

HIGHLANDER

by

Art Marcum & Matt Holloway

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## BLACK AND YELLOW TARTAN PLAID

Fills the frame -- bold, symmetrical -- a tightly woven piece of wool worn by members of the storied Clan MacLeod.

## A WOMAN'S HANDS

Young but calloused, familiarly fold pleats into one end of the cloth.

## A MAN

Lies down with his back against the cloth -- muscular, smooth-skinned torso -- but we never see his face as:

The woman's hands wrap the cloth around his body, an intimacy to her touch as she does up the rough-hewn leather belt around his waist.

The man stands, the pleated end of the cloth falling below his knees as her hands now bring the garment up the man's back and over his left shoulder, fastening it with a pin.

SERIES OF SHOTS: the man places a sharp DIRK in a scabbard -- hand moves around the HILT of a CLAYMORE SWORD, the quillion engraved: "MacLeod."

The man slides home the sword into its sheath as WE RISE up along his back, the man finally turning to face us revealing:

## CONNER MACLEOD

Draped in Highland kilt and the instruments of war. Strong and handsome, quick to anger, slow to forget a slight: MacLeod is no better or worse than any other man of the early 16th century.

The SIMPLE BEAUTY who faces him in her plaid *arisaid* and head covering is:

## HEATHER MACLEOD

Conner's wife -- independent streak a mile wide. The gaze she shares with her husband burns red hot. MacLeod reaches out and takes her hand, but she pulls it out of his grasp, still furious about something, and leaves without a word.

MacLeod hangs his head and sighs.

EXT. VILLAGE - WEST HIGHLAND COAST - SCOTLAND - DAWN (1503)

Jagged peaks dropping precipitously into the sea. A line of thatch-roofed Black Houses along the firth made choppy by an approaching storm. Tethered curraghs bobbing in the water. Sheep roaming freely through town.

The battle-ready men of Clan MacLeod, including the imposing CHIEF of the Clan -- John "BOONCH" MacLeod (50s) -- say good-byes to wives and children.

MacLeod exits his house. He sees Heather standing off from the rest of the clan. Alone.

CLOSE ON - HEATHER

Watching two YOUNG BOYS run into the arms of their father ANGUS. Heather's eyes betray a deep longing. [Gaelic subtitled English]:

MACLEOD

[We'll soon have one of our own.  
You'll see.]

HEATHER

[And if you don't return?]

MACLEOD

[They murdered Cameron and Gregor.]

Heather glances at two covered BODIES lying on the shore.

HEATHER

[You don't know that.]

MACLEOD

[Who else but the MacDonald's?  
They will pay in blood.]

HEATHER

[Always in blood.]

MACLEOD

[Yes --]

HEATHER

[You don't have to do this, Conner.  
You have a choice, you know.]

MACLEOD

[What choice do I have? There is  
God and there is the clan.]

HEATHER  
[You're a proud fool.]

Anger flashes in MacLeod's eyes. Heather takes his hand and places something inside it, closes his hand around it and walks away. Across the shore men climb into boats. Rain begins to fall softly.

MOMENTS LATER - MACLEOD

With half a dozen of his fellow men, oars in hands, propelling one of the two dozen currachs out into the water, lug-sails rising up single masts in unison.

MacLeod opens his hand to find a small, silver heart-shaped brooch -- a LUCKENBOOTH -- the object Heather gave him. MacLeod closes his hand tightly around the charm and places it safely inside his garment. Then:

MacLeod stands in the boat:

MACLEOD  
[THOUGH WE ARE POOR...WE ARE BORN  
NOBLE!]

A tremendous BATTLE CRY from the men as wind now fills the sails, SNAPPING them out and speeding them toward the enemy. MacLeod and the men pull the plaid cloth bunched around their necks over their heads becoming menacing hooded warriors.

EXT. FIRTH - DAY

The currachs of Clan MacLeod appear through driving rain, moving toward us.

BOONCH  
[TAKE COVER!]

In martial unison the MacLeods raise shields over their heads in anticipation of the coming onslaught of arrows.

REVERSE ANGLE - ON THE APPROACHING SHORE

The village of clan MACDONALD. We wait in suspended animation -- tense -- for something to happen. A beat and:

MacLeod peers out from behind his raised targe and sees something strange: SMOKE rising off burned rooftops. He lowers his shield.

ANGUS  
[What's happening?]

MACLEOD  
[They're here. Stay vigilant.]

MOMENTS LATER - BOONCH

Leads the men onto shore. MacLeod indicates for them to split into small groups. Moving defensively they enter the smoldering village to find:

A MASSACRE

The men of Clan MacDonald lie dead along the main road.

BEWILDERED CLANSMAN (O.S.)  
[Over here!]

MacLeod and Angus run over:

MACLEOD  
[What? What is it?]

Bewildered Clansman says nothing. MacLeod pushes past him into a HOUSE and stops, stunned.

ANGUS  
[What kind of madness is this?]

We catch only GLIMPSES of the unthinkable: women and children huddled around a hearth still smoldering, all of them dead.

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE VILLAGE

Sitting by a pile of male bodies -- a SURVIVOR. Lean and athletic with corded muscles, but his shoulders are slumped. Face and limbs covered in blood. Thousand yard stare. Catatonic. Boonch hands him water:

BOONCH  
(heavily accented English)  
What happened here, man? Was it  
the king's men?

Survivor, dazed, remains silent.

CLAN MEMBER #1  
(poking fun)  
[-- look at what he wears --]

We notice now that the man is dressed very strangely in a bloody, embroidered caftan.

CLAN MEMBER #2  
[You find him pretty, Duncan?]

CLAN MEMBER #1  
[Looks like the dress I took off your wife last night.]

Laughter as clansmen stop #2 from clocking #1.

Boonch pulls a strange CURVED SWORD from the man's sheath -- a SHASHKA SABRE: weapon of choice for warriors of the Southern Russian steppes. We will come to know this particular warrior as THE KURGAN.

BOONCH  
(off shashka sabre)  
Where do you hail from, stranger?

CLAN MEMBER #1  
[Can't you see, Boonch? He's so scared he swallowed his tongue --]

More laughs, but we catch a FLICKER in the Kurgan's eye that makes us wonder if he understood the slight. Boonch returns the sabre to its sheath and turns to his men but:

We STAY ON the Kurgan who seems more alert by the second, his pulse quickening now, his gaze on:

MACLEOD

Approaching with his men, joining Boonch and the others.

But something comes over MacLeod -- an odd feeling. All earthly sounds DROP AWAY save for MacLeod's heart now POUNDING in his ears, faster and faster as he turns to:

The Kurgan who seems to share the feeling, MacLeod knowing but not understanding that there is some kind of BOND between them and:

The Kurgan smirks maliciously at MacLeod, the sounds of the world coming back now and:

MacLeod, eyes darting to the DEAD all around him, suddenly understands who massacred these people:

MACLEOD  
[Take that man's weapon!]

CLAN MEMBER #1

[Him? He's nothing, Conner --]

MACLEOD

[Do it now!]

Clan Members #1 and #2 move to obey but it's much too late for that because:

In one terrifyingly fast motion the Kurgan stands, draws and swings, his curved blade slashing #1 and slicing #2 -- both men toppling over...

...the Kurgan plunging and withdrawing the sabre, a violent poetry to the lightning quick motions -- amazingly he swings the sabre back over his shoulder, the curved blade appearing under his arm and sticking into his fifth victim's gut --

MacLeod drawing and pushing BOONCH to safety and:

A CLANGING of steel on steel as MacLeod and the Kurgan engage, the Kurgan a whirlwind of gleaming metal -- MacLeod on the retreat and getting hammered and he steps back and:

The Kurgan's sword strikes the ground and MacLeod goes on the attack, not skilled so much as adrenalized and in a rage -- he smashes the Kurgan back and back and delivers a CUT across the Kurgan's torso and:

The Kurgan backs away. Sees his own blood. Can't believe he's been touched at all. He swings violently --

Their swords LOCK and in the blink of an eye the Kurgan slides his blade down MacLeod's blade, into the quillion and suddenly MacLeod's sword is out of his hand, flipping through the air and then, incredibly, it's in the Kurgan's hand and:

The Kurgan plunges MacLeod's own sword all the way through MacLeod's chest, MacLeod dropping to his knees -- the LUCKENBOOTH -- Heather's charm -- falling to the ground.

The Kurgan speaks gently into MacLeod's ear [Gaelic subtitled English]:

KURGAN

[Too bad, MacLeod. With time you might have been great.]

The Kurgan withdraws the blade. MacLeod falls onto his face.

The Kurgan steps in close, his boot coming down on top of the Luckenbooth, crushing it into the dirt as he raises his sabre to take off MacLeod's HEAD:

KURGAN (CONT'D)  
[There can be only one.]

The Kurgan brings the blade down to end it all -- THWACK  
THWACK: two arrows suddenly stick into the Kurgan's chest,  
throwing him off-balance --

Clansmen fire more arrows, the Kurgan raising his arms again  
to deliver the death blow and --

MORE arrows hit the Kurgan -- in the back -- the side -- his  
legs and suddenly three arrows hit his chest, the force of  
impact throwing him to the ground --

Boonch and Angus grab MacLeod and pull him to safety --

The Kurgan, lying on the ground, surrounded by MacLeods with  
swords out in a high ward: blades extended over heads and  
pointed down toward the target. They THRUST as one but:

The Kurgan rolls, snapping arrow shafts in half against the  
ground, parrying the blades and he's suddenly on his feet  
again, slicing through clan members, out-fencing and dropping  
them and running after MacLeod and:

BANG! BANG! BANG! -- musket balls to the Kurgan's back bring  
him down again but still he's trying to grab at MacLeod's  
ankle as he's dragged to the boats --

Like a beast the Kurgan tries to rise but the clan surrounds  
him, using the CLUB ENDS of muskets to beat him down, the  
Kurgan grunting in pain but his eyes never leaving:

MACLEOD, barely conscious, now in a curragh that is pushed  
from shore by Boonch and Angus.

EXT. VILLAGE - WEST HIGHLAND COAST - DUSK

The storm past. A YOUNG GIRL raises her arm and points out  
to the water. More CHILDREN and WOMEN gather, curious.

REVERSE ANGLE: an OBJECT appears on the water.

