. He's heard the commotion. 162

RILEY

Ben? Ben?!

BEN (VIA MIC)

I got it.

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162 CONTINUED: 162

We can now hear SIRENS approaching.

RILEY  
You'd better hurry.

163 INTERCUT BEN IN THE ELEVATOR. He sets the case down and 163  
pulls two DROPPERS OF VISINE out of his pants pocket.

BEN  
You'd better not leave.

Ben takes one of the droppers and carefully drops a single  
DROP on each of the four bolts in the corners of the  
Declaration of Independence's case.

Ben then grabs the second DROPPER OF VISINE and drops a  
second set of drops on the bolts. When the two drops of  
liquid combine, the BOLTS BEGIN TO SMOKE AND SMOLDER.

Ben checks the elevator panel. The elevator ascends...

BEN (CONT'D)  
(to the chemicals)  
Come on...come on...

164 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, STAIRWELL - NIGHT 164

Ian and his men charge back up the stairs...

165 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 165

...and burst into the empty corridor.

166 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR - NIGHT 166

The SMOLDERING dissipates, and Ben pulls the case apart.

The argon gas vents from the interior with a HISS-WHOOSH!

Ben gingerly lifts the precious document out, quickly rolls  
it up, then pulls a HEAVY-DUTY, CLEAR PLASTIC CYLINDRICAL  
BAGGIE out of his jacket pocket...

...and carefully SLIPS THE DOCUMENT INTO THE BAGGIE.

167 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 167

Woodruff watches as one-by-one, the monitors on the  
surveillance bay start coming back up online.

WOODRUFF  
Dammit. What happened to Ferguson?

168 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ELEVATOR FOYER - NIGHT 168

The ELEVATOR DINGS open, and Ben steps out.

169 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, NORTH FOYER - CONTINUOUS 169

Ben rounds the corner and casually melts into the crowd. He heads for the exit, but just a few yards ahead is...

ABIGAIL. Ben ducks into...

170 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, GIFT SHOP - CONTINUOUS 170

GALA GUESTS peruse the souvenirs. Head down, Ben watches as Abigail passes by outside the gift shop window. He waits a beat, then moves to exit. But he's stopped by...

WOMAN (O.S.)

Hey, sir!

Ben looks up. The CLERK working the register regards him.

CLERK

You trying to steal that?

Ben looks down and realizes the Declaration of Independence is poking out of his jacket. He's busted. Then...

He notices he's standing next to a bin filled with "ACTUAL SIZE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE Reproductions." Each one wrapped in heavy plastic just like the real one.

CLERK (CONT'D)

It's \$35.00.

BEN

\$35?! It's just a piece of paper.

He digs into his pockets and comes up with several crumpled bills and coins. He quickly counts them out, but...

BEN (CONT'D)

I only have \$32.57.

CLERK

We take ATM and credit cards.

171 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT 171

GUARDS search the corridor but find no sign of Ferguson.

172 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 172

GUARD (VIA RADIO)

I can't find Ferguson.

Woodruff is distressed by the news.

WOODRUFF

This isn't good.

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172 CONTINUED: 172

CUT TO QUICK SHOTS, RAPID FIRE:

173 We FOLLOW GUARDS' FEET sprinting down the inner corridor. 173

174 A GUARD PUNCHES HIS PASSCODE INTO THE VAULT KEYPAD. 174

175 THE GUARDS PUSH OPEN THE VAULT DOOR... 175

176 IN THE FOYER, Ben pushes by guests, almost to the exit... 176

177 IN THE SECURITY STATION, Woodruff turns the key on the console and prays... 177

WOODRUFF  
Please be there...please God, let  
it be there...

178 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - NIGHT 178

Carrying the "souvenir," Ben hurries down the sidewalk in front of the National Archives.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)  
Hey!

Abigail catches up to him, but Ben keeps moving.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
What's that?

BEN  
What's what?

179 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 179

Ian and his men burst out the back service exit.

180 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, VAULT ROOM - NIGHT 180

The vault's steel doors slide open, revealing the bad news...  
THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE IS GONE!

181 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SECURITY STATION - NIGHT 181

Woodruff sees the empty vault on the surveillance screen. He hits the ALARM and gets on his radio.

WOODRUFF  
Code Red. Code Red. We have a  
break in! Lock it down. Nobody  
leaves the building.

Woodruff looks around. He can't believe this is happening.

WOODRUFF (CONT'D)  
Somebody get the FBI on the phone!  
Now!

182 EXT. CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT 182

Abigail follows Ben as he hurries across the street.

ABIGAIL

What's that? That in your hand.

BEN

A souvenir. Got it at the gift shop.

They reach the van, where Riley waits, engine running.

RILEY

Let's go!

Just then, the National Archives ALARMS SOUND! Abigail's face falls. She knows what Ben has done.

ABIGAIL

You didn't.

BEN

You wouldn't understand.

Ben reaches for the van door, but Abigail SCREAMS...

ABIGAIL

POLICE!

Ben panics, grabs her, covers her mouth, but she BITES him and...COMES UP WITH THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

183 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT 183

As Ian and his men climb into their catering truck, Ian sees...

Ben standing across the street with Abigail who is holding the Declaration of Independence.

184 EXT. CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT 184

Abigail looks at the rolled up parchment, incredulous.

BEN

Careful with that!

ABIGAIL

Oh. My. God.

Riley sees she has IT now and puts his head in his hands.

RILEY

(sotto)  
Oh my God.

184 CONTINUED:

184

BEN  
(to Abigail)  
You're making a big mistake--

ABIGAIL  
--You weren't protecting it. You're  
stealing it.

BEN  
Listen. There are some very bad  
people, people who don't care about  
the Declaration of Independence,  
people who only see it as a map.

ABIGAIL  
You're pathetic.

With that, she turns and starts crossing the street, the  
Declaration of Independence in her hand.

Ben hurries to get into the van.

BEN  
Come on. Let's go.

Riley watches Abigail leaving with the Declaration.

RILEY  
But. You can't just let her go.

BEN  
Yes, we can.

Suddenly, the CATERING TRUCK barrels down on Abigail in the  
middle of the street. She side-steps out of its way, but  
it SCREECHES TO A STOP in front of her, blocking her path.

Ben sees the truck's driver...it's Shippen.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Oh no.

The truck's back doors burst open, and Ian, Shaw, and Powell  
jump out and swarm Abigail. She struggles like a wild cat.

Ben moves to help her, but Powell opens fire on him, sending  
Ben diving for cover behind the van.

185 INT. VAN - NIGHT

185

Riley ducks as the van is raked with bullets. The van's  
windows shatter. Glass shards pepper the interior.

186 EXT. CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT

186

Ian and Shaw throw Abigail into the back of the truck.  
Powell jumps into the cab, and the truck peels out.

- 187 INT. VAN - NIGHT 187  
Ben jumps in, and Riley slams it into gear.
- 188 EXT. CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT 188  
The catering truck wheels through traffic. A beat behind, the van blows through a red light and flies after it.
- 189 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 189  
Abigail holds the Declaration of Independence. Ian holds out his hand.
- IAN  
Give it to me.
- ABIGAIL  
Over my dead body.
- 190 EXT. CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT 190  
The catering truck turns hard and slews onto 3rd Street.  
A dozen POLICE CARS speed by them, going the other way, toward the National Archives.
- 191 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 191  
The truck veers suddenly, sending Abigail on her ass. Ian snatches the Declaration of Independence out of her hand as she stumbles.
- 192 EXT. 3RD STREET - NIGHT 192  
A scenic street if anyone had time to look. The U.S. Capitol on one side, the Washington Monument on the other.  
The van gains on the catering truck, but Powell leans out the passenger side window and OPENS FIRE.
- 193 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 193  
Ben and Riley duck as the front windshield EXPLODES.
- 194 EXT. 3RD STREET - NIGHT 194  
The van falls back.
- 195 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 195  
Abigail watches helplessly as Ian holds the Declaration of Independence.

ABIGAIL  
Please. Be careful with it.



- 195 CONTINUED: 195
- Ian ignores her. Slips the document from its cover.
- SHAW
- What do we do with her?
- Ian starts unrolling the document. Doesn't look up.
- IAN
- No witnesses.
- Shaw turns his gun on Abigail. Abigail's eyes search the truck. Looking for a way out...
- 196 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 196
- Riley pulls alongside the driver's side of the catering truck, then he YANKS the wheel hard...
- 197 EXT. FREEWAY ON-RAMP - NIGHT 197
- The van SLAMS into the catering truck just as...
- 198 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 198
- Shaw cocks his gun, squeezes the trigger, but the truck shakes violently ON IMPACT, sending Shaw on his ass.
- Abigail scrabbles to the truck's back doors, but they're latched shut.
- Irked, Shaw moves to finish her off. But just then, Ian notices something about the document that makes him go...
- IAN
- Wait.
- Ian looks up, then turns the document to Abigail.
- IAN (CONT'D)
- What the hell is this?
- Abigail looks at the document, and is just as surprised as Ian. Stamped on the document is a PRICE TAG. She grins.
- ABIGAIL
- A souvenir.
- 199 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 199
- The van slaloms traffic and pulls alongside the truck.
- 200 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 200
- Ian looks to Abigail, who stands by the truck's back doors.
- IAN
- Who are you?

- 200 CONTINUED: 200
- Abigail talks, she reaches behind her back and surreptitiously unlatches the door latch...
- ABIGAIL  
(stalling)  
I'm Dr. Abigail Chase, Executive  
Custodian of the Charters of Freedom  
for the National Archives.
- 201 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 201
- Ben moves to the back of the van and slides open the van's side door.
- 202 INT. CATERING TRUCK CAB, MOVING - NIGHT 202
- Shippen sees Ben in the van and whips the steering wheel...
- 203 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 203
- The catering truck YAWS into the van.
- 204 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 204
- Abigail finally manages to unlatch the latch.
- ABIGAIL  
Who are you--
- Just then, the truck is rocked as it SLAMS into the van. Ian and Shaw are buried by a cascade of chafing dishes.
- The truck's back doors to SWING OPEN WILDLY. Abigail just manages to grab the latch, and she ARCS OUT INTO traffic.
- 205 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 205
- A TOUR BUS motors along in the heavy D.C. traffic, passing the Jefferson Memorial, beautifully lit at night.
- 206 INT. TOUR BUS, MOVING - NIGHT 206
- A GROUP OF TOURISTS crane their necks out their windows as a TOUR GUIDE zealously describes the sights.
- TOUR GUIDE  
...And over to your right, you can  
see the Jefferson Memorial. Who  
can tell me what important document  
Thomas Jefferson authored?
- Nobody answers. Instead, they're all glued to the action...
- 207 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 207
- Abigail dangles off the door, both hands gripping the latch.

- 208 EXT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 208  
Riley maneuvers the van up to the back of the catering truck.  
Ben holds onto the door frame and reaches out to Abigail.
- BEN  
Grab my hand!
- Holding on for dear life, she looks to Ben like he's crazy.
- ABIGAIL  
With what?!
- 209 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 209  
Riley fights the wheel, holding steady. Looks ahead to see  
A TRAFFIC JAM. Total gridlock. A sea of red brake lights.
- RILEY  
Uh...hurry!
- 210 EXT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 210  
Ben reaches for Abigail.
- BEN  
Come on!
- Abigail summons up her courage, lets go of one hand, and  
SWINGS toward Ben. Their fingers almost touch...
- 211 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 211  
But there's no more room to go. Riley brakes...
- 212 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 212  
The van and Ben suddenly decelerate away from Abigail who  
almost falls.
- 213 INT. CATERING TRUCK CAB, MOVING - NIGHT 213  
The van falls back, and Shippen looks ahead and sees why...  
PARKED CARS locked in traffic. Shippen SLAMS on the brakes.
- 214 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 214  
The catering truck tires BURN RUBBER.
- 215 INT. CATERING TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT 215  
The sudden stop sends Ian and Shaw asses over elbows.  
The truck's doors SWING ABIGAIL BACK INSIDE, then close  
behind her. Abigail's now back in the truck in front of an  
angry firing squad. Shaw turns his gun on her...

- 216 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 216  
Ben hurries to the back of the catering truck and yanks the handle just as...
- 217 INT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT 217  
Shaw SHOOTs! But Abigail disappears as the truck door swings open again.  
The errant bullets blow out the windshield of AN ONCOMING TANKER TRUCK.  
The tanker truck driver yanks the wheel hard and slams on his brakes.
- 218 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 218  
The tanker truck JACK-KNIFES...
- 219 INT. CATERING TRUCK - NIGHT 219  
Ian and Shaw watch in horror as the jack-knifed tanker truck slews uncontrollably toward them.  
They dive out of the truck.
- 220 INT. CATERING TRUCK CAB - NIGHT 220  
Shippen lays on his HORN, not seeing what Powell sees in his rearview mirror....the runaway juggernaut.
- 221 EXT. INTERSTATE 395 - NIGHT 221  
POWELL and other MOTORISTS SCRAMBLE out of their cars, DUCKING and DIVING out of the way of the TANKER TRUCK...  
...which SHIPPEN finally sees. Too late.  
THE TANKER TRUCK CRASHES INTO THE BACK OF THE CATERING TRUCK...WHAM-SMASH-CRUNCH!  
EACH CAR IN FRONT OF THE CATERING TRUCK PLOWS INTO THE CAR in front of it. Metal crumples, glass shatters, tires POP.  
IAN, SHAW, and POWELL come up from the smoking mayhem. Ian looks down the shoulder where he sees...  
BEN and RILEY'S VAN blow past the pile-up. The van pulls off an off-ramp and disappears.
- IAN  
Piss!
- 222 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 222  
Riley drives, pedal to the metal. Ben sits in the back with a flustered Abigail.