HEATHER MACLEOD makes her way through the gathered crowd, her  
face lighting up because:

The object is MacLeod's curragh. MacLeod himself sits in the  
back of the boat, oar in hand. There is the hint of a smile  
on his face because he made it -- back to his true love.

But Heather's face suddenly falls, something horribly wrong:

MacLeod slumps over in the boat, the oar falling into the water. MacLeod is dead and has been for a while now.

OVERHEAD POV: the curragh carrying MacLeod passes underneath us, disappearing past the BOTTOM of the frame. HOLD on the brackish water for a long beat, a familiar, gravelly Scottish Voice in our ears:

SEAN CONNERY (V.O.)

From the dawn of time we came,  
moving silently down through the  
centuries, living many secret  
lives, struggling to reach the time  
of the Gathering -- when the few  
who remain will battle to the last.  
No one has ever known we were among  
you, until now...

And suddenly...

A MODERN TWO-MAN RACING SHELL

Appears from the bottom of the frame, moving swiftly in the opposite direction. TILT UP to stay on the rowers and WE RISE off the water now, PANNING to reveal:

LOWER MANHATTAN

The cluster of glass-wrapped buildings sprouting from the bottom of the island glowing sunset red as a word appears:

### HIGHLANDER

EXT. CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE - MANHATTAN - DUSK

An Old Gothic basilica at Columbus and 60th. Yellow cabs, end of the workday pedestrian traffic. PAN OFF the Catholic church to find:

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY - LINCOLN CENTER CAMPUS

A Jesuit sanctuary in the heart of the city. RED BANNERS bearing Catholic crosses hang from lampposts, surrounding the campus, giving the impression that this is sacred ground.

INT. LECTURE HALL (AMPHITHEATER) - FORDHAM - DUSK

CLOSE ON: a QUOTE written in chalk:

*"There is no present, there is no future, there is only the past happening over and over again." -- Eugene O'Neill*

The dashing Professor RUSSELL NASH (History Dept.) steps into frame to face us -- rough-hewn good looks, well-worn corduroy blazer, rimless glasses adding that pitch-perfect academic touch. Takes a second to realize -- we know this man. It's:

CONNER MACLEOD -- 500 years older, but the only real difference is the flawless American accent:

MACLEOD

...so what is it? The most important question to ask yourself before committing to an engagement with the enemy?

He faces a packed lecture hall -- 65 percent women, all of them hanging on his every word. Pacing like a big cat, MacLeod truly enjoys going toe to toe with his students -- he thinks of them as his own children.

STUDENT #1

Are you justified?

MACLEOD

"Justification" is you want to kill the sons of bitches.

Laughter -- crowd loves him.

STUDENT #2

Money. Will it break the bank?

MACLEOD

You've got a Mastercard with no limit -- remember, people, victory is priceless.

STONER STUDENT

U.N. approval?

MACLEOD

Come on, Speedman, would you ask your mother to hold onto your stash?

Stoner thinks about that one, unsure.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Anyone else want to play?

(no takers)

"Do I have a choice?" That is the question. Is there another way?

(MORE)

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Because if there is and you don't take it, sooner or later you lose everything you thought you were fighting for...

MacLeod's words trail off, an uneasy feeling coming over him. He scans the sea of students, looking for something. After a beat he forces himself to jump back in:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

But don't take my word for it. Let's get back to our vertically challenged friend --

MacLeod clicks a remote and an image of NAPOLEON'S CORONATION as painted by Jacques Louis David appears on the board:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

After showing his neighbors who's boss, he sets his sights on Russia...

(image changes to map of  
19th century Russia)

A land so vast it swallows armies whole. Napoleon has a choice to make and he chooses pride...

*FLASHBACK: THE ROAD TO VILNA - RUSSIA - DAY (1812)*

*The beaten FRENCH ARMY retreats through a half-frozen river in thread-bare coats and sole-less boots.*

MACLEOD (V.O.)

He subjects his men to one of the most humiliating defeats in history. The grunts were left to die of cold and hunger while the officers rode in carriages filled with loot for their Loire Valley chateaus.

*Miserable grunts watch as a horse-drawn CARRIAGE passes, driven by fur-wrapped OFFICERS and loaded with stolen booty.*

ARROGANT STUDENT (V.O.)

(loud and firm)

That's a lie.

BACK ON - MACLEOD

MACLEOD

Excuse me?

His eyes land on ARROGANT STUDENT: older than the others, something FAMILIAR about him to MacLeod -- the way he cracks the knuckles of his left hand one at a time with his thumb.

ARROGANT STUDENT

The grunts were worthless drunks  
and you know it.

Students throw catcalls: "Go Home," "Shut it," etc.

MACLEOD

Now wait a second -- let's give our  
friend a chance here. To be fair,  
there was a lot of drinking in  
those days...

*FLASHBACK: FRENCH CAMP - NIGHT (1812)*

*TRACK along shivering FRENCH GRUNTS huddled around a fire, drinking heavily. We LAND on a familiar face: wine-stained lips and a generally nasty disposition -- MACLEOD. He was there. An OLDER MAN, just as drunk, sits next to him:*

OLDER MAN

(French; subtitled  
English)

[What are you doing here, friend?  
This isn't your fight.]

MACLEOD

[Looking for the one who gave me  
this...]

*MacLeod lifts his shirt revealing a long vertical SCAR where the Kurgan ran him through.*

BACK ON - ARROGANT STUDENT

ARROGANT STUDENT

And when they weren't drunk they  
were raiding their own storehouses.

MacLeod sets his glasses down and meets Arrogant Student's gaze. In the look that passes between them we could swear they know each other. MacLeod can barely hide disgust:

MACLEOD

It was the officers who organized  
the supply lines. Some of those  
officers got exactly what they  
deserved.

*FLASHBACK: FRENCH CAMP - NIGHT (1812)*

*French Grunts running from a storehouse clutching moldy bread and BANG! a Grunt goes down -- BANG! another drops dead at MACLEOD'S FEET.*

*MacLeod, drunk, meets the gaze of the well-fed, warmly dressed OFFICER who fired the shots: it's ARROGANT STUDENT (NOW FRENCH OFFICER). He was MacLeod's CO.*

*French Officer draws his sabre and all sound drops away save for the BEAT BEAT of MacLeod's heart as he sways drunkenly, staring at Officer who cracks the knuckles of his left hand one at a time with his thumb:*

*MACLEOD*

*[You have no idea what you are.]*

*FRENCH OFFICER*

*[Draw.]*

*MACLEOD*

*[You're not the one I'm looking for.]*

*But Officer's eyes are wild. He THRUSTS his sabre and in the blink of an eye MacLeod dodges the blade as it passes, catches it flat between his arm and body on the withdrawal, twists it out of Officer's grip, flips it like a shortstaff and, a hand on the hilt and a hand on the blade, MacLeod runs Officer clean through, withdraws the sabre and raises it to cut off Officer's head, but:*

*Older Man pulls MacLeod away before the kill stroke:*

*OLDER MAN*

*[Run, MacLeod, or they'll give you the guillotine!]*

*BACK ON - MACLEOD*

*In a stare-down with Officer in the lecture hall, Officer sneering. Weird silence, the class not knowing what to make of it:*

*MACLEOD*

*We'll pick this up on Monday, people. Remember -- if you're going out boozing this weekend, try not to invade any large countries.*

Laughs as the class departs. A HOT COED leaves a bottle of vino on the lectern, but MacLeod's gaze is following French Officer who leaves through a side door, never looking back.

The class empty, MacLeod's eyes land on the BOTTLE OF WINE left for him by COED.

EXT. FORDHAM UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

MacLeod walks dimly lit campus grounds, arriving at a line of flagstones marked with CROSSES. He pauses, steeling himself, then he crosses over, as if leaving a protective force field.

ON WEST 60TH STREET

MacLeod continuing a brisk pace, shoes echoing on the quiet street. He reaches into his satchel and pulls out the WINE BOTTLE, smiles at the XOXO note from COED. He takes hold of the neck to get a better look -- Stags Leap '94, not bad and:

MacLeod spins around, the bottle a cudgel now, and he smashes French Officer's HAND, breaking the bottle and sending Officer's SILENCED PISTOL clattering to the street, Officer flexing his hurt hand:

FRENCH OFFICER

The ruthless MacLeod. Hiding on sacred ground. Now what would people say?

MacLeod drops the jagged bottle neck.

MACLEOD

We don't have to do this.

FRENCH OFFICER

Mercy? For a man who's killed hundreds?

Officer draws a FRENCH SMALL SWORD from his jacket, rushes MacLeod and delivers a PASSING CUT, MacLeod staggering backwards, steadying himself against a car. Wincing, he puts a hand against his shirt made bloody from the cut.

FRENCH OFFICER (CONT'D)

(an accusation)

I woke up six feet underground in a pine box -- buried alive by my own people.

Officer attacks -- MacLeod dodging the blows -- Officer's blade hacking up the parked car, but we sense that MacLeod is holding back, refusing to fight offensively --

MacLeod grabs hold of Officer's wrist as it swings the sword -- Officer lands a haymaker and suddenly MacLeod is stumbling backwards into the street and:

He's bathed in the HEADLIGHTS of an approaching sedan -- a SCREECHING of brakes, MacLeod closing his eyes and bracing for impact, but the bumper stops inches from his legs.

GLOBE LIGHTS come to life atop the car -- NYPD. MacLeod steps out of the way, discreetly buttoning his jacket over the blood on his shirt as the cops pull alongside and give him a good long stare:

COP

Party's over, buddy. Go home.

The cops drive off. MacLeod scans the block, but Officer has disappeared.

ON AMSTERDAM AVE.

MacLeod, in pain, seems to be looking for something but can't find it. He approaches an OLD MAN working the booth of a PARKING GARAGE:

MACLEOD

I'm looking for Halcyon.

OLD MAN

You're at the right place -- 'bout fifteen years too late though.

MacLeod continues:

INTO THE DARK GARAGE

A red-bricked former warehouse space filled with mechanical racks of cars stacked on top of each other.

MacLeod walks along a row of car racks, eyes studying the wall, looking for something specific:

*FLASHBACK: MacLeod (in trenchcoat and white sneakers) walking the same exact floor 20 years ago when the place was CLUB HALCYON -- past 80's ROCKERS in leather and dog collars, music pounding. He sits against the wall. He has a BLOODY NIMCHA hidden up his sleeve (Curved African long dagger).*

IN THE PRESENT: MacLeod slips between two car racks to the very same spot against the wall where that table was.

FRENCH OFFICER

Enters the garage, silenced pistol held over his short sword like a cop holding a flashlight over his piece. He searches for MacLeod quietly, methodically...

MACLEOD

Studying the wall, finds a MARKED BRICK: "NYC DWP."

*FLASHBACK: MacLeod at his table, eyeing TWO COPS who have entered the club as he pulls the LOOSE DWP BRICK from the wall and stashes the bloody nimcha inside.*

IN THE PRESENT: MacLeod struggles to pull the brick out, but it's stuck.

FRENCH OFFICER

Hidden behind the car rack nearest MacLeod, turns the corner and fires -- THWIT THWIT -- silenced bullets hit the wall but MacLeod is GONE -- French Officer turns sharply and:

MacLeod slices Officer's hand with the nimcha -- pistol drops -- Officer swings steel but MacLeod effortlessly forces the sword from Officer's hand and puts him against the wall, nimcha to his throat:

MACLEOD

The day is coming when we must  
fight, but it's not today.

(backs off)

Walk away.

A beat and MacLeod leaves. Officer, unable to help himself, picks up his blade, raises it high and brings it down in a chopping arc and:

We wince as MacLeod turns and raises a hand to catch the blade -- THUD! -- the blade stops against the DWP BRICK still in MacLeod's hand, and before Officer has time to regret it:

MacLeod swings the nimcha with lightning speed and amazing brute force -- the SOUND of impact...

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

OLD MAN walks away from the garage as an UNEARTHLY GLOW emanates from inside, wind kicking up.

MACLEOD

In a trance as an electric dance of light flows into him from French Officer's HEADLESS body. We are witnessing:

THE QUICKENING

The essence of the vanquished transferring to vanquisher, a mix of agony and ecstasy on MacLeod's face and suddenly:

It's over. MacLeod stands, the afterglow of a drug rush in his eyes as we go CLOSE ON his left hand: MacLeod uses a thumb to crack the knuckles on his left hand one at a time -- he inherited French Officer's tic.

The sound of SIRENS in the distance. MacLeod regards the body. He spies a COVERED FERRARI in a car rack.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

Under the GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE our professor -- MACLEOD -- drags Officer's body wrapped in the FERRARI CAR COVER to the edge and drops it in the water.

MacLeod watches the wrapped bundle sinking as it floats away. His hands shake -- a combination of nerves and adrenaline. Hasn't done this in a while.

EXT. FLATIRON BUILDING - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

The relaxed rhythms of Miles's *Sketches of Spain* as we PUSH IN on the storied Flatiron Building.

INT. HALLWAY - FLATIRON BUILDING - NIGHT

Jazz emanating from "Penthouse A." The door opens revealing JULIAN -- a man of Bacchanalian appetite in silk robe and slippers, wearing an easy-going smile and slightly bloodshot eyes. He holds two glasses filled with a milky liquid:

JULIAN

Fashionably late as always.  
Absinthe -- and not the watered  
down stuff at Zabars.

MacLeod takes a glass and drinks it down, the anaesthetic immediately easing his considerable pain.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Hey, man, you don't look so good.

MACLEOD  
Met a fellow traveler uptown.

JULIAN  
Get in here.

INT. JULIAN'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

...Julian leads MacLeod inside -- interesting and arty people drinking and eating -- a good time getting better:

JULIAN  
You know the guy?

MACLEOD  
From a while back. I opened his eyes for him.

JULIAN  
You never forget your first time. Hope you're hungry. I spit-roasted an entire boar.

A Rubenesque Beauty dressed haute-couture hippy (CRYSTAL) carries a tray of exotic appetizers. Julian grabs and eats several, savoring each bite, a true gourmand:

CRYSTAL  
Will you stop?  
(smooches Mac)

MACLEOD  
Crystal.

CRYSTAL  
Tell him he has to watch his cholesterol.

MACLEOD  
That stuff'll kill you, Julian.

CRYSTAL  
You're a prince, Mac.

Julian and MacLeod continue on. A MODEL-TYPE catches MacLeod's eye, inviting. MacLeod smiles, but turns away.

INT. BATHROOM - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MacLeod takes off his shirt revealing the recent wound across his ribs, but it's nothing compared to the dozens of scars (including the Kurgan's) criss-crossing his entire body. There is a large BURN SCAR covering half of his back.

JULIAN

Let's get you a topical so you can stitch up.

Julian uses a key to enter a door that leads into:

A WOOD-PANELLED APOTHECARY

Bottles filled with roots and medicines, an entire shelf dedicated to cannabis collected from around the world and marked. Precious PHOTOS are hung in here, including one of Julian smoking with RAVI SHANKAR and GEORGE HARRISON, confirming what we suspected: Julian is an Immortal too.

JULIAN

(rooting around)  
Got just the thing if I can find it. ...big news by the way -- I'm popping the question.

MACLEOD

Congratulations. Don't expect another gift.

JULIAN

Come on, weddings are a gas. ...a woman's like a puzzle with ten thousand pieces. You know how long I've been trying to put one together?

MACLEOD

As a matter of fact I do.

JULIAN

It never grows old, Mac. Hey -- you see that leggy number out in the hall?

MACLEOD

Pretty hard to miss.

JULIAN

She's a model, she travels a lot and she knows you're on the rebound. Long rebound, but who's counting?

MACLEOD

I have papers to grade.

JULIAN

You're a real buzzkill, you know that? Here we go...

Julian emerges with a small jar. MacLeod finishes sterilizing and threading a needle.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Bali Shao -- from a yarrow stalk farmer I met in Hunan province. Little dab and you won't feel a thing. Smoke it, and you'll be up for days.

MacLeod spreads the pungent ointment on the wound and goes to work stitching it up.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

What did you do with the body?

MACLEOD

Hudson River.

JULIAN

(scolding)  
It's Springtime, man...

MACLEOD

I know.

JULIAN

Water warms up, gasses release, bodies rise to the surface...

MACLEOD

I wasn't thinking straight. It's been a while.

JULIAN

Maybe you should take a vacation.

MacLeod winces -- went a little deep with the needle.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I've still got the villa in Ibiza.

MACLEOD

I'm going to stick around.

JULIAN

It's not like the old days --  
fingerprints, DNA -- FBI, CSI, IRS  
-- hell, you know how many times  
I've been audited.

MACLEOD

I'm not going anywhere.  
(cuts and ties off thread)  
This life...it's what she'd want.

Julian knows better than to argue the point. He hands over a prescription bottle and balm:

JULIAN

A month's supply of Vicodin. Apply  
the balm twice a day -- unless you  
want all of them looking like that.

In the mirror MacLeod's eyes fall on the largest, nastiest scar -- the one the Kurgan gave him. Julian is suddenly serious:

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Ever wonder if he's still out  
there?

MACLEOD

(puts on one of Julian's  
shirts)  
I spent a lot of years trying to  
answer that question. Somebody  
took him. My only regret is it  
wasn't me.

INT. MACLEOD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MacLeod grading papers and sipping a glass of single-malt.

TRACK AROUND MacLeod, taking in the joint: modest compared to Julian's swanky digs -- lots of books and periodicals. Framed maps hang on walls -- ancient and modern -- the only tip of the hat to his true age. The most striking contrast to Julian's is the silence, the isolation.

By the time we land back on MacLeod he's dead asleep. Then:

A GASP, A BURST OF WHITE LIGHT

Like we're heading for the next life -- SHADOWS playing just beyond our grasp and suddenly:

HANDS

Appear before us, tearing the white away, sunlight stabbing our eyes through a window framed by granite and we reveal:

MACLEOD

Sitting up on his stone hearth ripping away the white burial cloth that tightly envelopes his body. He gulps for air, completely disoriented and we realize now that he has been lying in state -- presumed dead -- in his modest house circa 1503. MacLeod turns to see:

HEATHER

Beside herself, but truly terrified when MacLeod speaks:

MACLEOD

[Why do you look at me that way?]

MacLeod's gaze falls to the ugly wound on his chest. He struggles to stand, but he's weak:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

[Heather -- I need help -- what's wrong with you, woman?]

HEATHER

[You -- you're dead --]

When he steps toward her, Heather turns and runs outside.

EXT. VILLAGE - WEST HIGHLAND COAST - DAY (1503)

MacLeod exits his house in a hastily draped kilt, sword sheathed, what he sees stopping him cold:

The entire village in a funeral procession, on their way to pick up MacLeod's body and put it in an ox-drawn cart. The clan stares at MacLeod as if he were a ghost.

A long beat -- a stand-off really -- as we try to discern whether the clan is thrilled or horrified.

SMASH CUT TO:

MacLeod, sword drawn, backing desperately away from us:

MACLEOD

[Don't do this! I'm one of you!]

A STONE hits his head, blood gushing as he's herded toward a weathered STONE MONOLITH that stands in the center of town:

ANGUS

[It's the devil's work!]

The frenzied MOB hurls rocks, Macleod vainly trying to parry with his blade as he backs up against the stoning wall. Cries of "Lucifer!" fill the air.

Heather watches, tears streaming, but she can't bring herself to stop the mob.

CLOSE ON - BOONCH

Marching toward his son, into the melee, taking hits from stones himself as he raises his arms for prudence:

BOONCH

[STOP! STOP THIS!]

Eventually the crowd stops, still rabid, but waiting for instruction. Boonch lifts MacLeod to his feet:

MACLEOD

[Thank you, father --]

BOONCH

(sotto voce)

[I love you, son. Now go. Run and never come back here.]

ON MACLEOD -- confused, trying to process the order. His eyes meet Heather's, pleading with her. She looks away.

BOONCH (CONT'D)

(to the crowd)

[WE MUST BURN HIM!]

The blood-thirsty mob cheers and:

MacLeod uses the split-second distraction to run for all he's worth, to run and never look back -- the mob chasing him -- Macleod running away from us and cresting a hill and we:

REVERSE ON - MACLEOD

Sprinting right at us, now sweating through a Fordham T-shirt. We're:

EXT. RESERVOIR - CENTRAL PARK - DAWN (PRESENT)

MacLeod on his daily dawn run, passing several younger CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNERS. The wild look in his eye suggests he's been running from that mob ever since the day he was banished.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAWN

MacLeod in a fast jog on his way home. He passes a STOREFRONT (ANTICA -- Antique Jewelry), then stops and backs up. Something in the store has caught his eye:

A piece of jewelry in a glass case. Unbelievably, it's the heart-shaped LUCKENBOOTH Heather gave him five hundred years ago. Tarnished and crimped, but still intact.