222 CONTINUED:

222

BEN

You all right?

ABIGAIL

No, I'm not all right! Where's the Declaration of Independence?

She immediately starts searching the van. Riley glances in the rearview mirror and sees her searching the van.

RILEY

What do you mean "where is it"?  
You had it!

ABIGAIL

I didn't have it. He gave me a fake.

Riley looks to Ben, surprised.

RILEY

You did?  
(between his teeth)  
Then, why'd we go after her, Ben?

ABIGAIL

Ben? I thought your name was Paul.

BEN

I had to lie. My real name is Ben Gates. Benjamin Franklin Gates.

ABIGAIL

I'm supposed to believe that?

BEN

Being named after one of America's founding fathers is sort of like a tradition in my family.

RILEY

An obsession, actually.

ABIGAIL

Where is the real the Declaration of Independence?

BEN

Don't worry. It's safe.

Abigail stops searching. Eyes him.

ABIGAIL

So you did steal it.

BEN

If I hadn't, those men would have.

222 CONTINUED: (2)

222

ABIGAIL

Give it to me. I have to return it.

BEN

I can't let you do that. That guy who tried to kill you will just come after it again.

ABIGAIL

We'll warn the authorities. They'll protect it.

BEN

Like they did tonight?

223 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES - NIGHT

223

The building is now cordoned off and swarming with POLICE.

224 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, NORTH FOYER - NIGHT

224

MEN and WOMEN in FBI blazers enter with Woodruff. Leading the group is SADUSKY (40s), solidly built, a complete pro.

SADUSKY

What're we dealing with?

WOODRUFF

A break-in.

225 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - NIGHT

225

The detained guests wait impatiently in the Rotunda. Sadusky and his team enters and take charge of the room.

SADUSKY

All right, my name is Sadusky. I am Agent In Charge. I want this building cleared and sealed off. Security clearance only.

Sadusky turns to a female agent, AGENT DAWES.

SADUSKY (CONT'D)

A complete list of names of everyone on tonight's guest list and their dates. Find out who's NOT here.

Agent Dawes peels off, and Sadusky turns to AGENT JOHNSON.

SADUSKY (CONT'D)

The vault and lobby security logs and all the surveillance tapes for the last 30 days.

Agent Johnson nods and peels off, and Sadusky turns to two more agents, AGENT COLFAX and AGENT HENDRICKS.

225 CONTINUED:

225

SADUSKY (CONT'D)

The cars in the underground parking garage. Find any not accounted for.

Colfax and Hendricks leave, and Sadusky turns to Woodruff.

SADUSKY (CONT'D)

I want the names and shift schedules of everybody with access to the building. From the janitors to the curator.

WOODRUFF

Yes, sir.

SADUSKY

Now, Mr. Woodruff, if you can please tell me what exactly was taken?

Woodruff gulps, can barely choke out the words...

226 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT

226

Riley pulls onto a highway.

ABIGAIL

There's no map on the back of the Declaration of Independence.

BEN

Ever heard of the Templar Knights?

ABIGAIL

They were a military order of the Catholic Church dissolved by the Pope in the 14th century.

BEN

After King Philip of France had them all burned at the stake.

ABIGAIL

That's only a legend.

BEN

The Templar Knights are what legends are made of. Noble men with no allegiance to any state or ruler. Their cause was to protect innocent people from tyrannical rulers and oppression. In 1307, they broke into a Visigothic stronghold in Languedoc, France and found a treasure so massive it took six days to exhume. They had taken a vow of poverty and swore to protect the treasure, using it only for the

(MORE)

226 CONTINUED:

226

BEN (CONT'D)

noblest purpose. King Philip wanted the treasure...if he could only find it. He had the Knights arrested and tortured, but none ever confessed to the treasure's whereabouts. The few Knights who'd evaded capture hid the treasure for almost 200 years, then finally brought it to the one place where there were no kings and no religious persecution, the New World. Christopher Columbus, not so coincidentally, was a descendant of the Knights.

ABIGAIL

What do the Templar Knights have to do with the Declaration?

Ben pulls a one-dollar bill out of his pocket and points to the symbols on the back.

BEN

The all-seeing eye. The unfinished pyramid. These are the marks of the Templar. Our founding fathers were descendants of the Knights. They put the map on the back.

Abigail just looks at Ben. An incredulous beat, then...

ABIGAIL

This is crazy. I'm calling the police. Stop the car.

Riley doesn't slow down.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You wish to add kidnapping to your list of federal offenses?

RILEY

You can get out whenever you want.

Abigail glances out the window. They're going about 70mph.

ABIGAIL

Fine. I will!

She reaches for the door handle.

BEN

Do you still want to hear the riddle from the pipe?

That stops Abigail. She turns him, listening.



226 CONTINUED: (2)

226

BEN (CONT'D)

"The legend writ, the stain effected  
The key in Silence undetected  
Fifty-five in iron pen  
Mr. Matlack can't offend."

ABIGAIL

Timothy Matlack? The calligrapher  
of the Declaration of Independence?

BEN

The pipe came from Mt. Vernon.

Abigail digests this, incredulous.

ABIGAIL

If that's true, the pipe is a major  
American historical find.

BEN

Yeah well, Ian already has it, and  
he'll take the Declaration too if  
we don't protect it.

ABIGAIL

How do I know you're not lying?

BEN

We look at the back.

Abigail considers that, then looks Ben square in the eye.

ABIGAIL

All right. But if there's nothing  
on the back, you're turning  
yourselves in.

BEN

Deal. Because if there's nothing  
on the back, the Declaration's safe.

227 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

227

Two EMTs work on Guard Ferguson who is conscious now. He  
sits propped up against a wall, talking to Agent Dawes.

GUARD FERGUSON

The only thing I remember is the  
smell of my hair burning.

ON SADUSKY who approaches. Agent Dawes nods to Guard  
Ferguson, then joins Sadusky down the hall.

AGENT DAWES

They got him with a taser gun at  
the service entrance.

227 CONTINUED:

227

SADUSKY

Did he see the shooter? Anything?

Agent Dawes shakes her head, no.

228 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, INNER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

228

FBI forensics TECHNICIANS work the crime scene, studying bullet casings and dusting for fingerprints. Sadusky moves down the corridor with Dr. Herbert and Woodruff.

SADUSKY

Rounds were fired, and nobody heard anything?

WOODRUFF

The vault corridor is lined with three feet of steel and concrete.

Sadusky studies the walls pocked with bullet holes.

SADUSKY

We get a description from the guards?

WOODRUFF

Which guards?

SADUSKY

The guards that were fired upon.

WOODRUFF

There were no guards on patrol down here.

Sadusky moves to the elevator which is also bullet-riddled.

SADUSKY

Then, who were the thieves shooting at?

Just then, Agent Colfax calls from the stalled elevator.

AGENT COLFAX (O.S.)

Found it!

Sadusky, Woodruff and Dr. Herbert move to...

THE ELEVATOR. Agent Hendricks stands above the elevator car in the shaft. He hands THE EMPTY THERMOPANE DISPLAY CASE down to Agent Colfax from its hiding place.

AGENT HENDRICKS

Looks like they used a dibasic acid to dissolve the bolts.

Dr. Herbert looks so broken up, he just might cry.

228 CONTINUED:

228

SADUSKY

Get a copy of the Declaration in place before opening tomorrow.

DR. HERBERT

Yes, absolutely.

SADUSKY

No word goes to the public. Everything is to appear normal.

Dr. Herbert does his best to compose himself.

DR. HERBERT

Who would do such a thing?

AGENT HENDRICKS

Anti-government terrorists.

Just then, Agent Johnson steps up.

AGENT JOHNSON

Computerized security records indicate that a Dr. Abigail Chase accessed the vault at 9:32pm tonight.

DR. HERBERT

Dr. Chase? Impossible. I was with her at that time.

Agent Johnson shows Sadusky a copy of Abigail's ID photo.

SADUSKY

Who is she?

DR. HERBERT

The Charters of Freedom Custodian.

AGENT JOHNSON

The one in charge of the Declaration of Independence.

SADUSKY

Where is she? Let's talk to her.

AGENT JOHNSON

Unaccounted for, sir.

Dr. Herbert is upset by the news. Now, Agent Dawes approaches, carrying a computer printout.

AGENT DAWES

A man named Benjamin Gates used his credit card in the gift shop at 9:39pm. He wasn't on the guest list. We got an address from the credit card company.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

228 CONTINUED: (2) 228

SADUSKY

Gift shop? What the hell did this  
guy buy?

\*  
\*

229 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 229\*

Ben roots around under the seat. Comes up with a Big-Gulp cup. Tosses it aside. Finally comes up with a cardboard mailing tube. He peels off an old cheeseburger wrapper stuck to it, then hands it to Abigail.

\*  
\*  
\*

BEN

Here.

\*

Abigail opens the tube and partially pulls out the document. The aged parchment is clearly visible through the plastic. She's awe-struck.

ABIGAIL

You are not to touch this ever again!

She slips the document back inside the tube.

BEN

Fine by me. I never wanted to touch  
it in the first place.

ABIGAIL

You don't deserve to touch it.

RILEY

Let's just look at the map. That  
way nobody will ever have to touch  
it again.

ABIGAIL

Not here.

RILEY

What do you mean "not here"?

ABIGAIL

Not in the back of a van. We'll  
need chemicals. A controlled  
environment. A clean room with  
particulate air filtration. ESD  
attire. I hope you have all that.

230 CUT TO - A DOOR BURSTS OPEN, and a SWAT TEAM swarms in, all 230\*  
in black, bullet-proof gear, helmets, lights, guns. We  
WIDEN to reveal that we're in...

231 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT 231

Shrouds of plastic hang over the windows. Beams of light cut through the darkness as the team moves swiftly through the room. A beat, then a SWAT team member calls out...

231 CONTINUED: 231

SWAT COP  
Interior secure!

232 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT 232

Sadusky and his team move down the hallway. Agent Dawes reads from a printout.

AGENT DAWES  
Ben Franklin Gates used his Visa on a one-way plane ticket from Toronto to D.C. two days ago after spending seven months unaccounted for. Before that, his paper trail's got him all over the place. Boston, France, Boston, Greenland.

AGENT COLFAX  
The landlady didn't want to say much about him. Only that he's rarely here, that he's very nice, and that he always pays his rent, sometimes months in advance.

They come to a room cordoned off and guarded by police.

AGENT COLFAX (CONT'D)  
Wait 'til you see this.

233 INT. BEN'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT 233

Sadusky and his team enter the room and stop suddenly at what they see. We REVERSE and find...

We're in Ben's apartment, and everything is now all lined in plastic. Every square inch of the room. The windows, walls, carpet, television, and all of the furniture.

A CHEMISTRY SET sits on the dresser. A box of BLUE ESD BOOTIES sit near the door. The only other thing not covered is a Xerox copied collection of old handwritten letters.

Agent Dawes dons a pair of gloves, picks them up, and studies the letters.

AGENT DAWES  
Letters to the editor of *The New-England Courant*. Written in 1722.

She flips through the other letters.

AGENT DAWES (CONT'D)  
They're all from the same person.  
(reads a letter)  
"Your humble servant, Silence  
Dogood."

Agent Hendricks studies the blue booties by the door.

233 CONTINUED:

233

AGENT HENDRICKS

What's this guy up to?

AGENT JOHNSON

Profilers say we're looking at an adult male, a loner, has a high IQ but has never been able to hold down a job, is socially inept, has probably written numerous letters to the White House expressing anti-government sentiments. We're expecting him to contact us shortly with ransom demands.

Sadusky eyes the "Don't Tread on Me" Flag which is covered in clear plastic.

SADUSKY

I don't think he's going to be calling with any ransom demands.

234 CUT TO - A BOTTLE OF SAMUEL ADAMS beer is slammed down onto a table. We WIDEN to reveal... 234

235 INT. HAWK AND DOVE RESTAURANT - NIGHT 235

Powell and Shaw sit with Ian who studies the pipe.

SHAW

Where do you think they went?

No response. Ian turns the pipe over, then looks to a cocktail napkin on which he's written the riddle.

ON THE NAPKIN, the words "legend" and "key" are underlined along with "undetected" and "Silence."

IAN

That bastard. He did know something he wasn't telling me. Look at this.

(points to a line)

"Legend" and "key" are not the same thing. "Legend" means map. "Key" means key.

\*  
\*

POWELL

The key to the treasure?

IAN

During the war, generals used secret codes and ciphers to disguise their communications. To decode the cipher, the recipient needed the "key," like a book or an old letter. "The key in Silence undetected." You know why Silence is capitalized?

\*  
\*

Powell and Shaw exchange a look, then hazard a guess...

235 CONTINUED: 235

SHAW  
Because...it's important?

IAN  
Because it's a name.

236 INT. VAN, MOVING - NIGHT 236

Ben and Abigail look ahead to see a SEA OF POLICE AND FBI in the parking lot of Ben's apartment building.