MacLeod wants to go in, but the store is closed. He puts a hand on the window. OVERLAP the sound of metal clanging against metal and we're:

EXT. EDINBURGH - DAY (1505)

Edinburgh castle sits perched over Renaissance Scotland's Manhattan. All walks of life live and work in the streets branching off the famous "Royal Mile." The clanging still rings in our ears as we go:

EXT. SMITHY - EDINBURGH - DAY

MacLeod bangs away at a red-hot claymore, shaping it. In the past two years he has become a proficient blacksmith. He has a very modest shop/house on a downscale street.

MacLeod places the hot steel in a basin of salty brine -- HISS -- quenching the blade. When he looks up something catches in his throat and stops his heart:

HEATHER

Weary from months of hard travel, a bundle filled with her scant belongings in hand and a hopeful, but uncertain look in her eye -- the very same catch in her throat.

Overwhelmed, MacLeod speaks in passable but accented English:

MACLEOD

You came back.

HEATHER

(Gaelic; subtitled  
English)

[I don't understand.]

He takes a step toward her and this time, instead of running away, she runs right into his arms. They kiss.

INT. COACH AND HORSES ALE HOUSE - EDINBURGH - NIGHT (1508)

A trio of OLD FIDDLERS playing lively music. Long wood-planked tables and benches, dirt floor and a sweaty, dancing, boisterous crowd.

MacLeod and Heather dance a lively Scottish dance. Heather's hair is longer -- several years have passed. When the song ends they squeeze in next to each other at the end of a crowded table:

MACLEOD

You won't give my seat away?

HEATHER

(perfect King's English)  
Depends on the price.

He plants one on her and we MOVE WITH HIM through drunkards toward the bar, fiddlers starting up again and gradually something strange...

...all earthly sound FADES AWAY as the sound of MacLeod's beating heart grows louder -- louder and faster as it did on that day the Kurgan killed him and:

MacLeod stands very still, eyes darting around the bar -- studying each face -- wondering what brought this terrible feeling on...but no one looks his way or seems out of the ordinary. He shakes the feeling off and indicates to the BARKEEP that he wants two big ones.

HEATHER

Watches her man, a smile on her face, enjoying the music -- until a deep, polished and rather romantic SPANISH VOICE intrudes on her reverie, speaking in verse:

SPANISH VOICE

'My darling dear, my daisy flower...'

Heather looks up to meet the gaze of the drunken, but still very charming, JUAN RAMIREZ (mid-50s):

RAMIREZ  
 (taking her hand and  
 sitting)  
 'Let me, quod he, lie in your lap...'

Heather is delighted as Ramirez acts out the poem by theatrically falling asleep in her arms...

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)  
 'Lie still, quod she, my paramour,  
 Lie still hardely, and take a nap.  
 His head was heavy, such was his hap,  
 All drowsy dreaming, drowned in sleep,  
 That of his love he took no keep.'

Heather claps at the performance. Ramirez sits up. Of indeterminate ethnicity, though he certainly could be as Spanish as his accent, Ramirez wears the clothes of the Spanish court. The discerning eye will recognize the sheathed steel on his waist as a Japanese Katana blade.

HEATHER  
 Where did you learn that?

RAMIREZ  
 I composed it this very day for  
 you, my dear...my darling --

HEATHER  
 Now you lie. I've read John  
 Skelton's poems.

RAMIREZ  
 Yes -- but I lie in a noble cause.

Ramirez drinks heavily from his readily accessible wineskin.

MACLEOD  
 Move your ass, friend.

Ramirez turns around slowly, deliberately to MacLeod and then back to Heather, not moving a muscle.

RAMIREZ  
 He's terribly coarse, isn't he?

HEATHER  
 Conner, sit -- he's entertaining.

MacLeod sullenly sits across from them and sets down two large mugs of ale. Ramirez helps himself to one.

RAMIREZ  
Thank you, friend.

He guzzles most of it right then and there, MacLeod staring daggers at Heather.

HEATHER  
(Gaelic; subtitled  
English)  
[He's drunk.]

RAMIREZ  
[And still listening.]

MacLeod and Heather are surprised he knows their language.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)  
(to Heather)  
Run away with me -- tonight. We'll  
go to Santorini...

HEATHER  
You've been to Greece?

MACLEOD  
(impatient)  
Heather --

RAMIREZ  
(sharply)  
Do not speak when I am speaking.  
(to Heather -- charming  
again)  
It's rude.

HEATHER  
You go too far.

RAMIREZ  
He's not a man. A man would have  
given you a son by now -- a brood  
of them --  
(directly to MacLeod)  
But not this one.

HEATHER  
(pale)  
How could you know that?

MacLeod is already standing and drawing his sword:

MACLEOD  
Get up.

Very slowly, very methodically, Ramirez rises to face MacLeod, drinking from his skin the whole time.

HEATHER

Stop it, both of you. Conner --

MACLEOD

Stay out of it.

Ramirez finishes the wine and then -- faster than we thought possible -- he draws his exquisite Katana blade. The strangeness of the weapon gives MacLeod pause.

The fiddles go silent -- the entire bar captivated. A beat and:

Ramirez lunges at MacLeod who sidesteps away and Ramirez stumbles into a table, landing in food, beer flying. He's hammered out of his gourd -- much more so than we suspected.

Ramirez slowly stands, swaying, blade in hand. MacLeod no longer wants to fight, but the old man comes at him again and falls into another table, everyone laughing uproariously at the poor old sod -- hell of a show.

Ramirez stands again and faces MacLeod. MacLeod lets his sword fall -- unwilling to engage -- but Ramirez comes once more forcing MacLeod to put the old man down on the ground. MacLeod places the Highland blade against Ramirez's neck:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

It's over. Leave us.

Blade to his neck, Ramirez looks MacLeod in the eye -- a watery, thousand yard stare that reveals a soul troubled to its core:

RAMIREZ

Do it.

MacLeod turns away but Ramirez grabs hold of the blade and presses it harder against his neck, opening a cut:

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

I'm ready -- do it, boy -- do it quick -- just do it.

MacLeod truly pities the old lush. He pulls his sword back -- cutting Ramirez's hands -- and sheaths the blade.

MacLeod takes Heather's hand and they leave, leaving Ramirez broken and drunk on the ground.

EXT. SMITHY - DAY

MacLeod hammers away at a red hot billet just starting to take shape. Sweating and filthy, he wears no shirt, the Kurgan's scar visible and...

...the sound of metal banging against metal FADES AWAY replaced by the sound of his racing heart and suddenly MacLeod whips around holding the glowing metal rod out as a weapon and a warning to:

RAMIREZ

Relatively sober but still wearing last night's dirty clothes, his arms up in surrender, non-threatening:

RAMIREZ

It's a sickening feeling is it not?

MACLEOD

Go away, old man.

RAMIREZ

This sensation is a part of the Quickening, and it's a warning that another like you is near.

MACLEOD

I won't spare you a second time --

RAMIREZ

You met a violent death. And by some kind of witchcraft you came back.

MacLeod, spooked, takes a step back.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

You're different and you don't know why.

MACLEOD

-- yes --

RAMIREZ

And you live in dread -- of being discovered as something strange and unholy --

MACLEOD

Who are you?

RAMIREZ  
 (removing hat with  
 flourish)  
 Juan Sanchez Villa-Lobos Ramirez --  
 chief metallurgist to Queen  
 Isabella of Castile, may God rest  
 her soul. And I'm the same as you.

MACLEOD  
 You're still drunk.

RAMIREZ  
 You're immortal, MacLeod. You  
 cannot die. Not unless they  
 separate this --  
 (points to MacLeod's head)  
 From this --  
 (points to MacLeod's body)

MacLeod grabs the old man, gets in his face:

MACLEOD  
 You're mad -- what you say is  
 impossible --

RAMIREZ  
 You showed me a kindness last  
 night. I'm here to return the  
 favor.

In the blink of an eye the old man twists MacLeod's wrist --  
 the metal rod drops -- Ramirez bringing MacLeod's arm behind  
 his back and driving MacLeod's head into the basin of brine.

Head submerged, MacLeod flails, trying to break free but  
 Ramirez has him completely overpowered.

HEATHER

Returning with bread SCREAMS and runs at Ramirez to help her  
 husband -- Ramirez easily holding her off.

IN THE BASIN of murky brine: MacLeod DROWNS before our very  
 eyes -- water invading his lungs, eyes bulging...

HEATHER  
 Let him go! Let him GO! STOP!

MacLeod, head still submerged, goes completely slack.  
 Ramirez holds him down another beat for good measure.

CLOSE ON - MACLEOD

Eyes closed, drowned, and then: his eyes open. He is underwater but somehow still alive.

RAMIREZ

Pulls Macleod from the basin. He falls to the ground, coughing but fine.

Heather backs away, her fear returning -- MacLeod recognizing that fear again. A long beat.

Heather steels her courage for the man she loves. She helps MacLeod to sit up on the anvil and dries him off.

MACLEOD

How can this be?

RAMIREZ

You might as well ask why there are stars in the sky.

Ramirez breaks off a piece of bread and takes a seat himself.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

You'll need to learn a thing or two if you're to last. If I'd had my wits about me your head would be rolling around that cesspool of a tavern. The one who gave you that scratch on your chest won't let you off so easily.

MACLEOD

You know this man?

RAMIREZ

(laughs)

Know him? Yes. In the same way I know the devil will not be reasoned with. The Kurgan exists to kill and you are on his list.

MACLEOD

In God's name, why?

RAMIREZ

Because, Highlander -- there can be only one.

EXT. SAN QUENTIN STATE PRISON - DAY (PRESENT)

PAN OFF the sparkling cobalt of San Francisco Bay to find California's oldest prison.

INT. PAROLE HEARING ROOM - SAN QUENTIN - DAY

CLOSE ON the HEARING EXAMINER (40s, short sleeves with a tie, pious). Mid-hearing, he speaks directly to the parolee we cannot see:

HEARING EXAMINER

Now normally at this point we'd be hearing from the sentencing judge and the prosecuting attorney. But I'm told neither are available due to the fact that they've both been dead going on two decades now.