RILEY  
What do we do now?

ABIGAIL  
Turn yourselves in.

BEN  
Go to Hillcrest.

RILEY  
(scoffs, incredulous)  
We can't go there!

ABIGAIL  
Where?

BEN  
We need the key to the cipher. I had copies. He has the originals.

ABIGAIL  
Who?

RILEY  
He hates you. He'll turn you in.

ABIGAIL  
Whoever it is, he sounds like a good man.

237 EXT. HILLCREST NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT 237

Oak trees line the street colonial and Queen Anne homes. \*

238 EXT. COLONIAL HOME - NIGHT 238

Ben knocks on the door and waits with Riley and Abigail. A beat, then a 60-year-old, graying MAN opens the door. He takes one look at Ben, then slams the door. Riley shrugs. \*

BEN  
I don't think he recognized me.

RILEY  
I think he's still mad at you for not going to Medical School.

238 CONTINUED:

238

BEN  
(pounds on the door)  
Dad! Open the door! I need your  
help.

The man opens the door again. We realize now he's PATRICK GATES, Ben's father. He looks to his son, then to Abigail...

PATRICK  
Don't tell me. You got her pregnant.

BEN  
No!

Abigail looks down at her stomach, suddenly self conscious.

ABIGAIL  
(disappointed)  
I look pregnant?

BEN  
(to his dad)  
I need the Silence Dogood letters.

ABIGAIL  
(incredulous)  
You have Silence Dogood letters?

BEN  
Our great-great-great-great-grandfather George Washington Gates found a few hidden in an old desk he bought at an auction. No one ever understood their meaning until we found the pipe.

PATRICK  
This better not involve Charlotte.

BEN  
My days of looking for Charlotte are over. I swear.

RILEY  
He's telling the truth, Mr. Gates.

Patrick smiles smug as he opens the door to let them in.

PATRICK  
I knew it. I knew there was no Charlotte. I told you so.

BEN  
Dad, let's not do the "I told you so" thing.



238 CONTINUED: (2)

238

PATRICK

I think after all these years I'm entitled to a little "I told you so." I told you, I told your grandpa, I told your mother. You people wasting your lives chasing something that doesn't exist--

BEN

--All right, dad, you asked for it. Do you really want to know? I found. Charlotte. That's right. I really found her.

\*  
\*

That stops Patrick. He looks to Abigail.

ABIGAIL

I'm not Charlotte. My name is Abigail. Dr. Abigail Chase.

BEN

Charlotte was a ship.

PATRICK

I know. She left port from Maine 1779. I wasted seven years searching the coast of France.

BEN

She never made it to France. I found the ship's log of the HMS Erebus, a ship that left port two days before the Charlotte. The captain wrote that his ship barely survived a bad southeaster which I figured must have blown the Charlotte off course.

That stops Patrick. His eyes flash with excitement.

PATRICK

How far off course?

239 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

239

Ian works on his laptop while Powell and Shaw eat room service food. His computer BEEPS.

IAN

(triumphantly)  
Silence Dogood. Here she is.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN are the search results for "Silence" and "Declaration of Independence." We notice the name "SILENCE DOGOOD" many times.

SHAW (O.S.)

Who is it?

239 CONTINUED:

239

We PUSH IN on the screen, then PULL OUT and as we hear Agent Johnson's voice take over the explanation...

AGENT JOHNSON (O.S.)  
Silence Dogood, a.k.a., Benjamin Franklin.

We PULL BACK and realize that we have transitioned to...

240 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

240

Sadusky stands with his team at a make-shift command post. The FBI has just run the same Google Search.

Agent Johnson reads from his laptop screen.

AGENT JOHNSON  
Ben Franklin was 15 years old, apprenticing for his brother James' newspaper when he secretly wrote 14 letters to the Editor of *The Courant* using the pen name, Silence Dogood, a middle-aged widowed wife of a minister. She wrote about colonial life, gained quite a following, and even obtained proposals of marriage.

Sadusky regards the copied letters from Ben's apartment.

SADUSKY  
These letters were written by Benjamin Franklin?

Now, Agent Colfax steps up with a sheet of paper.

AGENT COLFAX  
The gift shop clerk ID'd Gates on the surveillance tapes from earlier in the evening.

Sadusky studies Ben's photo.

CLOSE ON THE PICTURE, a grainy surveillance image of Ben in his tuxedo as he passes through the security checkpoint upon entering the National Archives gala.

Sadusky hands the photo back to Agent Colfax.

SADUSKY  
Release his picture to the press. Dr. Chase's too. Someone's bound to spot them.

241 INT. COLONIAL HOME, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

241

Ben clears the dining room table. Abigail helps, but her eyes search the room and stop on...A PHONE. But it's too close to Ben to get to.

241 CONTINUED:

241

ABIGAIL  
Where's the bathroom?

BEN  
Down the hall. First door on the  
right.

Abigail disappears into the hall.

242 INT. COLONIAL HOME, HALL - NIGHT

242

Abigail moves down the hall and finds to the bathroom.  
Directly across the hall is a study. Abigail glances back  
toward the living room, then ducks into the study.

243 INT. COLONIAL HOME, STUDY - NIGHT

243

Packed with books on shelves and in piles. Abigail moves  
to a desk and finds a phone cradle...but no phone. She  
notices a collection of FRAMED BUTTONS hanging on the wall.

\*  
\*

CLOSE ON one of the framed buttons. It's a silver-plated  
George Washington Inaugural button. There is a note, "Dad,  
Found this in a backyard in Maryland. Love, Ben."

BEN (O.S.)  
Looking for this?

Abigail turns, startled. She sees the phone in Ben's hand.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I thought we had a deal.

ABIGAIL  
(covers)  
Dr. Herbert will be worried about  
me.

BEN  
You guys dating?

ABIGAIL  
Yes, and he's going to kill you.

BEN  
I figured. He looked like your  
type.

ABIGAIL  
You have no idea what my type is.

BEN  
I know you don't like treasure  
hunters.

ABIGAIL  
I like men I can trust.

243 CONTINUED: 243

Ben considers that, then hands her the phone and leaves.  
Abigail looks at the phone in her hand, surprised.

244 INT. COLONIAL HOME, DINING ROOM - NIGHT 244

Abigail emerges from the hallway with the phone to find Ben standing there.

ABIGAIL

Why did you come after me? You had  
the Declaration of Independence.  
You could've just gotten away.

BEN

Why didn't you call your boyfriend?

ABIGAIL

He's not my boyfriend.

They look at each other for a moment, then Riley enters.

RILEY

I parked the van around back.

Ben hands Abigail the gloves. She dons them, then opens  
the tube. They all look at each other for a beat, then...

Abigail carefully slips the Declaration of Independence out  
of the tube. The document practically glows with history.  
She catches her breath, mesmerized by its power, then  
gingerly unrolls the document. They are all awe-struck.

Now, Patrick enters with a TRAY OF TEA. He goes to set it  
on the table, right on the Declaration of Independence...

...but Ben quickly intercepts the tray.

BEN

Whoa! Not there.

Ben grabs the tray from his dad and sets it on the buffet.  
Now, Patrick notices the ancient parchment on the table.

PATRICK

Where'd you get that? It looks  
old.

BEN

A little over 200 years.

PATRICK

Wow. You sure?

Ben and Riley exchange knowing looks. Riley nods...

RILEY

Pretty sure.

244 CONTINUED:

244

PATRICK

What is it?

RILEY

Just a map.

PATRICK

I don't see anything.

He reaches to turn the parchment over, but Ben stops him.

BEN

This side. It's invisible ink.

PATRICK

So, put it in the oven.

ABIGAIL

No!

PATRICK

Why not? Ferrous sulfate inks can only be brought out with heat.

ABIGAIL

But it will damage the--

BEN

--parchment.

(to his dad)

She's right. It's very old. We can't risk compromising the map.

PATRICK

You need a reagent.

BEN

I know.

Ben grabs a slice of LEMON off the tea tray.

PATRICK

Just the upper right-hand corner.

BEN

(peevied)

I know.

ABIGAIL

If there is indeed a secret message, it will be marked with a symbol there first.

BEN

I know.

244 CONTINUED: (2)

244

He brushes the lemon over the corner of the parchment.  
They all eagerly...wait...for it to reveal...anything.

ABIGAIL

Nothing.

Riley looks hard at the parchment, ready to jump off the  
highest building.

RILEY

Nothing?

PATRICK

You sure it's this side?

BEN

It needs heat.

With that, Ben leans in and BREATHES on the parchment. As  
if by magic, the puff of warm breath reveals...

A SERIES OF NUMBERS. They appear briefly, flicker, then  
disappear. But everyone in the room sees them. A wash of  
silence overcomes them, then...

ABIGAIL

We need more heat.

245 CUT TO CLOSE ON a hairdryer blowing on a low setting on the 245  
parchment. As it does, a LONG SERIES OF FADED NUMBERS  
slowly emerge: 6.14.7, 4.54.4, 10.1.9...

ABIGAIL

Oh. My. God.

PATRICK

A series of numbers. 3 per set.

BEN

It's an Ottendorf cipher.

PATRICK

George Washington and the Marquis  
de Lafayette used them to pass secret  
messages from the front lines.

\*

RILEY

(covering)

Duh.

BEN

The first number indicates the page  
in the key, in this case, the set  
of Silence Dogood letters. The  
second number in the cipher is the  
line on that page. And the third  
is the word on that line.

245 CONTINUED:

245

RILEY

Where is the map with the "X"?

\*

BEN

There's never a map with an "X."

RILEY

Then, who started that legend?

Abigail studies the numbers, tears welling in her eyes.

ABIGAIL

This is amazing.

BEN

Dad, where're the letters? We need the letters.

PATRICK

(suddenly guilty)

When you left, I got rid of everything.

As they talk, Abigail picks up the document and holds it up to the chandelier light for closer inspection.

BEN

Dad, where are they?!

PATRICK

I donated them.

Riley hangs his head.

RILEY

I hope you got a big tax write-off.

BEN

Who'd you give them to?

PATRICK

There's only one place for them.

BEN

You gave them to the Ben Franklin Museum?

PATRICK

It completed their collection.

Abigail excitedly scrutinizes the writing on the Declaration of Independence.

ABIGAIL

This is a tremendous discovery! All this time. No one knew there was something on the back.

245 CONTINUED: (2)

245

PATRICK

On the back of what?

Patrick peeks at the front of the document, and his face falls as he now SEES WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PARCHMENT. It starts with, "In CONGRESS, July 4th 1776."

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Holy shit!

BEN

I know.

PATRICK

That's the--

BEN

--I know.

Patrick digests that, about to blow a gasket, then...

PATRICK

(excited)

It's brilliant! Putting the map on the back of an important document guaranteed the map's survival.

BEN

I know.

RILEY

Um, guys...

Riley's attention is drawn to the television in the den. On the screen is the grainy surveillance picture of Ben captioned with his name.

Ben goes to the television and turns it up.

REPORTER (ON SCREEN)

...for questioning in connection with an attempted robbery at the National Archives tonight. Authorities are also looking for this woman...

ON THE SCREEN, a picture of Abigail also appears. Abigail gasps.

REPORTER (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

...Dr. Abigail Chase, a museum employee who has been reported as missing. Police did not say whether Dr. Chase is a suspect or a witness, only that she is the only National Archives employee not currently accounted for...



245 CONTINUED: (3)

245

The thought of her being wanted almost makes Abigail faint.

ABIGAIL

We should turn ourselves in. We have evidence now.

BEN

The FBI will just think I put those numbers on the back. They'll put me in jail, the Declaration back on display, and Ian will just come after it again.

PATRICK

He's right. The Declaration of Independence will never be safe.

RILEY

So, now what?

PATRICK

Find that treasure.

Ben looks to his dad, surprised. It's first time he's seen a glimmer of approval in his dad's face in a long time.

ABIGAIL

We need to change our clothes.

246 EXT. HILLCREST NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

246

A swarm of POLICE CARS and government sedans sit parked on the driveway and street outside Patrick's home.

247 INT. COLONIAL HOME, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

247

Sadusky's team sweeps the house. Patrick sits calmly at the table as Sadusky scrutinizes the tea service.

PATRICK

My son told me to call you. Said otherwise I'd be aiding and abetting.

Sadusky looks to Agent Dawes who reads from a dossier.

AGENT DAWES

Benjamin Franklin Gates. Graduated with honors from Dartmouth with a PhD in American History. Spent his summers working on a deep sea salvage expeditions.

PATRICK

He was looking for Charlotte.

AGENT HENDRICKS

A girl?

247 CONTINUED:

247

PATRICK  
(dramatically)  
A quest.

The agents exchange eye-rolling looks, like "another whacko."

SADUSKY  
Sir, did your son say where he was going?

PATRICK  
(thinks)  
No, he never actually said.

\*  
\*

SADUSKY  
Your son's in a lot of trouble, Mr. Gates. He's stolen a National Treasure.

PATRICK  
Sometimes a man has to do something wrong in order to do something right.

SADUSKY  
And what would that right thing be?

Patrick reaches for something in his pocket and, IN AN INSTANT, every FED (except Sadusky) has their gun out and trained on Patrick who freezes. Sadusky sighs.

\*

SADUSKY (CONT'D)  
Guys. He's going for his wallet.

The agents holster their sidearms, and Patrick pulls out his wallet, takes out a \$1-bill, and lays it on the table.

PATRICK  
Have you ever heard of the Lost Treasure of the Templar Knights?

\*

248 EXT. COLONIAL HOME - NIGHT

248

Sadusky and his team of agents exit the house. As they walk, Sadusky studies the one-dollar bill.

AGENT JOHNSON  
A map on the back of the Declaration of Independence? Insanity obviously runs in the family.

\*

AGENT COLFAX  
Let's hope we recover the Declaration before he goes into endgame.

SADUSKY  
Whether or not there's a treasure map, Gates isn't the only one after it.

248 CONTINUED: 248

Agent Dawes looks to her boss, realizing...

AGENT DAWES

The gunfire outside the vault room...

SADUSKY

...Someone was shooting at Gates.  
Someone else who knew about the map.

Sadusky finally pockets the dollar bill.

SADUSKY (CONT'D)

Ben Gates had copies of the Silence  
Dogood letters at his apartment.  
He needed them for something. Let's  
find out where the originals are.

249 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 249

REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIERS armed with muskets fire a volley  
of shots at a line of RED COATS. BOOM-BOOM-BOOM! Several  
British fall. We WIDEN to reveal...

We're watching a re-enactment of a revolutionary battle.  
Horses, cannons, drums, gunfire. We MOVE through a CROWD  
OF TOURISTS which stands on the sidelines and come to...

WASHINGTON SQUARE, where a mock-up of a Continental Army  
encampment has been set up for the show. Standing between  
the tents, Ben and Abigail survey the scene.

ABIGAIL

He's taking too long. He's been  
caught.

BEN

They're not looking for Riley, just  
us. He's fine.

250 CUT TO - CLOSE ON a 12-year-old BOY'S FACE pressed against 250  
some glass. We WIDEN to see...

251 INT. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MUSEUM - DAY 251

The BOY is looking through exhibit glass at a collection of  
Franklin inventions and artifacts: a glass armonica, a  
Franklin stove, and many hand-written LETTERS.

As the boy studies the letters, we notice some of Sadusky's  
team are here, eyeing the crowd.

252 INT. BEN FRANKLIN MUSEUM, OFFICE - DAY 252

The museum CURATOR stands with Sadusky and Agent Dawes. He  
studies a photocopy of Ben Gates drivers license picture.

SADUSKY

We're expecting him to come here--

252 CONTINUED:

252

CURATOR

--I'm afraid you must be mistaken.

The curator hands the photo back to Sadusky.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

The Gates Family donated many of the Silence Dogood letters to us.

Sadusky and Agent Dawes exchange a curious look.

CURATOR (CONT'D)

Fascinating story how they came to have them, in fact. Goes all the way back to President Jackson...

253 INT. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MUSEUM - DAY

253

The boy finally finishes reading the letters and exits.

254 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY

254

The boy exits the museum, passing an ACTOR dressed like BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, spouting aphorisms to PASSERSBY. The boy crosses the cobblestone street and goes to...

RILEY. Sitting at a bus stop and working on a *Gettysburg Times* crossword puzzle. He looks up.

BOY

And.

RILEY

You sure? 4th letter, 22nd line--

BOY

--third word, "and."

RILEY

Good. Thanks.

Riley hands him \$5, then jots down "and" under the numbers "4.22.3."

ON HIS CROSSWORD, we see Riley's written words under the corresponding codes from the Declaration. So far, it reads:

"The trove unfolds for  
He who tolls pass and..."

255 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY

255

Another line of RED COATS falls to cannon fire...BOOM-BOOM! The crowd CHEERS, while Abigail grows increasingly anxious.

ABIGAIL

I can't take this anymore.

255 CONTINUED:

255

Ben watches the re-enactment.

BEN

I know. It's all wrong. We lost this battle and every other in Philadelphia...

Abigail regards him. That's not what she meant, but he continues on his tangent.

BEN (CONT'D)

...Most people don't realize that George Washington was a rather poor military tactician, and that it was really Benedict Arnold who won the war for us with his victory in the Battle of Saratoga which finally earned the Continental Army the support of France.

Abigail just stares at Ben.

BEN (CONT'D)

What?

ABIGAIL

Nothing. I just thought I was the only one obsessed with meaningless historical trivia.

BEN

There's no such thing. Sometimes...

As he talks, Abigail spots something over his shoulder...

IAN and SHAW moving through the crowd toward them.

BEN (CONT'D)

...the littlest things matter the mos--

Without warning, Abigail grabs Ben and...PULLS him IN FOR A PASSIONATE KISS.

Ben's surprised but goes with it until Abigail just as suddenly pulls out of the kiss.

ABIGAIL

Ian's here.

She motions with her eyes, and Ben follows them to see IAN and SHAW pushing through the crowd.

BEN

He must've figured out what "Silence" meant. Which means he's going to the museum.

255 CONTINUED: (2)

255

Ben moves to go, but Abigail grabs him.

ABIGAIL

I just want you to know that kiss  
meant nothing. I was only doing it  
to hide us.

BEN

History remembers what it wants to  
remember.

\*

With that, Ben and Abigail follow Ian and Shaw.

\*

256 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY

256\*

Crowded with TOURISTS. Ian and Shaw move through the throng.  
They come to the corner. Up ahead is the Ben Franklin  
Museum. In front, there are several FEDERAL AGENTS.

Ian stops, looks around, to across the street to where Riley  
is waiting.

Just then, however, a bus pulls up and stops right in front  
of Riley, blocking Ian's view.

257 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY

257

As people climb on and off the bus, Riley stares at something  
on the side of the bus. He smiles to himself...

RILEY

I'm a genius.

We REVERSE to see what he was seeing...

CLOSE ON THE WORD "PASS" inscribed in iron. We PULL BACK A  
little to see "PASS AND STOW." Then, a little more to see  
the words are inscribed on the Liberty Bell in an ad...

...on the side of the bus which now pulls away. A beat,  
then Ian steps up with Shaw, but RILEY'S GONE. Ian looks  
around. See the trash can. On top, the crossword puzzle.

258 INT. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MUSEUM - DAY

258

Sadusky and Agent Dawes exit the office. The other agents  
all signal him with, "Nothing yet."

Sadusky notices a WOMAN who looks like a prostitute reading  
the Dogood letters.

AGENT DAWES

I don't get it. Why would Gates  
want to steal something the family  
donated?

But Sadusky isn't listening. He pulls away from his team  
to follow the prostitute who is now leaving.

259 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY

259

The prostitute crosses the street to the bus stop, but Riley's long gone. The prostitute looks around.

SADUSKY (O.S.)  
Who're you looking for?

The prostitute sees the suit and immediately looks to run, but she's surrounded by the rest of Sadusky's team.

SADUSKY (CONT'D)  
Whoa, you're not in trouble. We're just looking for the same person you are.

260 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY

260\*

SOLDIERS march to the beat of drums and fife commands. Smoke rises over the field from cannon and musket fire. Riley moves down a line of Continental Army tents, oblivious to the "melee" in the background.

\*  
\*

RILEY  
I'm a genius. I'm a genius!

Suddenly, someone grabs him and pulls him BETWEEN THE TENTS. Riley almost screams, then sees it's just Ben and Abigail.

\*

BEN  
Ian's here.

\*  
\*

RILEY  
Doesn't matter. I got it. "The trove unfolds for he who tolls pass and..." I didn't get the last word, but I figured it ou--

BEN  
--The Liberty Bell.

RILEY  
How'd you know?

ABIGAIL  
"Tolls Pass and Stow." It's obvious.

\*

RILEY  
Not that obvious.

261 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY

261

The prostitute sits on the bench, surrounded by FBI.

PROSTITUTE  
All I know is the guy didn't want nothing for his money. Just a word.

261 CONTINUED: 261

SADUSKY

What word?

262 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 262

Soldiers march forward, then stop. An actor playing GEORGE WASHINGTON rides a horse, commanding his troops...

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Fire!

The soldiers fire synchronized volleys. BOOM-BOOM-BOOM!  
The British ranks thin. The crowd goes wild.

263 EXT. 4TH STREET - DAY 263\*

Agent Johnson sits in a parked sedan. Sadusky and the others wait by the open car door as Agent Johnson works on a laptop.

AGENT JOHNSON

6,903 search hits for the words "stow" and "Declaration of Independence." The top results being the Fourth of July and the Liberty Bell.

SADUSKY

The Liberty Bell?

AGENT JOHNSON

Two foundry workers named John Pass and John Stow cast the bell.

SADUSKY

That's it. Let's go.

264 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 264

Ian and Shaw move through the park.

SHAW

You're kidding, right?

IAN

I wish I were.

SHAW

You mean, we have to ring the Liberty Bell?!

265 INT. LIBERTY BELL PAVILION - DAY 265

Crowded with TOURISTS. A TOUR GUIDE stands next to the famous bell (which is enclosed in a glass display case).

TOUR GUIDE

...which hasn't been rung in over 150 years. It was in 1846 on George  
(MORE)



265 CONTINUED:

265

TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)  
Washington's birthday that the final  
expansion of the crack occurred,  
retiring the Liberty Bell  
permanently.

266 EXT. LIBERTY BELL PAVILION - DAY

266

A long line of TOURISTS snakes across the park plaza.  
Sadusky and his team move through the crowded plaza.

SADUSKY  
I want agents posted in the pavilion  
and surrounding plaza. As of right  
now, the Liberty Bell in under around-  
the-clock guard.

AGENT COLFAX  
What exactly do we think Gates is  
planning?

SADUSKY  
I don't know, but we already lost  
one national treasure, I'll be damned  
if we're going to lose another.

267 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL - DAY

267

Across the park from the new Liberty Bell Pavilion.

268 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY

268

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM! A trap door in the belfry floor is smashed  
open with the butt of the rifle, and Ben, Abigail, and Riley  
climb up onto the belfry's platform.

From here, there is a panoramic view of Independence Park  
and Liberty Pavilion.

RILEY  
The Liberty Bell is not here. It's  
over there.

ABIGAIL  
But the bell was here when the map  
was written.

BEN  
So, it must be rung from here.

Riley considers that, then...

RILEY  
OK, then we simulate it. We get  
the bell's exact size and metallurgic  
composition and determine the tone  
it made--

268 CONTINUED:

268

ABIGAIL

--E-flat.

RILEY

Perfect. We generate a church bell e-flat note digital wave file, we get a couple high excursion, low-distortion speakers up here, and plug our ears.

BEN

But what could ringing the bell possibly do?

RILEY

Maybe some stone will magically crumble away, finally revealing the "X" that marks the spot.

Abigail looks to the street below, swarming with POLICE.

ABIGAIL

One thing's for certain, it'll definitely alert everyone to our presence.

Ben looks at her, realizing...

BEN

The man who rang the Liberty Bell when the Declaration of Independence was signed...who was he?

ABIGAIL

Andrew McNair. There used to be a plaque commemorating him up here.

BEN

Find it.

They all three immediately get on their hands and knees and search the old belfry floor. A beat, then...

ABIGAIL

Here it is!

Ben hurries to her. Finds an old bronze plaque under layers of dirt. Ben rubs away the dirt with his hand.

CLOSE ON the plaque which is dedicated to:

"Andrew McNair  
For tolling the bell on July 8, 1776  
Proclaiming the signing of  
The Declaration of Independence  
--Member Lodge 43, Lancaster Pennsylvania--"

268 CONTINUED: (2)

268

Ben reads the last line of the plaque.

BEN  
 "Member Lodge 43"  
 (looks up)  
 McNair was a Freemason.

Ben grabs the rifle and pries up the plaque with the bayonet.

ABIGAIL  
 What are you doing?!

BEN  
 "The trove unfolds for he who tolls  
 Pass and Stow." The cipher was  
 talking about McNair.

The plaque finally pops off. Underneath...a SMALL HOLE in the floorboards. Ben looks to them. They both see it.

RILEY  
 Jesus...

Ben sticks his hand into the hole. A beat, then Ben pulls out his hand. Turns it over. Opens his fist, revealing...A PAIR OF OLD BIFOCALS.

\*  
 \*

Riley claps his hands together, happily.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
 OK! Super! It's been so worth it.  
 Can we talk about shares now? 'Cause  
 I really need a PAIR OF GLASSES!

BEN  
 Bifocals.

Abigail studies Ben, realizing...

ABIGAIL  
 Ben Franklin invented them.

RILEY  
 And I'm sure he's been looking for  
 this pair! Those Founding Fathers  
 and their fraternity pranks!

Riley mimics an old man's voice.

RILEY (CONT'D)	BEN
"Let's hide old Ben's bifocals!"	The map.
(feigns laughter)	ABIGAIL
"HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!"	Here.

Abigail slips the Declaration out of the musket barrel, and they quickly unroll it as Riley continues his rant.

268 CONTINUED: (3)

268

RILEY

"And then, because we have NOTHING BETTER TO DO, let's put a secret message on the back of the Declaration of Independence!"

BEN

The trove unfolds...

ABIGAIL

...means the treasure can be seen...

Ben dons the bifocals and looks at the Declaration.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Well?

Ben takes off the glasses. Hands them to Abigail. She slips them on as Riley rattles on.

RILEY

"And let's crack the Liberty Bell too!" "Hey, good idea! And FUNNY!"

Abigail looks at the Declaration. What she sees takes her breath away. Now, Riley notices the look on her face.