We are now OVER THE STOOPED SHOULDER of the PAROLEE. Past his scraggly beard and long, wild gray hair we have a view of the PAROLE COMMISSION -- five middle-aged men and women.

HEARING EXAMINER (CONT'D)

Normally we would then skip to behavior and comportment during time served, but you've been in solitary confinement for fifty years. There isn't any comportment to speak of. So I guess that leaves you, Mr. Kruger.

REVEAL the parolee: an OLD MAN (80s) clutching a well-worn Bible, wrists and ankles manacled -- Jerry Garcia by way of Charles Manson. But the eyes give him away -- cold and piercing. There's no mistaking the eyes of THE KURGAN.

HEARING EXAMINER (CONT'D)

Do you regret and repudiate your crime?

KURGAN

By his very nature man is weak...

FLASHBACK: DOLORES PARK - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT (1958)

*In silhouette the Kurgan, looking like the GRIM REAPER, swings a gardening scythe at the exposed neck of a defeated, MUSCLE-BOUND IMMORTAL lying on the ground. A FLASH OF LIGHT, the Kurgan taking his Quickening:*

BEAT COP (O.S.)

*FREEZE!*

*An army of cops scrambles up the hill -- the Kurgan stands and runs -- BANG! BANG! BANG! A fusillade of bullets takes the Kurgan down and we're:*

BACK ON - THE KURGAN

The hint of a grin under his bushy beard at the memory.

HEARING EXAMINER

Tell the commission in your own words why we should grant your request for parole.

KURGAN

I have waited an eternity. And now the end is finally near. 'Mark the perfect man and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.'

HEARING EXAMINER

(impressed)

Psalm 37. I read the same passage to my father in his final hours.

KURGAN

Before we leave this world, we will gather -- gather knowing that, in the end, there can be only one.

HEARING EXAMINER

One and only. Our lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

KURGAN

Amen.

Hearing Examiner, impressed, looks to his fellow Commissioners -- they nod.

CLOSE ON a stamp hitting a file: "PAROLE GRANTED." We catch a glimpse of the YOUNG KURGAN'S mug shot and his name: "KRUGER, VICTOR."

EXT. MONTGOMERY STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

The hustle and bustle of modern life -- late-model cars, pedestrians engrossed in their iphones, electronic multi-media displays in windows and THE KURGAN taking it all in.

The world has changed in fifty years. He holds a prison envelope with all of his earthly possessions in it.

The Kurgan's gaze lands on WELLS FARGO HEADQUARTERS across the street, the sign reminding customers that the bank was founded in "1852." The Kurgan enters.

CUT TO:

The Kurgan exits, a Samsonite case in hand. Alarm bells ring inside. Sirens swell in the distance as the Kurgan calmly turns the corner and nonchalantly drops the bloody knife up his sleeve down a storm drain.

INT. WELL-APPOINTED BATHROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON: a sink filled with nasty grey hair. TILT UP to the mirror to find the Kurgan cutting his beard off with scissors.

SERIES OF SHOTS: the Kurgan applies shaving cream -- shaves the stubble off -- meticulously washes the grey shoe polish out of his hair under the bathtub spout and soon:

The Kurgan of old stands before the mirror, not a day older than the day we met him. The age thing was an act to fit in.

The Kurgan's body also shows the scars of time -- from bullets, musket balls, arrows -- but there's only one from steel: the scar MacLeod gave him. MacLeod's was the only blade that touched him. The Kurgan runs fingers over it.

We DRIFT OUT of the bathroom to find we're in the PRESIDENTIAL SUITE of the Four Seasons -- ravaged room service on a tray -- landing on:

The Samsonite case filled with stacks of hundreds stolen from the bank. A U.S. Army service record circa WWI with MACLEOD'S PICTURE affixed to it peeks out of the Kurgan's prison envelope.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - MANHATTAN - DAY

HARBOR PATROL BOATS idling close to shore. UNIS, OCME and two young, no-nonsense DETECTIVES work around a COVERED BODY.

Veteran Lieutenant Detective AL KING (50s, left arm in a sling) makes his way to the body, begrudgingly popping a piece of Nicorette gum. His two Detectives (MALLOY, female; HINES, male) are surprised to see him:

DET. HINES  
Lieutenant -- didn't expect you  
back for a few more weeks.

LT. KING  
I'm feeling much better. Thanks  
for asking.  
(off body)  
This our swimmer?

Malloy pulls the covering back. King doesn't blink.

LT. KING (CONT'D)  
You get a cause of death?

DET. MALLOY  
Glad you didn't lose your sense of  
humor.

King is staring at the headless body of FRENCH OFFICER.

DET. MALLOY (CONT'D)  
M.E. says there's no way a  
propeller made the cut -- too  
clean.

LT. KING  
So they're calling it a homicide.

DET. HINES  
No ID, but we did find this.

Hines hands King a soggy piece of PAPER in an evidence bag:  
a FLYER publicizing an evening lecture with PROFESSOR RUSSELL  
NASH. The washed-out photo is recognizable as MACLEOD.

EXT. ANTICA (FINE ANTIQUE JEWELRY) - MANHATTAN - DAY

MacLeod walks into the store where he saw Heather's  
Luckenbooth.

INT. ANTICA - DAY

A high-end, eclectic mix of fine jewelry spanning the ages.  
The PROPRIETOR (BRENDA WYATT; 30s) shows an Egyptian necklace  
to a monied couple.

MacLeod approaches the case where the Luckenbooth is  
displayed only to discover that it has been replaced by  
another piece of jewelry. He checks the other cases, making  
sure he hasn't got the wrong one.

BRENDA

I'm sorry, did you make an appointment?

MacLeod turns on Brenda. Her simple beauty is enhanced by an inner confidence that comes from having met life's unexpected challenges.

MACLEOD

No -- there was a piece here just yesterday -- a heart -- kind of asymmetrical and made of silver...

BRENDA

The Luckenbooth.

MACLEOD

Do you still have it?

BRENDA

I thought I was ready to let it go.

MacLeod is thrown -- until he sees that she wears the Luckenbooth on a chain around her neck. Brenda removes the necklace and hands it to him as:

BRENDA (CONT'D)

It's wonderful, isn't it? Early 16th century, Scottish -- the West Coast Highlands.

MacLeod gently takes the Luckenbooth from her.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Traditionally a husband would give the Luckenbooth to his bride-to-be on the morning of their wedding day and she would wear it affixed to her arisaid --  
(indicates her blouse)  
Right about here.

*QUICK FLASH: (Highlands, 1501) MacLeod pins the brooch to Heather's arisaid on their wedding day.*

MACLEOD

Where did you get this?

BRENDA

My ex-husband found it in a pawn shop on Skye. He has a good eye, but it wandered.

MacLeod smiles -- she is unapologetically direct.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

As you can see from the condition it's in it was treated rather carelessly. Typically the charm would be buried with the wife but something must have happened to make her stop wearing it.

MACLEOD

(a dig)

You can tell all that just by looking at it?

BRENDA

Every piece has a story to tell. Which story depends on my mood.  
(off Luckenbooth)  
I like to think she threw it away when she left him -- an act of independence, which wasn't unheard of in those days.

MACLEOD

No -- but it's not a very romantic story.

BRENDA

Well if you can do better...

MACLEOD

...maybe she gave it back to her husband to keep him safe...and he didn't live to return it.

BRENDA

That is romantic. But it never happened.

MACLEOD

You're awfully sure of yourself.

BRENDA

What kind of charm would it be if it couldn't protect him?

MacLeod is amused -- she makes a good point.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Can I show you anything else?

MACLEOD

I want this.

A bell rings -- a Leona Helmsley-type enters with her little dogs.

BRENDA  
That's my two o'clock. I'm sorry.

MACLEOD  
I'll come back when you have time.

BRENDA  
No -- I mean it's not for sale.  
It's -- personal.

MACLEOD  
Tell you what -- I didn't catch  
your name...

BRENDA  
Brenda.

MACLEOD  
Brenda, I'll take your best piece,  
anything in the store -- but this  
comes with it.

BRENDA  
Am I supposed to be impressed?

MACLEOD  
Be sensible.

BRENDA  
(holds out her hand)  
You first.

Reluctantly MacLeod places the charm in Brenda's hand. He also places a card in her hand.

MACLEOD  
If you change your mind.

MacLeod leaves. Brenda looks at the card: "*PROF. RUSSELL NASH -- CHAIR -- HISTORY DEPT. -- FORDHAM UNIVERSITY*"

When she looks up MacLeod is gone.

EXT. ARTHUR'S SEAT - DAY (1508)

High atop the hills overlooking Edinburgh Castle and the bustling medieval city. MacLeod and Ramirez draw swords -- MacLeod swinging -- Ramirez in a flash sliding his blade into MacLeod's quillion, the blade flying and Ramirez catching it, the same way the Kurgan did. MacLeod is amazed.

RAMIREZ

There's a whole world out there,  
Highlander. Too many cultures to  
count. Each has made its own  
contribution to the art of killing  
a man.

QUICK CUTS:

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Marozzo's '*Coda Lunga*'...

-- Ramirez takes the Italian stance and sends MacLeod's sword  
flying again.

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*La Verdadera Destreza* --

-- Ramirez's feet make dizzying circular movements -- the  
Spanish school -- and he delivers a CUT to MacLeod's leg.

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*Battojutsu*.

-- Ramirez, blade still sheathed on his waist, waves at  
MacLeod to attack. MacLeod comes in fast but in one smooth  
motion Ramirez draws in the Japanese fashion -- delivers a  
CUT to MacLeod's chest, MacLeod falling to the ground -- and  
Ramirez returns the blade to its sheath.

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You will learn to live with pain.

INT. SMITHY - NIGHT

Heather hands MacLeod a bottle of scotch. He gulps it as  
Ramirez ties a wire-thin piece of linen to a sharp bone:

RAMIREZ

...your body can endure much of it.  
Use it to your advantage. Pain can  
be a tool as much as steel.

Ramirez deftly SUTURES the wound he gave MacLeod. Hurts like  
hell. Heather watches Ramirez -- a quick study.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

My Persian friend Ibn Sina taught  
me this five hundred years ago. No  
doctor has yet surpassed him.

Sweat bursting on his brow, MacLeod holds out his hand. Heather takes it and squeezes. Ramirez notices this -- seems not to like it -- but does not comment.