RILEY (CONT'D)

What?

Abigail stares at the Declaration as if in a trance.

RILEY (CONT'D)

What?

Abigail slowly looks to Ben in disbelief. He smiles big. Riley looks at them both, impatient...

RILEY (CONT'D)

What? Another riddle? What do we have to do now? T.P. the White House?!

Ben takes the glasses off of Abigail's face and hands them to Riley, who puts them on, and we go to his POV.

CLOSE ON THE BACK OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. As the lenses come into view...

The blank parchment comes alive! A 3-D image magically appears, rising out of the various shades of parchment colors, beiges and tans, in a prism, Magic-Eye effect...

An 18th CENTURY CHURCH and CEMETERY. An "X" marks a spot in the field of graves. The map is dated "August 17, 1776."

RILEY (CONT'D)

(laughs excited)

I knew it! There it is! "X" marks the spot! That's what I've been talking about!

268 CONTINUED: (4)

268

Ben takes the bifocals from Riley. Studies the map again.

BEN

That's Trinity Church.

ABIGAIL

The original Trinity Church burned down just two months after the Declaration of Independence was signed.

BEN

I don't think that was a coincidence.

\*

269 EXT. LIBERTY BELL PAVILION - DAY

269\*

Powell exits the pavilion and rejoins Ian and Shaw in the plaza. Right behind them is Independence Hall.

POWELL

They're not inside.

IAN

They're here somewhere.

Ian looks around, then realizes. He looks up to...

270 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY

270

Abigail rolls up the Declaration and slips it into its cover. Just then, we hear someone coming up the steps.

RILEY

Someone's coming.

BEN looks down from the belfry just as IAN looks up from the plaza below. THEIR EYES CONNECT.

BEN

Ian.

Riley pulls open the trap door and sees POWELL sprinting up the stairs. Riley slams the trap door shut.

271 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, STAIRWELL - DAY

271

Powell tries to push open the belfry's trap door, but...

272 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY

272

Riley's standing on the trap door. He yells to Ben...

RILEY

Go!

Ben and Abigail climb out of the belfry. Riley shoves the musket barrel through an iron ring latch on the trap door.

\*

\*

- 273 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, STAIRWELL - DAY 273  
Powell shoots up at the trap door...BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!
- 274 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY 274  
Riley tap-dances as gunfire chews up the floorboards at his feet. WOOD SPLINTERS and POPS.
- 275 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, CLOCK TOWER PARAPET - DAY 275  
Ben and Abigail peer over the edge. It's a 20-foot drop to the roof. Ben looks around for other options. Abigail hands him the Declaration of Independence.
- BEN  
What're you doing?
- ABIGAIL  
I don't want to be responsible for bending it!
- With that, she turns and...JUMPS! She LANDS HARD on the rock and tarpaper roof below, then looks up to Ben, who's a little awe-struck by her.
- He tosses the Declaration down to her, then jumps too.
- 276 CLOSE ON the iron latch as BOOM! Gunfire blows it out. 276
- 277 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY 277  
Powell bursts up through the trap door into the belfry, hurries to the edge, and sees Ben and Abigail below.
- 278 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, ROOF - DAY 278  
Ben grabs Abigail and lunges out of the way as the roof is raked with gunfire. They land hard on a slanted part of the roof. The force knocks the Declaration of Independence from Abigail's grip.
- Bullets POCK the shingles in their wake, barely missing the Declaration as it ROLLS...DOWN...THE...INCLINE.
- 279 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY 279  
Powell chases them with gunfire, when suddenly Riley KIPS DOWN from the outside the belfry's archway and...
- KICKS POWELL in the FACE! Powell staggers back, then charges Riley, slamming him into the wall.
- 280 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, ROOF - DAY 280  
Ben and Abigail slide out of control down the incline. Ben gets a foothold. Throws out his hand, just catching THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE inches from the edge.

280 CONTINUED: 280

But Abigail isn't so lucky. She's out of his reach. She tumbles OFF THE LEDGE! She SCREAMS!

281 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, BELFRY - DAY 281

Powell whip-kicks Riley in the chin. He stumbles backwards. Falls through trap door, grabbing the lip with one hand. Powell scrambles out of the belfry.

282 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, ROOF - DAY 282

Abigail's fingers grip the rain gutter. A three-story drop below her. Ben scrambles to the edge and peers over. From his vantage point, we have a nice, clear view of...

Abigail's cleavage. It's impossible not to notice. And it gives Ben pause. The rain gutter CREAKS, ready to give.

ABIGAIL  
Um, how about a little help?

Ben looks back to see POWELL jump down from the clock tower.

BEN  
No time.

Ben takes the Declaration of Independence...

BEN (CONT'D)  
Hold this.

...And SHOVES it down into Abigail's bosom. She's aghast.

ABIGAIL  
You can't--

BEN  
--Whatever you do, don't bend it.

With that, Ben stands and SLAMS his foot down hard on the rain gutter which TEARS AWAY FROM THE BUILDING! Rivet by rivet, POP-POP-POP!

We FOLLOW ABIGAIL as she falls, jerking sharply each time a rivet tears away from the plaster. She holds on tight as the rain gutter swings down like a stiff copper vine...

283 TO INDEPENDENCE SQUARE. To her surprise, she lands softly. 283

284 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, ROOF - DAY 284

Powell goes to the edge and sees Abigail getting away. He hurries to a roof access ladder, but BEN TACKLES him from behind and pins him to the ground.

Just then, we hear ABIGAIL SCREAM! Ben looks down to see Ian and Shaw throw ABIGAIL into a Corvette, then peel out.

- 284 CONTINUED: 284
- Ben takes off sprinting, running the length of the roof in the direction of the Corvette.
- POWELL gets up and takes off running after Ben.
- RILEY clammers down from the clock tower and joins the chase.
- BEN gets to the end of the roof. There is a gap between Independence Hall and Congress Hall. A big one. No time to debate it. Ben LAUNCHES HIMSELF across the gap...
- 285 EXT. CONGRESS HALL, ROOF - DAY 285
- Ben lands hard, shoulder-rolls to his feet.
- 286 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL, ROOF - DAY 286
- Powell follows suit. He LEAPS across the chasm...
- ...But lands short, his body slamming against the bricks, then falling to the plaza below.
- Riley sees him fall, looks away, decides to take the stairs.
- 287 EXT. CONGRESS HALL, ROOF - DAY 287
- Ben sprints across the roof. Looks down to see the CORVETTE in traffic. A TRUCK a few cars behind.
- Ben FLINGS HIMSELF off the roof...and into a TREE. Lands on a branch. Which instantly BREAKS. Ben tumbles onto...
- 288 EXT. TRUCK, MOVING - DAY 288
- The roof of the truck. THUNK!
- 289 INT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 289
- Ian drives. Abigail sits stiffly in the front passenger seat, Shaw's gun to the back of her head.
- IAN  
Where's the map?
- ABIGAIL  
It's called the Declaration of Independence. And it's the reason we kicked your ass in the war.
- Ian sees the plastic sticking up from Abigail's blouse and reaches for it, but Abigail GRABS HIS WRIST.
- IAN  
Ah-ah-ah! Mustn't wrinkle it.
- She relents, and Ian slips the document out of her bosom.



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289 CONTINUED: 289

IAN (CONT'D)  
Consider this reparation.

290 EXT. TRUCK, MOVING - DAY 290

Ben crouches like a rodeo rider as the truck pulls alongside the Corvette. Ben lunges...

291 EXT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 291

Ben lands on top of the Corvette...THUNK!

292 INT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 292

Ian and Shaw hear the clatter overhead. Ian pulls a gun from under his seat and FIRES up into the car's roof!

293 EXT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 293

Ben rolls aside as the car's roof is ripped up by gunfire.

294 INT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 294

Abigail grabs Ian's arm and struggles with him. Ian can't drive, shoot Ben, and fight her at the same time.

295 EXT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 295

Ben barely manages to hang on as the car spins sideways across traffic, then CRASHES into the side of another car. \*

296 EXT. LIBERTY BELL PLAZA - DAY 296

Sadusky hears, then sees the mayhem in the adjacent street.

SADUSKY  
Get people over there now!

Agent Dawes gets on her radio as they all start sprinting toward 5th Street.

297 EXT. 5TH STREET - DAY 297

SADUSKY and AGENT DAWES push through panicked TOURISTS, see the Corvette speeding through traffic with Ben clinging to the roof. Is it him? Sadusky calls out... \*

SADUSKY  
GATES! \*

Ben turns. Their eyes meet. Sadusky gets a good look; it's his man. Sadusky pulls out his gun, has a clean shot...

As the Corvette slaloms traffic, Sadusky follows him with his gun. An easy target. His finger tightens on the trigger...but...he...just...can't...do...it.

- 297 CONTINUED: 297
- The Corvette disappears around a building. Sadusky lowers his gun, mad at himself.
- SADUSKY (CONT'D)
- Shit.
- 298 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 298
- The Corvette SLAMS over the curb, sending screaming PEOPLE ducking and diving out of the way. The Corvette speeds toward...
- A LINE OF RED COATS. Soldiers scatter, parting like the Red Sea. HORSES buck and BOLT!
- 299 INT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 299
- Ian navigates through the battle. Suddenly, Ben reaches in through the open window and grabs the Declaration of Independence from him.
- Ian fights it, but Abigail BITES HIS ARM! Ian smacks her, then whips the wheel...
- 300 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 300
- ...Sending Ben flying off the top of the Corvette.
- We FOLLOW BEN who SLAMS onto the grass. Losing the Declaration of Independence which...
- ...ROLLS AWAY down a grassy hill.
- Ben gets to his feet, stunned. Realizes he's lost the document which...
- ...ROLLS into the path of...
- A GROUP OF OFFICERS ON HORSEBACK.
- We FOLLOW the DECLARATION as it rolls through the sea of hooves...SLAMMING...DOWN...ALL...AROUND...IT!
- It finally stops rolling right in front of a BRITISH OFFICER ON HORSEBACK who tries to calm his panicked horse.
- Ben charges into the stampede.
- 301 INT. CORVETTE, MOVING - DAY 301
- Ian sees the Ben going for the Declaration of Independence, and he GUNS the Corvette right toward Ben and the horse.
- 302 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 302
- The Corvette's ENGINE SCREAMS. Ben DIVES one way. The horse rears back the other way, launching the BRITISH OFFICER skyward.

302 CONTINUED: 302

The Corvette skids up between Ben and the Declaration of Independence. The driver's side door pops open, and Ian scoops up the Declaration of Independence.

303 INT. CORVETTE - DAY 303

Ian closes his door and turns back to drive but is greeted by Abigail's elbow, which she SLAMS INTO HIS FACE.

Ian's nose crunches, spurts blood. Pissed off as all hell, Ian reels around with his gun...

IAN  
You little bitc--

He goes to shoot, but just then, the passenger side door pops open, and BEN PULLS ABIGAIL OUT THE OTHER SIDE.

304 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 304

Ben and Abigail roll away from the Corvette in the grass.

305 INT. CORVETTE - DAY 305

Ian goes to shoot them but is stopped by...

SHAW  
Forget 'em. Look!

Ian looks through the windshield to see dozens of FEDS sprinting onto the field of battle. Ian GUNS IT.

306 EXT. INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - DAY 306

The Corvette peels out. Abigail watches it go.

ABIGAIL  
He's got the Declaration!

BEN  
I know.

The British Officer staggers to his feet. Goes to his horse, but the horse is...

...COMMANDEERED by Ben who leaps into his horse's saddle, whips it around to find his path is blocked by...

SADUSKY AND A LINE OF FEDERAL AGENTS. Guns drawn.

SADUSKY  
Freeze, Gates!

Ben looks the Corvette which disappears into traffic.

BEN  
You're letting him get away!

306 CONTINUED:

306

SADUSKY

Get off the horse, and get on your knees!

The FBI AGENTS move in as we PULL UP above the mayhem to...

A GOD'S EYE VIEW of the FEDS swarming in on Abigail and Ben who drops to his knees, defeated as we DISSOLVE TO...

307 CLOSE ON the bifocals which sit on top of an otherwise bare metal table. We WIDEN to reveal we're in...

307

308 INT. FBI, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

308

Ben sits across from Sadusky, Agents Johnson and Dawes, who finishes the last dregs of her coffee from a styrofoam cup.

AGENT DAWES

They don't look like magic glasses.

BEN

There's nothing magic about it. It's an ancient optical effect. The Egyptians encoded all their major art works with it. It's believed humans used to be able to see the 3D images with the naked eye, but the human eye evolved.

SADUSKY

Evolved?

BEN

In the Bible, the oceans are described as being the "color of wine." That's because the human eye couldn't see the color blue back then. Now, it can. Benjamin Franklin was a genius and inventor. He designed these special lenses and used this optical effect to hide the map on the back of the Declaration of Independence.

SADUSKY

You sure you don't want a lawyer?

BEN

Haven't you ever wondered why all those symbols are on the back of our one-dollar bill? The All-Seeing Eye? The pyramid? Our Founding Fathers were Freemasons, descendants of the Templar Knights who go all the way back to Ancient Egypt.

Sadusky and his team all exchange dubious looks, then...

308 CONTINUED:

308

SADUSKY

Anyone want more coffee?

No takers. Sadusky moves to go, but Ben stops him with...

\*

BEN

You didn't shoot me. Why?

SADUSKY

What?

BEN

On the car. You had a clear bead on me. Why didn't you take it?

SADUSKY

Because you don't fire into a crowd.

BEN

Because you knew there was something else going on here.

Sadusky studies Ben. Says nothing.

BEN (CONT'D)

Let me get the Declaration back. Ian Howe can't find the treasure without the glasses. I'll cut a deal with him. Tell him I'll give him the treasure if he gives us the Declaration of Independence.

SADUSKY

Why don't you just tell us what the map said, and we'll go make the trade with Mr. Howe?

BEN

Ian's too smart for that.

Sadusky considers that, nodding his head, then...

AGENT JOHNSON

You wanna know what I believe?

Everyone looks to Agent Johnson.

AGENT JOHNSON (CONT'D)

That you'd do anything to get your hands on that treasure. That you and Ian Howe made a deal. But once you got close to it, you both got greedy and you each decided you'd get more of the treasure without the other. Am I right?

Before Ben can answer, a KNOCK at the door interrupts.

308 CONTINUED: (2)

308

Sadusky opens it to find Agents Colfax and Hendricks.

SADUSKY  
You find Howe?

Colfax and Hendricks exchange a solemn look, then...

AGENT COLFAX  
He just called.

SADUSKY  
Great. Where--

AGENT HENDRICKS  
--With his ransom demands. He wants Ben Gates. He's requested that we release him...

AGENT COLFAX  
...And that no police or federal agents follow him.

SADUSKY  
Absolutely not. Out of the question.

AGENT COLFAX  
He said that if we don't comply with his demands by midnight tonight, he'll...

Agent Colfax's voice trails off.

SADUSKY  
He'll what?

AGENT HENDRICKS  
He'll...  
(chokes out the words)  
...cut off a piece of the Declaration of Independence every hour and send it to us in a box.

The agents are all horrified by the prospect.

BEN  
He's not bluffing.

Agent Johnson loses it and charges Ben, grabbing him by the collar and throwing him up against the wall.

AGENT JOHNSON  
You little prick. How do we know that you and Howe didn't plan this whole thing?!

BEN  
You don't.

308 CONTINUED: (3) 308

Agent Johnson stares daggers at Ben who looks to Sadusky.

BEN (CONT'D)  
But I'm all you got.

309 INT. FBI, BULL PEN - DAY 309

Sadusky escorts a handcuffed Ben toward a glass walled conference room. Inside, agents huddle around Agent Hendricks who talks on the phone.

Hendricks sees Sadusky and pokes his head out of the room.

AGENT HENDRICKS  
It's Howe! He wants to talk to Gates.

310 INT. FBI, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 310

Wearing handcuffs, Ben takes the phone from Agent Hendricks.

BEN  
(into the phone)  
Hello, Ian.

A long beat as Ben listens. A digital recorder records the conversation in the background while Agent Colfax monitors it on headphones. Finally....

BEN (CONT'D)  
Yes, I understand.

With that, he hangs up and looks to Sadusky.

BEN (CONT'D)  
USS Intrepid. Port side. East River. He's coming in by chopper.

SADUSKY  
New York?

BEN  
In three hours.

AGENT DAWES  
We'd better hurry.

AGENT JOHNSON  
He say anything else?

BEN  
No feds. No wires. Or no deal.

311 EXT. UPPER NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY 311

Islands crammed with high rises.

- 312 EXT. USS INTREPID - DAY 312  
Retired combat aircraft sit idle on the deck. Flags and pennants flap in the breeze.
- 313 EXT. HARBOR PARKING LOT - DAY 313  
A high-tech van sits in the parking lot. Several antennas protrude from the van's roof.
- 314 INT. FBI VAN - DAY 314  
This surveillance vehicle is packed with equipment. Shirt off, Ben is wired by Sadusky's team while Sadusky watches. Sitting at a computer bay, Agent Colfax wears headphones.
- AGENT COLFAX  
Say something.
- BEN  
Can I put my shirt back on?
- AGENT COLFAX  
All right. He's good.
- 315 EXT. HARBOR PARKING LOT - DAY 315  
Ben climbs out of the van. Turns back.
- BEN  
I need the bifocals.
- Agent Dawes gives them to him, and Ben pockets them.
- SADUSKY  
As soon as he shows you the Declaration, we'll move in. Don't try anything.
- 316 EXT. USS INTREPID, BRIDGE - DAY 316  
Hidden here is an FBI SNIPER. Through his scope, we FOLLOW Ben as he climbs the gangway and steps onto the deck.
- 317 EXT. BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY 317  
Across the street, more FEDS watch and wait. Agent Hendricks searches the skies with binoculars for the chopper.
- 318 EXT. USS INTREPID, DECK - DAY 318  
Ben crosses the deck to the port side.
- 319 EXT. BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY 319  
Finally, Agent Hendricks sees something in the distance.



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319 CONTINUED: 319

AGENT HENDRICKS  
I got a visual.

We see it now. A TINY SPECK in the sky. A chopper?

320 INT. FBI VAN - DAY 320

Sadusky sits with Agents Dawes and Colfax.

AGENT DAWES  
Think it's Howe?

Sadusky leans into a microphone.

SADUSKY  
Get ready, Gates.

321 EXT. USS INTREPID, DECK - DAY 321

Ben moves to the edge of the deck. Nothing but river below.  
He checks his watch, then...

BEN  
(into his mic)  
Sadusky?

322 INTERCUT Sadusky in the van. 322

SADUSKY  
(into his mic)  
Yeah?

BEN (VIA MIC)  
I want you to know that Abigail had  
nothing to do with this. I know  
you believe me.

323 INTERCUT Sadusky and Dawes, exchanging worried looks. 323

AGENT DAWES  
What the hell is he talking about?!

SADUSKY  
Shit! He set us up!

324 INTERCUT BEN on the deck. He JUMPS! A 60-foot drop... 324

325 SPLASH! Ben knifes into the East River. 325

326 INT. FBI VAN - DAY 326

There's a loud POP! As the wires on Ben's body short out.  
Agent Colfax whips off his headset.

AGENT COLFAX  
Sonofabitch!

327 EXT. HARBOR PARKING LOT - DAY 327

Calling orders into a radio, Sadusky and Dawes jump out of the van and sprint across the parking lot.

SADUSKY

Gates jumped! He's in the river!  
Move in! Move in!

328 EXT. USS INTREPID, BRIDGE - DAY 328

The FBI SNIPER scrambles, searches the water below, can't see shit. The flight deck blocks his view.

329 EXT. EAST RIVER - DAY 329

Ben surfaces a few feet from the hull. A beat, then BUBBLES appear next to him and...

A DIVER'S HEAD pops out of the water. The diver slips back his mask...it's RILEY.

BEN

Ransom demand?

Riley grins, affects a British accent.

RILEY

I rather liked that part too.

He hands Ben a TANK, REGULATOR, and set of FINS. Grins.

BEN

Just like diving for that wreck off  
the coast of France.

Ben jams the regulator into his mouth, and they disappear from the surface.

330 EXT. USS INTREPID, DECK - DAY 330

FEDS lean over the flight deck, searching the murky water.

331 EXT. HARBOR - DAY 331

More FEDS scour the shore. No sign of Ben.

332 INT. FBI, HOLDING CELLS - DAY 332

Sadusky moves purposefully down a line of holding cells, stops at one. Inside, sits Abigail.

SADUSKY

We know you're not involved. You're  
free to go.

Abigail looks at him, surprised.

333 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - EVENING 333

On the corner of Wall Street and Broadway, this medieval gothic church is dwarfed by modern skyscrapers all around.

334 INT. TRINITY CHURCH - EVENING 334

We FOLLOW a man's legs, walking up the aisle. He stops a pew. Sits. We WIDEN to reveal that it's IAN.

BEN (O.S.)  
You're late.

We WIDEN MORE to reveal BEN in the pew in front of Ian.

IAN  
I took a look around. Waited.  
Made sure you weren't working with  
the FBI.

BEN  
Satisfied?

IAN  
Not until I get that treasure.

BEN  
Do you have the Declaration of  
Independence?

IAN  
If I give it to you now, how do I  
know you won't just walk off with  
it and forget about the treasure?

BEN  
How do I know you'll give me the  
Declaration of Independence after I  
show you where the treasure is?

IAN  
I guess we're just going to have to  
trust each other.

BEN  
That's easy for you to say. I never  
tried to kill you.

IAN  
Come on, Ben. This is a treasure  
hunt. It's just the way it is. I  
actually quite like you. If we  
weren't such enemies, I do believe  
we'd be great friends.

BEN  
Forget it, Ian. Deal's off.

334 CONTINUED:

334

Ben stands and starts down the aisle. Ian calls after him... \*

IAN

All right!

Ian pulls out his cell phone. Punches in a number.

IAN (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Bring it.

BEN

I want the pipe too.

IAN

What pipe?

BEN

The Meerschaum pipe. From the Charlotte. I found it. You took it.

Ian rolls his eyes, then talks into the phone...

IAN

And bring the bloody pipe.

With that, Ian hangs up. A beat, then the church doors open, and SHAW enters with Declaration of Independence in a mailing tube.

Shaw approaches and hands Ben the tube. He opens it, verifies that the Declaration of Independence is inside, then hands it back.

Ben then reaches into his pocket and pulls out THE BIFOCALS. Ian regards them, realizing...

IAN (CONT'D)

The All Seeing Eye.

BEN

(excitedly)

We found them in the Independence Hall belfry. There really is a map on the back of the Declaration of Independence. It's the most fantastic thing you'll ever see!

Ian is caught up in the moment. He reaches for the bifocals, but Ben "accidentally" drops them.

We watch as THE BIFOCALS FALL TO THE FLOOR IN SLO-MO and then land on the tiled floor...CRACK!

And if that isn't bad enough, Ben finishes them off by STOMPING ON THEM WITH HIS SHOE...CRUNCH!

334 CONTINUED: (2)

334

The bifocals lie on the floor in a million crystal pieces.

BEN (CONT'D)

Whoops! I guess you'll just have to take my word for it.

Enraged, Ian lunges at Ben and tackles him to the church floor. PARISHIONERS crane their necks to see the commotion.

Ian pins Ben and shoves a gun into Ben's stomach.

IAN

I'll kill you for that!

BEN

You do, and the secret to the treasure dies with me.

Ian stares at Ben. Knows he's not bluffing.

BEN (CONT'D)

I give you the treasure; you give me the Declaration of Independence.

IAN

That's it?

BEN

That's it.

Ian stands, then holds out his hand for Ben.

IAN

I guess that makes us partners again.

Ben ignores him. Gets to his feet.

BEN

Oh yeah. And no guns.

335 INT. TRINITY CHURCH, FOYER - NIGHT

335

The REVEREND enters the foyer just as Ben, Ian, and Shaw exit. The Reverend moves to the collection dish and finds...

...Two GUNS. He looks around, where did these come from?

336 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

336

Ben, Ian, and Shaw exit the church, passing AN OLD LADY IN A BLACK SHAWL who reaches out and GRABS BEN'S WRIST!

Startled, Ben looks to the woman, realizes it's...ABIGAIL. She pushes back her shroud.

BEN

What're you doing here?!

336 CONTINUED: 336

ABIGAIL

I saw the map, remember? \*

Ben and Ian exchange a knowing look.

IAN

Bloody hell!

ABIGAIL

Don't worry. Nobody followed me. \*

337 INT. PLAZA HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT 337

Sadusky, Agent Dawes, and Agent Johnson enter. Agents Hendricks and Colfax stand outside the ladies restroom, tails between their legs. \*

AGENT COLFAX

She asked to go to the bathroom. \*

AGENT HENDRICKS

She was only in there for 30 seconds. I swear. \*

Sadusky looks around, moving forward.

SADUSKY

All right. Both Gates and Dr. Chase came here, to Manhattan. What for?

AGENT JOHNSON

The treasure.

AGENT HENDRICKS

There's no way any treasure's still buried here. Everything's changed, ground's been dug up for subways and underground parking lots, high rises.

SADUSKY

So what in Manhattan hasn't changed in over 200 years?

338 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT 338

Worn tombstones and crypts going all the way back to the 17th century are enclosed in this ancient churchyard by an old wrought iron fence.

Ben, Abigail, Ian, and Shaw come around the corner.

IAN

Normally I find graveyards rather depressing, but in this case, I find it uplifting and full of promise. Where do we start?

338 CONTINUED:

338

Riley approaches, carrying a shovel.

RILEY

Uh, bad news. There's no "X."

BEN

Yes, there is.

RILEY

I've looked all over.

BEN

You're not looking right.

IAN

Problem, partner?

BEN

No.

Ben and Abigail look around. Then, Ben looks to the sky.

BEN (CONT'D)

In the map, there was a crescent moon in the sky.

\*  
\*

ABIGAIL

Maybe the "X" can only be seen at night.

\*  
\*

Realizing, Ben starts walking back toward the church. Riley calls after him.

\*

RILEY

Well, it's night now, and I don't see it!

With that, Ben pulls open the heavy church doors, and...

LIGHT SPILLS OUT OF THE CHAPEL, cutting a swath through the graveyard, casting EERIE TOMBSTONE SHADOWS everywhere.

None of which look like an "X." Except maybe...