EXT. ARTHUR'S SEAT - DAY

MacLeod and Ramirez thrust and parry, MacLeod improving, his moves formal and correct. Suddenly Ramirez parries a blow, clocks MacLeod across the jaw with the hand wrapped around his hilt and pulls MacLeod in close:

RAMIREZ

This is no gentleman's game. Many times the fight is won inside the blade.

Ramirez throws MacLeod to the ground and delivers a deep cut to the other side of his chest.

MACLEOD

Enough!

RAMIREZ

Enough? Then take my head right now and you'll learn it all. Everything in one stroke.

MACLEOD

(struggling to his feet)  
What are you talking about?

RAMIREZ

The Quickening, MacLeod. When one of us takes another, the victor gains the other's strengths. Everything in here...  
(touches his own head with his sword)  
Ends up in here --

Ramirez delivers a cut to MacLeod's head. Fueled by running blood MacLeod charges but Ramirez moves deftly -- the German school -- and delivers another cut.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

*In Des Fechten.*

INT. SMITHY - NIGHT

Heather stitches MacLeod up. Ramirez drinks and eats.

HEATHER

You have immortal life -- the one thing every one of us desires -- and you spend your days robbing each other of it.

RAMIREZ

The tiger's teeth weren't put there to smile.

HEATHER

I know nothing of tigers.

RAMIREZ

We fight because we must. There's no choice in the matter.

Heather laughs scornfully.

MACLEOD

You won't win this argument, friend.

Ramirez feigns amusement, but his eyes bore into Heather as if she were some insurmountable obstacle.

EXT. FRANCISCAN FRIARY - EDINBURGH - NIGHT

MacLeod, claymore drawn, walks warily outside the DESERTED friary (closed in 1495), searching for Ramirez:

RAMIREZ (V.O.)

There is great power in the Quickening. You must use your senses to feel your opponent.

MacLeod stops at a doorway, feeling that Ramirez is inside. A beat and MacLeod lunges through the door -- SOUNDS of a struggle and we're:

INT. CHAPEL - FRANCISCAN FRIARY - NIGHT

...Ramirez with his blade pressed firmly against MacLeod's neck. Moonlight plays eerily through stained glass.

RAMIREZ

But we will not fight on Sacred Ground. None of us can violate that law.

(sheaths blade)

Ra, Zeus, Saturn, Yaweh and Allah. I've seen many gods rise and fall.

MACLEOD

How many years do you have,  
Ramirez?

RAMIREZ

I was born a slave under the rule  
of Pharaoh Khufu so that would make  
it...4,623 years, three months and  
two days.

The enormity of the time span is almost too much for MacLeod  
to comprehend.

MACLEOD

And if we outlive the gods, what  
does that make us?

RAMIREZ

We do not know who made us, or for  
what purpose. But we dare not risk  
incurring his wrath.

OVERLAP the sound of an explosion and we're:

EXT. FOREST - OUTSKIRTS OF EDINBURGH - DAY

MacLeod with smoking musket extended. An enormous PUMPKIN  
(the target) remains unmoved atop a stump. Frustrated,  
MacLeod reloads, his fingers deft from practice.

RAMIREZ

You will test yourself in war. Be  
fluent in the latest instruments.  
Use any means to create the  
opportunity to take your opponent's  
head.

MacLeod fires again -- BAM! the pumpkin wobbles, grazed.  
MacLeod seems satisfied. Ramirez hands MacLeod a MODERN  
1500's SPANISH HAND CANON.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

Lucky for us man's inventions move  
faster than his feet can carry him.

MacLeod lines up on the pumpkin again and BLAM! The pumpkin  
explodes into pulp.

EXT. ARTHUR'S SEAT - DAY

MacLeod and Ramirez going blow for blow, getting in close and dropping each other and rolling out of the way and springing back to their feet, MacLeod combining everything he's been taught and suddenly it's Ramirez's sword that's flying through the air -- MacLeod forcing Ramirez to the ground and pointing the blade at Ramirez's neck.

MACLEOD

(proud of himself)

Still want me to do it? Still  
ready to die, old man?

Ramirez reaches out a hand for MacLeod to help him up. MacLeod sheaths his blade and takes Ramirez's hand and as Ramirez stands he grabs MacLeod's sword and puts MacLeod on his ass and the blade to MacLeod's neck. Disappointed, Ramirez drops the sword and walks away.

EXT. FOREST - OUTSIDE EDINBURGH - DAY

A thick copse of trees shrouded in even thicker fog.

MACLEOD

Silently stalking his prey -- tree trunks made black by dampness appearing before him like dreams from the mist.

POV: from behind a trunk and through trees of MACLEOD.

MacLeod feeling something, the SOUND of his heartbeat growing louder, his hand going to the hilt of his sword and:

He springs around a tree drawing steel and...a STAG bounds away. MacLeod exhales, frustrated.

THE POV: still on MacLeod and moving closer --

MacLeod turning, feeling it but not knowing where. He closes his eyes, his focus solely on locating his adversary, hand sheathing his sword and moving to the hand canon holstered to his waist and:

MacLeod dives and rolls, coming up on one knee with that canon leveled through the trees on:

RAMIREZ

About twenty paces away. The old man smiles as if he somehow has the upper hand and BOOM!

-- MacLeod fires -- Ramirez disappearing behind a tree as a healthy chunk of it is blown away -- MacLeod on his feet and suddenly:

The SOUND of a blade unsheathed and swung behind him, MacLeod turning -- CONFUSION suddenly on his face as he brings his left arm up defensively and:

#### A JEWELLED BLADE

Comes right at us at lightning speed and slices deeply into MacLeod's arm and sends him sprawling, blood gushing.

#### A DARK FIGURE

Looms over MacLeod like a giant.

MACLEOD'S POV: disoriented, but coming into focus on the massive BENIN WARRIOR standing over him, wrapped in a cloak to hide his Nigerian origins.

The Benin takes hold of MacLeod, lifts him off the ground and throws him against a tree, MacLeod's back taking the full brunt --

No time to get his bearings as powerful black hands lift MacLeod and hurl him against another tree --

Eyes glazed, back torqued, MacLeod lies on the ground as the Benin comes at him, spinning the ornate blade from hand to hand and he's raising it and slashing -- CLANG! -- MacLeod drawing just in time to stop the Benin's blade millimeters from his neck.

The Benin tears the sword from MacLeod's grasp -- MacLeod rolling over and crawling away and:

The Benin brings a massive, sandaled foot down in the middle of MacLeod's back. MacLeod suddenly goes limp and we have to wonder if he's paralyzed as the Benin positions himself for the kill stroke, two hands on his blade now.

MacLeod, unable to move, sees something GLEAMING in the leaves on the ground -- the hand canon -- he reaches for it and as the Benin brings the blade down:

MacLeod rolls onto his back and thrusts the canon up to block the blow -- the Benin's blade SHATTERS in half against the canon --

MacLeod's hand finds the end of the shattered blade and grips it like a dagger, the sharp edges cutting MacLeod's hand open, MacLeod ignoring the pain of it as he brings the blade up at lightning speed and plunges it into the Benin's gut.

The Benin drops to the ground --

MacLeod now grabs his sword and without even thinking he raises it and we're:

CLOSE ON MACLEOD as he chops. The SOUND of a clean stroke and the head hitting the forest floor. Exhausted, MacLeod drops to his knees and JERKS as if in a trance -- consumed by the Benin's essence -- MacLeod's FIRST QUICKENING...

...is a rush of energy and as his body absorbs the shock we can see MacLeod enjoying it -- feeding off of it -- growing stronger because of it and as abruptly as it started...

It's over. MacLeod raises his head and looks right at us. We can't help but notice the knowing smile of the addict curling his lips. That was very, very good.

Ramirez appears before MacLeod.

RAMIREZ

(off Benin's body)

I felt his arrival yesterday.  
We've been playing a game of cat  
and mouse for some time now.

(MacLeod does not respond)

Smile, boy. The Benin had three  
hundred years under his belt.

But MacLeod's eyes still gleam in the afterglow of the Quickenings.

MACLEOD

You didn't prepare me for this.

RAMIREZ

There is no preparation for this.

MacLeod stands, moving his sword deftly from hand to hand in the exact same way the Benin did (thanks to the Quickenings):

MACLEOD

...and when will we fight?

RAMIREZ

When only a few of us are left we  
will feel an irresistible pull to a  
faraway land. There we will gather  
to fight for the Prize.

MACLEOD  
 (skeptical)  
 The Prize...

RAMIREZ  
 The triumph of your will over all  
 others...

INT. CHAPEL - FRANCISCAN FRIARY - NIGHT

Back with MacLeod and Ramirez under those eerie stained glass windows:

MACLEOD  
 What would you do with such power?

RAMIREZ  
 I cannot win. I fought the Kurgan  
 once before and barely escaped with  
 my head. This shell of mine --  
 it's an old man's body. You were  
 reborn in your prime. That's good.  
 But it will take more than strength  
 to defeat the Kurgan.

MACLEOD  
 (gripping his sword)  
 I have all the skills I need.

RAMIREZ  
 You don't understand. You and I,  
 we respect mortal life. That is  
 the unspoken code we live by. The  
 Kurgan wins because he has no  
 honor. He isn't bound by any  
 code...

*FLASHBACK: KURGAN'S VILLAGE - RUSSIAN STEPPES - DAY (256 AD)*

*Moving over rolling hills covered in deep snow we find a hamlet of earthen dwellings with thatched roofs. The entire village, wrapped in furs, is gathered in the center of town for a meeting. These are hardened people.*

*Facing his fellow villagers with a stoic stare: The KURGAN. An older, bearded, bear of a man -- VILLAGE ELDER -- stands next to the Kurgan. They speak in a Slavic tongue that has since fallen out of use [subtitled English]:*

VILLAGE ELDER

[...these unspeakable acts:  
robbery, rape, murder. You have  
committed them all.]

KURGAN

[You would betray your own blood?]

VILLAGE ELDER

[I would uphold the laws of decent  
people. But I have no illusions.  
Your failings are my own -- as a  
father.]

A rough-hewn NOOSE is lowered over the Kurgan's neck and tightened by Village Elder (Kurgan's Father). Two villagers unceremoniously pull the rope, lifting the Kurgan off his feet. He hangs from a simple wood frame, legs kicking, hands vainly prying at the rope, face turning purple.