Ben moves to where the shadow of a plant is cast onto the wall of A LONG STONE CRYPT.

Ben backtracks, following the source of the shadow to...

A GRAVESTONE. Covered in ivy. As Ben starts pulling away the ivy, Ian and the others approach.

Ben clears the ivy, revealing the gravestone. We see now that a TEMPLAR CROSS has been hewn out of the ancient stone.

They all exchange knowing looks.

338 CONTINUED: (2)

338

RILEY (CONT'D)

"X" marks the spot.

IAN

Here? Under this grave?

Ian grabs Riley's shovel, goes to start digging, but Ben stops him with...

BEN

No.

Ben points across the cemetery.

BEN (CONT'D)

There.

They all follow his finger and finally see it. The "X" in the gravestone casts a giant shadow of an "X" on the side of the stone crypt. Ben smiles.

BEN (CONT'D)

"X" marks the spot.

He moves to the crypt. The shadow falls in the direct center. Riley laughs excitedly.

RILEY

Can you believe that?

IAN

I will when I see the treasure.

Ben kneels beside the worn crypt. Feels carefully along the surface as if reading Braille. He stops. Digs out some soft dirt, revealing what looks to be...

A SMALL KEYHOLE.

BEN

Ian, give me the pipe.

Shaw digs the pipe out of his pocket and hands it to Ben. Abigail eyes the pipe.

\*  
\*

ABIGAIL

My God, that's an amazing piece!  
What craftsmanship!

BEN

I know. That's why I hate this part.

ABIGAIL

What part?

Ben SLAMS the pipe against the stone. It SHATTERS, revealing a THIN SKELETON KEY that was hidden inside.



338 CONTINUED: (3)

338

Ben scoops up the key and slips it into the key hole. A perfect fit. He looks to the others who all stand by anxiously, then TURNS THE KEY.

Suddenly, there is a loud SCRAPING SOUND as a two-foot thick section of the crypt's lid SLIDES OPEN on a ancient pulley system. As it opens we can see...

A NARROW PASSAGE. Barely wide enough for one person to squeeze through. A very dark.

They all exchange a look. And can't help but smile at their sudden success. Ian looks to Riley.

IAN

You first.

RILEY

No way. The guy who goes first always gets killed.

ABIGAIL

That's silly.

RILEY

Hey, I don't make the rules. There's always a map with an "X," and there's always a trap. Maps and traps. That's just what guys who hide treasures do.

BEN

I'll go first.

Ben flicks on a flashlight and ducks down inside.

339 INT. UNDERGROUND STAIRWAY - NIGHT

339

Old moss covered steps descend at a steep angle into darkness. Ben waves his flashlight around. The passageway below takes a sharp turn. He calls up to the others.

BEN

Looks OK!

340 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

340

Riley steps down next, but just then, the lid begins to RUMBLE CLOSED! Ian pushes Abigail harshly aside.

341 INT. UNDERGROUND STAIRWAY - NIGHT

341

Ben hears the rumbling, looks back, sees Ian and Shaw coming down the stairs, pushing by Riley.

BEN

Where's Abigail?!

341 CONTINUED: 341

Ben pushes by them and charges back to the stairs to see that the crypt entrance is CLOSING...CLOSING...

342 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT 342

Abigail looks to the crypt. It's almost closed. She scrambles to her feet, lunges for the crypt, and...

TUMBLES through the door...

343 INT. UNDERGROUND STAIRWAY - NIGHT 343

...and ROLLS RIGHT INTO Ben's arms just as the crypt door seals behind her, inches from crushing her. Ben holds her, their faces almost touching. The chemistry...electric.

ABIGAIL

How'd I know if I hung out with you long enough, I'd eventually be robbing graves?

Ben grins, cocky. Just then, Riley pokes his head into the stairwell, carrying a lantern. \*

\*

RILEY

You guys coming down the creepy stairway or what?

344 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT 344

Ben, Abigail, and Riley join Ian and Shaw, and they move down this long, stone-walled tunnel.

IAN

I know you all think I'm the "bad guy," but were it not for me making the hard choices, we wouldn't be here now, would we?

BEN

If you don't want to be the "bad guy," Ian, all you have to do is give me the Declaration of Independence.

IAN

Even if I gave it to you, you wouldn't leave. You're too close.

BEN

Try me.

Ian studies Ben for a beat, then...

IAN

Sorry. I need you to find the treasure.

344 CONTINUED:

344

Abigail holds her lantern up to the walls which are intermittently coffered with lions' heads, solar-crosses, and snakes. She looks to Ben who explains...

BEN  
Masonic symbols.

ABIGAIL  
What do they mean?

BEN  
That we're getting close.

RILEY  
But watch out for the trap. Because it's coming up.

345 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, OSSUARY - NIGHT

345

Ben, Abigail, Riley, Ian, and Shaw enter this dark, dank, dirt-walled room. They shine the lights about, but there's nothing here.

IAN  
Dead end.

Suddenly, a SKELETON'S TORSO falls out of the ceiling, right in front of Riley's face. He SCREAMS!

Ben shines his flashlight upwards to see...

HUNDREDS OF GRINNING SKULLS, half buried in the dirt ceiling, peering down at them. The remnants of uniforms, boots, and brass buttons can be seen.

ABIGAIL  
Hessians.  
(off Riley's look)  
German soldiers who fought for the  
British during the Revolution.  
They were buried in a common grave.

\*  
\*

Shaw looks up. Just above him, there is a gun and flintlock powder horn in a dead soldier's belt.

IAN  
There must be another outlet.  
Something we missed. Come on.

They all turn to go, but Shaw hangs back. He reaches up to the gun and tries to take it, but it's stuck.

As Shaw yanks harder, bits of dirt and dust rain down on him. Suddenly...

A BAYONETED RIFLE SWINGS out of the ceiling like a pendulum attached to a skeleton's arm, and...

345 CONTINUED:

345

...STABS SHAW in the chest!

The group turns and sees Shaw as he staggers back with the rifle stuck in his chest. Ben goes to help him, but Shaw crashes into...

The dirt wall behind him which caves in under his weight. Shaw falls through the hole in the wall, screaming all the way down. Which sounds like a long way down.

The group rushes to the hole in the wall and shine their lights into it, revealing...

A DEEP, NARROW SHAFT in the wall. In the shaft, there hangs two heavy chains with weights attached.

IAN (CONT'D)

Well, that was fortunate, now wasn't it?

Ben reaches into the shaft and adjusts the weights on the chains. The chains CREAK as an ancient WOODEN BOX descends into view from higher in the shaft.

Ben and Abigail exchange a look.

ABIGAIL

It looks like an elevator.

Ben and Riley pry open the door on the box, and a MILLION RATS and COCKROACHES pour out from the elevator cab! They all gulp, staring at the vermin. A beat, then...

RILEY

I hate elevators.

Ben steps inside. The elevator CREAKS and GROANS but holds.

BEN

Come on.

They all step in. MORE CREAKING. Ben adjusts the weights again and the cab descends. \*

\*

346 EXT./INT. TRINITY CHURCH, VARIOUS - NIGHT

346

Sadusky's team sweep the church and surrounding grounds.

347 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

347

Sadusky is here, kneeling in the dirt next to the crypt. He picks up a piece of the broken Meerschauum pipe and examines them. Agent Dawes approaches. \*

\*

AGENT DAWES

Got a positive ID from the Reverend. They were here.

347 CONTINUED:

347

But Sadusky isn't listening. He looks to the crypt and notices that the edges of the stone have recently been disturbed. The ivy overgrowth has also been torn away.

AGENT DAWES (CONT'D)

What is it?

Sadusky tries to lift the crypt's stone lid to no avail.

AGENT DAWES (CONT'D)

There's no moving that. It's got to weigh a ton.

\*

Sadusky looks at Agent Dawes and realizes she's right.

SADUSKY

I want sonar here on the double.  
And bring in a jackhammer!

348 INT. UNDERGROUND ELEVATOR CAGE - NIGHT

348

All eyes look around, warily as the cab descends creakily into depths unknown. Deeper...deeper still...

RILEY

I just want to point out that there are no buttons on the panel. In fact, there is no panel. How's this thing going to take us back up?

\*

BEN

It's a one-way elevator.

RILEY

Then, it's not an elevator, is it?  
Because it doesn't elevate.

\*

Suddenly, the cab STOPS. They've hit something. WATER rushes in at their feet, filling the cab up to their ankles.

Riley and Ian pull open the wooden elevator door, and more water RUSHES IN...

349 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, ANTECHAMBER - NIGHT

349

They shine their lights into the room. The chamber is circular, and there is a STONE PLATFORM in the center. Three 14th Century SWORDS jut out of the stone platform in a crisscross formation.

BEN

Templar Swords.

Ian moves to the platform, followed by Ben and Abigail.

\*

Riley slogs out last. He steps something which CRUNCHES under his foot. Riley looks down to find...

349 CONTINUED:

349

...a SKELETON.

RILEY

I knew it.  
(sing-song)  
It's a trap.

Riley starts searching the walls for a way out while Ian, Ben, and Abigail study the swords.

ABIGAIL

What do they mean?

Ian reaches for one of the swords.

BEN

Ian, I wouldn't--

But Ian does anyway. He pulls out the center sword. We immediately hear the RUSHING SOUND OF WATER. Everyone looks around. The sound is all around them.

RILEY

What's that?

But Ian doesn't care. He just studies the sword. Riley continues feeling the walls but can find no exit.

RILEY (CONT'D)

How're we supposed to get out of here?

BEN

Look at this.

Ben shines his light on the side of the platform to see a bas relief a SNAKE CUT INTO PIECES carved into the stone.

Abigail immediately recognizes the severed snake symbol.

ABIGAIL

"Join or die."

RILEY

I say we join.

Ben kneels down to study a STONE SLOT in a CIRCULAR STONE at a vertex of a triangle etched into the floor.

BEN

When we were at war with France, Ben Franklin drew a political cartoon of a snake cut into eight pieces, representing the eight colonies at the time. The cartoon called the colonies to "Join or Die."

349 CONTINUED: (2)

349

The sound of the rushing water intensifies as Ben notices two more slots in the floor at the triangle's other vertices.

RILEY

But what does that mean?

Now, the sound of the RUSHING WATER builds to a CRESCENDO, and suddenly, WATER VOMITS into the chamber from several ancient drains in the walls near the ceiling.

The force of the thundering cascade knocks all of them off their feet, Ian drops his sword, but more importantly...

...HE DROPS THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE INTO THE WATER!

Water also pours into the chamber from the elevator shaft. Before anyone can react, the chamber is already filled up to their chests.

Abigail and Ben both see the Declaration of Independence in its tube bobbing around in the churning water.

Ben frantically swims to it, but it slips away...just out of his reach.

ABIGAIL

I got it!

The tube floats to Abigail. She scoops it out of the water, then holds it over her head as the water swirls around her.

The chamber is filling quickly, and it's now mostly dark, except for the faint glow of the submerged flashlights.

Everyone claws at the walls, finding no purchase in the smooth stone. Ben calls over the din of the rushing water.

BEN

Listen! We have to work together!  
"Join or die."

RILEY

How?!

BEN

There is a triangle carved into the floor! At each vertex, there is a slot! We must get the swords, then each of us must stick them in the slots and turn the swords! All of us, together!

Riley regards Ben for a long beat, then...

RILEY

Are you out of your mind?!

Ben answers by disappearing under the water's surface.

- 349 CONTINUED: (3) 349
- Riley and Abigail exchange a look. Then, Riley looks up. The flat stone ceiling is only a few feet overhead now. They'll soon be drowned. Riley takes a deep breath, then dives down.
- 350 UNDERWATER. Ben dives down to the platform. The two remaining SWORDS are still sticking up out of it. He grabs one. Riley swims up behind him and grabs the other. They both then kick back toward the surface. 350
- 351 IN THE CHAMBER. Ben and Riley resurface with the swords, gasping for breath. Ben hands Ian the sword. 351 \*
- BEN \*  
Find the slot! At the triangle's \*  
vertex. \*
- The stone walls suddenly GROAN under the tons of pressure.
- BEN (CONT'D)  
Go!
- All three disappear underwater, leaving Abigail, holding the Declaration up high, but the water is rising rapidly. \*
- 352 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT 352
- WORKERS finally jackhammer through the crypt wall, and Sadusky peers inside.
- 353 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, ANTECHAMBER - NIGHT 353
- Abigail still holds the Declaration of Independence above her head, but there is less than a foot of space left now.
- 354 UNDERWATER. Riley and Ian dive down, feel the floor, find edges of the triangle, and follow them. BEN also feels the floor, searching for the sword... 354
- 355 IN THE CHAMBER. Only inches of space left now. Abigail presses the Declaration of Independence and her face against the ceiling in the cramped pocket of air. 355
- 356 UNDERWATER. Ian follows his edge. Finds the vertex slot. Shoves his sword into it. Turns it. 356
- RILEY finds his vertex and does the same.
- BEN finally finds the sword.
- 357 IN THE CHAMBER. Abigail and the Declaration of Independence are now completely submerged. There is no air pocket anymore. 357
- 358 UNDERWATER. Ben finds the third vertex, plunges the sword into the slot and... 358
- ...TURNS IT.