INT. VILLAGE ELDER'S DWELLING - NIGHT

Village Elder wakes with a start. Moonlight plays on his WIFE'S FACE, but something is off. When he touches her she rolls over revealing that her throat has been cut.

VILLAGE ELDER

Steps out of his dwelling to an awful sight:

Every single member of the village hangs from the wood frame. All of them dead. And suddenly:

A rope is around Village Elder's neck and he is pulled down and dragged along the ground by a galloping horse.

The KURGAN rides the horse away from the village, dragging his father with him -- dragging him until he dies and we're:

BACK IN THE CHAPEL WITH MACLEOD AND RAMIREZ

RAMIREZ

When the mind is evil so is the  
sword. The Kurgan must not be  
allowed to win the Prize.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - TEXAS - DAY (PRESENT)

A well-kept manse built during the oil boom years surrounded by acres of Lone Star State dust. Ex-Texas Rangers with shotguns sit on the porch under the shade of their Stetsons.

A Salt and Pepper Ranger stands from his seat, something on the horizon reflected in his mirrored aviators.

REVERSE ANGLE: a DUST CLOUD approaches from the distance.

The Rangers lazily stand.

A CONVERTIBLE BMW

Kicks up that dust moving at close to 100mph, the KURGAN at the wheel, hot wind in his face. Comfortable in a tailored Tom Ford suit, no tie.

MOMENTS LATER - THE KURGAN

Steps from the car and walks up the steps to the front porch. He is surrounded by Rangers who cockily give him the once over. A Ranger wands the Kurgan for metal -- nothing.

INT. SKINNY'S OFFICE - SAME

Enough state of the art computer equipment to make an NSA analyst jealous. Sitting at the desk, a bearded man raised in Old Dixie (SKINNY; 40s). The rolled-up sleeves of his snap-button shirt reveal extremely powerful arms. He speaks with the swagger of a high-end drug dealer:

SKINNY

(on phone)

...'cause it don't work that way.  
A gnat hits the windshield, I grab  
his Social, sell it to you. Not my  
problem if you don't like the  
name...

Salt and Pepper Ranger enters and indicates there's business to tend to. Skinny nods and wraps up the call:

SKINNY (CONT'D)

A refund? Sure -- give me an  
address and I'll mail it to  
you...that's what I thought.

Skinny hangs up. He reaches over to the wall and takes a CIVIL WAR-ERA SWORD off pegs:

*FLASHBACK: (Shiloh, 1862) Skinny in a confederate uniform, charging into battle down a field of tall grass, sword drawn -- BOOM! -- smoke clears revealing Skinny mangled -- his legs a bloody mess. Amazingly, Skinny's eyes POP OPEN.*

EXT. FRONT PORCH - RANCH HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Kurgan coolly waits. Soon the front doors open and Skinny rolls out in a wheelchair. Our eyes are drawn to the fact that Skinny has no legs. Skinny's face goes gray at seeing the Kurgan on his porch, though he feigns bravado:

SKINNY

You don't look dead.

KURGAN

I need some legwork done. You came to mind.

SKINNY

Hilarious, asshole. What do you want -- driver's license, travelling papers? Voter registration?

KURGAN

Looking for somebody.

The Kurgan disdainfully tosses a fat roll of bills into Skinny's lap. Skinny fingers the cash, looking the Kurgan over real good.

SKINNY

You don't bring in so much as a butter knife.

SALT AND PEPPER RANGER

He's clean.

INT. SKINNY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Skinny rolls behind his workstation and casually picks up his sword as a warning, tossing it from hand to hand with flourish, his well-kept arms flexing:

SKINNY

Things have been pretty quiet. I suppose you being back means you're going to stir some shit up, but don't get any ideas -- my services buy me a pass until the Gathering. That's the deal.

The Kurgan takes a seat. Five Rangers have the Kurgan completely covered. He slides MacLeod's photograph across the desk. Skinny picks it up.

SKINNY (CONT'D)

Saw that one coming. Thing is, MacLeod here bought himself some insurance in case anyone ever came looking for him, and in this business all I've got is my reputation.

KURGAN

How much is your reputation worth, Skinny?

SKINNY

Double.

The Kurgan tosses the money on the desk. Skinny frowns -- should have asked for more. He goes to work on his computer.

The Kurgan laconically eyes the Rangers, the gleaming shotguns not bothering him in the least. The Rangers are just itching for him to make a move.

Out of the Kurgan's view we see Skinny click on his MACLEOD FILE (one of dozens of Immortal Files) and scan through docs he's collected over the years:

SKINNY (CONT'D)

Looks like MacLeod got himself a citation after a bar fight in Bombay about 45 years back. Public intoxication in Jakarta a decade later. Had a passport stamped in Boston in '71. After that...

Skinny opens a NYT article from 15 years ago. The headline: "*Local Man Donates Rare Blade to MET.*" In the accompanying grainy photo: CONNER MACLEOD handing a sword to the CURATOR.

But Skinny CLOSES the article and keeps his word to MacLeod:

SKINNY (CONT'D)

Looks like you're S.O.L. Victor. He dropped off the grid.

KURGAN

You sure about that? A man like you's not in a position to take sides.

SKINNY

Any more than a man in yours should  
be making threats.

The Rangers pump the actions on their shotguns.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The RANGERS watch the Kurgan walk off the porch to his car. They're curious as the Kurgan opens his trunk.

The Kurgan unlocks the hasps on a long, sleek case in the trunk. We salivate at the prospect of finally seeing the Kurgan's sword as he opens the case revealing:

A sleek, state-of-the-art ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE LAUNCHER.

The Kurgan unceremoniously picks up the launcher, slings it onto his shoulder, aims at the house and in the split second between pulling the trigger and launch we see the sudden looks of dismay on those Rangers' faces and:

WHOOSH -- KABOOM! Half the house erupts in a huge explosion.

INT. SKINNY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The Kurgan calmly walks through smoking carnage. He finds Skinny pinned under a door, trying desperately to reach his sword. The Kurgan picks it up.

KURGAN

The Gathering's a lot closer than  
you think, Skinny.

SKINNY

I'll look again okay?! I'll find  
him for you!

KURGAN

I'll do it myself.

He brings the sword down, a FLASH OF LIGHT filling frame.

MOMENTS LATER - POST-QUICKENING

The Kurgan at Skinny's computer (pulled from the wreckage and rebooted) studying the NYT article that Skinny closed: We see now that the sword MacLeod holds in the photo is none other than the Kurgan's curved SHASHKA SABRE.

The Kurgan grins. OFF MacLeod's stony glare in the photo we go:

EXT. GRASSMARKET - EDINBURGH - DAY (1508)

MacLeod and Ramirez walking through the bustling outdoor market crowded with vendors, women and children.

RAMIREZ

(off people)

We travel among them, Highlander,  
but you are not one of them. This  
is the hardest lesson.

MacLeod looks around at smiling faces.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

You must live apart from them.  
Become an island unto yourself.  
(off MacLeod's look)  
Make no mistake -- if they knew  
your secret they would tear you  
apart. But they are not to blame.  
Their lives are too short. In the  
blink of an eye they are gone, most  
having learned nothing and profited  
little.

MacLeod spies HEATHER in the crowd, picking through vegetables. She's a vision to behold.

MACLEOD

You underestimate them.

RAMIREZ

She will only bring you heartache.  
I would spare you that pain.

MACLEOD

She gave up her home, her people --  
everything she knew to be with me.

RAMIREZ

You cannot give her children.  
Would you deny her that happiness?

MacLeod turns sharply on Ramirez, but deep down Ramirez has only confirmed what MacLeod already knew to be true.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

You could have some good years,  
yes, but eventually the differences  
between you will destroy the things  
you had in common.

*QUICK FLASH: (Japan, 898). The face of a beautiful JAPANESE PRINCESS(50s), smiling and looking right at us. We're...*

INT. SMITHY - NIGHT

Ramirez, deep into his cups, spins the tale of his marriage to both MacLeod and Heather:

RAMIREZ

...Princess Shakiko was her name.  
I could have spent a lifetime in  
her eyes and another on her lips.  
The third would have been spent --

MACLEOD

Spare us the details.

HEATHER

The details are the best part.

She takes MacLeod's hand. Ramirez is suddenly melancholy.

RAMIREZ

(in verse)

'The wind doth blow today, my love,  
And a few small drops of rain;'

*QUICK FLASH: (Japan, 898) Ramirez, beside himself, runs through a feudal castle hallway and stops in a doorway:*

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

'I never had but one true-love,  
In cold grave was she lain...'

*Through the doorway Ramirez sees that his Princess clutches a DAGGER that is buried in her chest.*

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

She took her own life -- to spare  
me the pain of watching her die.

MACLEOD

I'm sorry.

RAMIREZ

I've carried that image with me for  
six hundred years.

Shaken, MacLeod lets Heather's hand go.

HEATHER

And would you give back the time  
you had together to spare yourself  
this pain?

RAMIREZ

(spoiling for a fight)  
The heavens weren't even aware of  
her existence --

HEATHER

I can tell you your princess did  
not regret a single day or moment --

RAMIREZ

They didn't have a chance, her time  
was so short. That is how  
insignificant you are --

MACLEOD

Bite your tongue, old man.

RAMIREZ

(still at Heather, off  
MacLeod)  
And you hold him back -- you stop  
him from realizing his true  
potential!

MACLEOD

Get out before I throw you out.

MacLeod's anger sobers the glassy-eyed Ramirez.

RAMIREZ

I apologize for that -- I...  
Sometimes I forget myself.

MacLeod and Heather remain unmoved. Ramirez shoulders his  
wineskin, his many sad years really showing. At the door he  
turns back:

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

Perhaps you are not the one to take  
my burden from me.

Ramirez leaves.

INT. LECTURE HALL - FORDHAM - DAY (PRESENT)

MacLeod clicking through digital SLIDES: Alexander on a horse; Crusaders in Jerusalem, the pristine WTC Towers, modern oil derricks as:

MACLEOD

Land, God, resources -- the Prize  
we fight for changes, but the cost  
remains the same...

IMAGES of casualties from modern wars mixed with photos of wives and children waving tearful good-byes to soldiers departing on trains and ships:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

So the question becomes: is any  
Prize worth the cost?