359 ON ABIGAIL. Suddenly, the chamber ceiling RUMBLES as the heavy stone ceiling slabs START SLIDING APART! 359

360 CUT TO - PITCH BACK. We hear the SCRAPING SOUND of the stone floor rolling open. As it does, the faintest glimmer of light peeks up from the submerged flashlights below. 360

A beat, then Abigail's hand POKES UP THROUGH THE CRACK in the floor, holding the Declaration of Independence.

She tosses it aside onto the dry floor, then pulls herself up through the opening.

Ian pulls himself up through the floor next, then rolls aside, gasping for air in a soggy heap.

361 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, OSSUARY - NIGHT 361

Sadusky and his team sprint down the passageway and come to the grave room. Only now, the elevator shaft is COMPLETELY FLOODED.

The elevator chains disappear into a pool of water which spills into the ossuary.

SADUSKY

There's got to be another way down.  
Find it!

362 INT. UNDERGROUND TREASURE CHAMBER - NIGHT 362

The water gurgles up through the widening crack in the floor. Abigail waits by it. A beat, then Riley surfaces, coughing.

ABIGAIL

Where's Ben?

Ian catches his breath, then peers into the darkness. In the near distance, we can see something...GLIMMERING.

Suddenly, the floor starts rumbling closed again. Panicked, Abigail calls out...

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Ben! Ben!

Ian picks up the Declaration of Independence which lies on the stone floor near him.

Just then, Ben comes up, gasping for air, choking on swallowed water, but...holding a flashlight.

BEN

(between coughs)  
I thought we might need this.

The flashlight beam cuts through the darkness. We catch glimpses of pillars, statues, stone steps...

362 CONTINUED:

362

RILEY

Is that...?

The beam of light stops on something very shiny... It's a three-tiered bronze-gilded altar. The very sight of it makes Abigail gasp. Ian stares at it, mesmerized...

IAN

"...An altar of bronze, twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide..."  
Second Book of Chronicles.

Ian and Ben exchange knowing looks.

BEN

Stolen from the Temple of Solomon  
in the 5th Century B.C.

The group moves to the altar where they find candles and torches. They quickly light them, then turn to see...

THE TREASURE CHAMBER.

Dozens of marble Doric and Corinthian columns line the walls of the cavernous chamber filled with ancient treasures...

Crown jewels, gold and silver plates and chalices, gilded cherubim, olivewood furniture, carriages, loot from the Oracle of Delphi, and countless sacred artifacts.

ABIGAIL

This is what it must have been like  
to find King Tut's Tomb.

RILEY

Don't say that. Those guys were  
cursed.

Ian starts moving through the chamber, in awe of its treasures. But Ben doesn't move. He just stands there.

BEN

We'll be taking the Declaration of  
Independence now, Ian.

Ian finds a chest, opens it...it's filled with ancient Greek and Roman coins.

IAN

Oh come on, Ben. Have some fun.

Ian moves past the chest, and Riley can't help himself. He goes to it, sticks his hand in it, and comes up with a handful of coins. He laughs, incredulous.

BEN

A deal's a deal, Ian.

362 CONTINUED: (2)

362

But Ian isn't listening. He's found another ANCIENT SWORD, only this one is different...special.

Its silver handle is decorated with images of scythed chariots engaged in battle and the famous Macedonian King.

Riley steps up behind Ian. He sees the sword.

RILEY

Cool gothic sword.

IAN

It's not just any sword...

Ian picks it up. It's heavy. Weighs more than 30 pounds.

IAN (CONT'D)

...It's the sword of Alexander the Great...

As Ian holds up the sword, we notice that it almost GLISTENS with an ethereal power.

IAN (CONT'D)

...It was used to conquer the world.

Without warning, Ian swings the sword backwards under his arm in a rowing motion and...

...Plunges it into RILEY'S STOMACH!

Riley staggers back, stunned. Then, he collapses.

Shocked and horrified, Ben and Abigail rush to Riley. He's bleeding. Badly.

BEN

Riley. Oh, Jesus...

Ben takes off his shirt. Balls it up. Presses it on Riley's wound. Abigail helps Ben hold it there. Riley looks up to Ben. He knows it's bad. He grimaces in agony. \*

RILEY

At least I was rich before I died. \*

With that, Ian swings his sword at Ben who just barely rolls out of the way in time. The sword hits the stone floor with a loud CLANK, taking out a divot of stone.

IAN

You couldn't just want the treasure now, could you, Ben?

Ian swings again, but Ben grabs a bronze plate and blocks the blow. SPARKS fly as the plate shatters.

IAN (CONT'D)

You couldn't just be reasonable and argue with me over shares. I say, "How about 70-30?" And then you say, "How about 60-40?" And then I say, "What about 80-20?"

Ben scrambles to his feet, and Ian chases him.

IAN (CONT'D)

No, you have to go and be all noble.

He swings the sword at Ben again, but Ben dives behind a suit of armor which Ian SMASHES with his sword.

Ben goes down with the medieval suit which clatters to the ground. Ben shoulder-rolls to his feet and comes up with a sword of his own.

They face off. En Guard! They circle each other.

IAN (CONT'D)

I don't trust honest men.

Ian strikes. Ben parries. Their swords cross with a loud CLANK. They push off each other, and then the duel begins in earnest.

\*

Actually, it's more like two guys fighting a bar fight with heavy swords. Neither is trained in fencing, but neither is about to give up first.

\*

\*

\*

They exchange blows in an exhausting *Rob Roy*-esque sword fight. Ian attacks. Ben parries and simultaneously delivers a brutal kick to Ian's ribs, staggering Ian.

\*

The Declaration of Independence falls to the ground and rolls away, down some stone steps...

Angered, Ian winds up. Strikes a vicious blow. Ben deflects it with his sword which breaks in half. The other half clanks to the ground.

ON ABIGAIL. She's applying pressure to Riley's wound. She sees the Declaration of Independence rolling toward a slatted drain in the floor...

She grabs Riley's hands and puts them on the now bloody, balled up shirt.

ABIGAIL

Apply pressure.

Riley weakly holds onto the field dressing as...

Abigail hurries to the still rolling Declaration of Independence which is almost to the drain.

362 CONTINUED: (4)

362

Abigail DIVES FOR IT...but just misses it. The Declaration of Independence slips through the slats and DISAPPEARS DOWN THE DRAIN!!!

ON IAN and BEN. Ian swings. Ben ducks and dodges, but Ian's sword catches pieces of him. Slices into Ben's shoulder. And his chest.

ON ABIGAIL. She sticks her hand into the drain...

INSIDE THE DRAIN. The Declaration of Independence is stuck way down deep in the drain where the drain narrows.

Abigail's hand reaches down for the tube, but it's...just... out...of...reach.

ON BEN and IAN. Bloodied, Ben hurls the broken sword at Ian who deflects it and charges Ben.

Ben scrambles over the treasure pile, improvising, grabbing whatever he can to parry Ian's blows. A chalice...CLANK! An urn...which shatters!

Ben grabs an alabaster cherubim. He holds it up to deflect a blow, but notices that it's just too beautiful to ruin. Ben sets it back down, then dives behind a PILLAR just as...

Ian swings again, striking the pillar instead...WHAM! Chunks of marble fly.

Ian circles around the pillar, chasing the wounded Ben with his sword. Ian swings, and Ben ducks. This time, Ian's sword gets STUCK in the pillar.

As Ian tries to extricate it...

Ben pushes a Greek limestone statue. But it's heavy. It teeters...finally tips.

Ian turns just in time to see the statue about to crush him. CRASH!

But it doesn't crush Ian. The statue instead crashes into the pillar, leaving just enough space to save Ian.

Ian grabs the sword, yanks it out...

Bad idea. The pillar gives way, and the statue finishes its fall, smashing down on Ian. Killing him instantly.

And tearing a hole in the stone wall behind him. Water GUSHES IN from the hole. It's the elevator shaft.

As the water rushes in, the whole treasure chamber begins to rumble. Pieces of the stone ceiling start to fall, crashing down all around.

Ben looks to see Abigail still struggling with the drain.

362 CONTINUED: (5)

362

ON ABIGAIL. She's got her whole arm in the drain but she still can't reach the Declaration of Independence. Rocks and debris rains down all around her.

BEN (O.S.)

Look out!

Abigail pulls her hand out of the drain. Turns to see Ben holding the Sword of Alexander up high. He swings it down, SMASHING the drain open.

Abigail quickly reaches in and pulls out the Declaration of Independence.

They hurry to Riley. Everything is shaking, falling apart.

RILEY

(weakly)

The treasure room's caving in.

BEN

We know.

RILEY

That always happens.

Ben and Abigail grab Riley under his arms and help him to the pillar that's crashed through the wall. The water has leveled off in the shaft.

363 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, SHAFT - NIGHT

363

Ben and Abigail peer into the shaft. The two chains disappear into the water below.

BEN

We have to get in the water.

ABIGAIL

(to Riley)

Can you swim?

RILEY

Do I have a choice?

As everything in the treasure chamber collapses behind them, Ben pushes Riley into the water and jumps in after him. \*

Abigail follows, then Ben swings the sword and cuts one of the chains. The elevator shoots out of the depths, catching Ben, Abigail and Riley and carrying them up the shaft! \*

364 INT. UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS, OSSUARY - NIGHT

364\*

The three roll off the roof of the charging elevator and spill out onto the ossuary floor as the elevator disappears up into the shaft with the sword. \*

- 364 CONTINUED: 364
- Abigail lands on Ben. They regard each other. Surprised to be alive. Dust and debris settle in the room. \*
- Riley lies in the dirt, staring up at the hundreds of grinning skulls looking down on him. \*
- RILEY  
Are we dead?
- 365 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH GRAVEYARD - NIGHT 365
- Sadusky, his team, and dozens of POLICE are here.
- BEN (O.S.)  
Hey, can we get a little help over here?
- Sadusky turns to see Ben and Abigail helping Riley out of the crypt stairwell. In an instant, a swarm of federal agents and police are on them.
- 366 EXT. TRINITY CHURCH, BROADWAY - NIGHT 366
- Sadusky hands the Declaration of Independence over to an armored transport, which pulls away with an escort of a dozen police cars.
- Sadusky's team, Ben, and Abigail stand nearby with two EMTs who load Riley onto an ambulance. \*
- EMT  
(to Ben)  
He lost a lot of blood, but he's going to be fine. \*
- Now, Sadusky approaches.
- SADUSKY  
OK, guys let's go.
- The federal agents all start to leave. Ben and Abigail look at each other, confused.
- BEN  
Aren't you going to arrest us? \*
- SADUSKY  
What for? You do something wrong?
- Ben and Abigail exchange a look like, no...okay...go...bye! \*
- Sadusky grins at them, then heads to his sedan. \*
- SADUSKY (CONT'D)  
You kids need a ride?
- Ben and Abigail smile at each other.

366 CONTINUED:

366

BEN  
No thanks. We'll walk.

\*  
\*

SADUSKY  
All right. Good night!

CLOSE ON Sadusky's hand as he climbs into his car. On his finger, we now see that he wears a SILVER MASONIC RING, just like the one Charles Carroll and Count Pulaski wore.

As Sadusky drives away, Ben and Abigail look back to the Trinity Church graveyard.

\*  
\*

BEN  
Too bad no one will ever know.

\*  
\*

ABIGAIL  
We'll know.

\*  
\*

With that, she kisses Ben. A long, deep kiss. Then, suddenly, Ben pulls away.

\*

BEN  
Just tell me one thing. Does this kiss mean anything?

\*  
\*

Abigail considers that, then...

\*

ABIGAIL  
Only time will tell.

\*  
\*

With that, they kiss some more as we PULL BACK as the federal agents all get in their cars and leave...

\*

DISSOLVE TO:

367 INT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, ROTUNDA - MORNING

367\*

Ben, Abigail, Riley (all better now), Ben's dad Patrick, Sadusky, his whole team, Dr. Herbert, Woodruff, and all the National Archives GUARDS stand proud, watching as...

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE is raised back up in its display case to its wall exhibit.

Dr. Herbert crosses himself. Thank God. Woodruff sheds a tear. Ben, Abigail, and Riley exchange cocky smiles. Dr. Herbert checks his watch.

DR. HERBERT  
Opening time.

And with that, the "ceremony" is over. Everybody scatters, back to their regular routine. Woodruff takes one more look at the precious document, then shrugs...

WOODRUFF  
No one will ever know.



368 EXT. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, NORTH FOYER - MORNING

368

The GUARDS open the front doors, and museum PATRONS and TOURISTS start filing in. Ben and Riley cross the traffic and head down the front steps.

It's another beautiful day on Pennsylvania Avenue. Riley takes it all in...and then sighs.

RILEY

So, any other family quests, treasures that you might know about, something else I can waste seven years of my life with?

BEN

Nope. That was the only one.

SADUSKY (O.S.)

Gates! Poole!

They turn to find the Sadusky and his team approaching.

RILEY

What now?

SADUSKY

It seems that, well, the President's been looking for, uh, something else for a very long time, and he would very much appreciate your help in finding it.

Ben and Riley look at each other and GRIN BIG as we start SLOWLY PULLING UP for a overhead view of the National Archives...

RILEY

I don't know, Sadusky. How much he paying? 'Cause the last expedition I went on was sort of a bust.

SADUSKY

How much do you want?

As they talk, we continue PULLING UP until we have a glorious, sky-high, panoramic view of our great nation's capital, and we..

FADE OUT.

The End.