Lights come up. The class remains silent.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Since all of you are tongue-tied  
today I want a twenty page essay by  
the end of the week. Single  
spaced.

Groans all around.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Finally something worth fighting  
for. Okay, ten pages -- but I want  
it from you. Don't quote back  
Clausewitz and Gibbon to me.  
They're full of shit.

Laughs and relieved chatter as the class filters out.  
MacLeod's eyes curious when they land on someone standing in  
the back of the class: BRENDA.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - MANHATTAN - DAY

Lt. King (still wearing sling) walking with detectives Malloy  
and Hines. Hines, on a phone call, grows increasingly  
incredulous at whatever's being said on the other end.

DET. MALLOY

(off notes)

Russell Nash, born 1971, Boston,  
Massachusetts. His father was some  
kind of international businessman.  
He left young Russell a fortune.  
Private schools, Harvard.

(MORE)

DET. MALLOY (CONT'D)  
Nash eventually moves to New York  
and teaches history.

LT. KING  
Record?

DET. MALLOY  
Clean. Gives to charity, serves on  
a couple boards including the Met  
but keeps to himself. No wife. No  
kids. No immediate family to speak  
of.

Hines hangs up and turns to King:

DET. HINES  
You're not going to believe this.

INT. HOMICIDE - POLICE PRECINCT - MOMENTS LATER

Malloy and Hines follow Lt. King who takes off his sling and  
tosses it as he enters his small OFFICE where a FAX is coming  
through. King works the injured arm back and forth (there's  
still some pain there) as he studies the FAX: it's in French,  
but we recognize the perp as FRENCH OFFICER:

LT. KING  
This our headless horseman?

DET. HINES  
FBI fingerprint database came up  
dry so I passed him along to  
Interpol.

LT. KING  
(reading)  
"Guy Lautrec."

DET. HINES  
He was booked on a murder charge in  
Toulouse, France.

LT. KING  
How much time he do?

DET. HINES  
None. The victim made a miracle  
recovery and walked out of the  
hospital. No body, no crime.

Desk Sergeant enters with a note for King. Malloy grabs it:

DET. MALLOY  
 (reading note)  
 Dr. Coleman. Fifth time he's  
 called.

King snatches the note and tosses it.

DET. MALLOY (CONT'D)  
 That'll show him.

LT. KING  
 I'm fine.

DET. MALLOY  
 Most cops who take two in the chest  
 are happy to collect disability for  
 six months...

King ignores her and turns to page 2 of the fax: a grainy  
 image of a SWORD.

LT. KING  
 This what I think it is?

Malloy throws Hines a concerned look, but Hines shrugs: what  
 are you gonna do?

DET. HINES  
 (off picture of sword)  
 The "murder weapon." Gets better.  
 Check out the date on the process  
 order.

LT. KING  
 "Avril" --

DET. HINES  
 That's April.

King gives Hines a weary look. Then:

LT. KING  
 1936?

DET. HINES  
 And the M.E.'s report says he  
 couldn't have been older than  
 twenty-six, but his body has more  
 scar tissue on it than an eighty  
 year-old Great White.  
 (off Malloy's look)  
 I watch NatGeo. So what?

LT. KING  
 So you're an idiot. Someone in --  
 (checks fax)  
 Toulouse, France is having a slow  
 day. They're screwing with you and  
 you bought it.

INT. ST. ANDREW'S PUB - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

A wood-panelled Scottish nook. An as advertised FIDDLE TRIO  
 plays traditional, ex-pat patrons doing the same dance we  
 saw MacLeod and Heather do in 1508.

At a table: MacLeod and Brenda with draft beers. MacLeod  
 opens a jewelry box revealing the Luckenbooth.

BRENDA  
 There's a real story behind it for  
 you isn't there?

MACLEOD  
 It reminds me of someone, that's  
 all. Someone I cared about.  
 (beat)  
 What changed your mind?

BRENDA  
 It's time. That ever happen to  
 you? One day you realize you can't  
 move forward if you keep looking  
 back?

MACLEOD  
 I look back because it's the only  
 direction we can learn from. And  
 it pays the bills.

BRENDA  
 You're good with them -- your  
 students.

MACLEOD  
 They're the kids I never had. When  
 you're young you still have a  
 hundred paths to choose from.

BRENDA  
 (playful)  
 So you're saying it's too late for  
 me. I'm destined to keep making  
 the same mistakes?

MACLEOD  
 (with a smile)  
 Or different ones.

MacLeod meets her gaze, maybe a bit surprised at himself.  
 There's definitely a charge there.

BRENDA  
 (off dancers)  
 Looks like fun.

MACLEOD  
 It's an old Scottish traditional --  
 kind of like a two-step.

BRENDA  
 Want to show me how?

MACLEOD  
 I don't dance.

BRENDA  
 I think you're lying.

She smiles a carefree smile that's contagious and offers her hand. MacLeod takes it.

They walk onto the dance floor and join in, MacLeod showing Brenda the simple steps to the dance. It's fun, and for a moment or two MacLeod actually forgets the past and focuses on the present, but eventually...

...a familiar, uneasy sensation takes over as MacLeod's heartbeat INCREASES in volume, all other sounds fading away -- MacLeod looking around for the Immortal -- studying faces...

MACLEOD  
 (pretending to flirt)  
 I'll get us another round. Go back  
 to the table and don't move an  
 inch.

BRENDA  
 I won't.

MacLeod heads through the crowd, continuing to scan faces, becoming more and more concerned that any second now blood will be spilled and...

A HAND on his shoulder, MacLeod turning and grabbing JULIAN.

MACLEOD  
 What are you doing here?

JULIAN  
 You're not gonna believe it, man...  
 (sees Brenda)  
 Hey, very nice.

The goofy grin and nanosecond attention span make us suspect he's not completely sober:

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 I prefer a woman with a little more  
 meat on her bones, but she's got a  
 pulse so that's something.

MACLEOD  
 You're wasted.

JULIAN  
 Not even. I did pop a Xanax. And  
 a Valium. And some purple things --  
 I forget what they're called...

MACLEOD  
 What is it? What's wrong?

JULIAN  
 Skinny's dead, man. Somebody blew  
 up his house.  
 (MacLeod frowns)  
 Now who would do that? That's  
 messing with some serious chi.

He hands over a newspaper ARTICLE: the Wells Fargo Bank  
 Robbery in SF and a Security Photo of the OLD KURGAN.

MACLEOD  
 How long ago?

JULIAN  
 Close to two weeks.

MacLeod stares at the Kurgan's picture, kicking himself. He  
 turns to Brenda. She smiles.

MacLeod leaves the bar without a second glance.

INT. MACLEOD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MacLeod pieces together a state-of-the-art SNIPER RIFLE.  
 Julian drinks from a bottle, more despondent by the minute:

JULIAN

He'll bring it with him, don't you think? The Gathering? Now that he's back it won't be long.

MACLEOD

You always knew it was coming.

JULIAN

I mean -- why can there be only one? You ever think about that? Why can't there be two? Or a whole shitload of us for that matter?

MACLEOD

You thought there was another path. When the Kurgan disappeared I let myself think that too. That there was more than this. More than fighting just to survive another day.

JULIAN

I can't die, Mac. I'm not ready. I'm not like you.

MacLeod attaches the rifle to a standing tri-pod.

MACLEOD

Go home to Crystal. Get some sleep.

MacLeod opens the blinds revealing an amazing view of the METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. (Not until this moment did we realize just how prime his piece of New York real estate is.)

MacLeod opens the window so the barrel has an unobstructed line on the entrance to the museum. He scoots his chair in close to the rifle and puts his eye against the SCOPE.

INT. SMITHY - EDINBURGH - NIGHT (1508)

MacLeod and Heather sit close together. Ramirez has recently left, drunk and disappointed.

MACLEOD

You have to leave me, Heather.

HEATHER

(shocked)  
...that's really what you want?

MACLEOD

I want you to be happy.

HEATHER

When I'm with you I'm happy.

MacLeod remains silent. Furious, Heather lays out a cloth and begins to throw things on it to pack for leaving. MacLeod slowly realizes she's packing his things, not hers.

MACLEOD

What are you doing?

HEATHER

I ran from you once, I won't do it again --

MACLEOD

(grabs her)

Stop.

HEATHER

There's the door. You leave if that's what you want.

MACLEOD

I'm the reason we don't have children. I'm cursed.

HEATHER

You've let Ramirez poison you. Do you forget he tried to kill you? And he would have if he'd been able to stand.

She takes his hands, desperate for him to understand.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You're not cursed, Conner. You have a gift. And Ramirez wants you to squander it killing.

MACLEOD

His burden is my burden now. I have a responsibility --

HEATHER

Yes! To me! Because I will be gone soon and you have to carry on. What will you do? Will you drown yourself in spirits and soak yourself in blood? You've been chosen -- chosen by God to see into the future.

MacLeod closes the cloth around his belongings and ties the bundle up. He sheaths his sword. He stands at the door.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You're a coward.

It's almost impossible for MacLeod to reach for the door rung, but he does. When he pulls on it, something strange:

The door won't open. MacLeod puts two hands on the iron rung and pulls hard but the heavy door will not budge. Suddenly:

A FLAMING LOG flies in through the window, setting fire to the straw-strewn floor -- the window shutters slam closed -- MacLeod pulling at them but they're locked.

EXT. SMITHY - NIGHT

Streams of smoke escape from seams in the door and shutters, a man watching it all very calmly with sabre in hand: the KURGAN. He turns to see:

The SILHOUETTE of a man using a cane for support. The man takes a few unsteady steps toward the light.

KURGAN

The great Pharaoh Khufu. Look at what you've become.

Ramirez, drunk, uses his Katana as a cane to steady himself as he removes his hat with flourish.

RAMIREZ

I don't go by that name anymore.

KURGAN

(beat)  
MacLeod is mine.

RAMIREZ

In fact he's mine.

In a flash Ramirez draws, the blade leaving the scabbard, leaving Ramirez's hand and whizzing through the air, a missile headed right at the Kurgan's neck --

The Kurgan moving in the nick of time -- the Katana embedding itself in a doorjamb --

Ramirez charging behind the blade -- the Kurgan raising his sabre in defense -- Ramirez parrying it aside with his scabbard and cracking the Kurgan across the jaw with it and withdrawing the Katana --

Ramirez comes at the Kurgan with blade and scabbard in the distinctly Japanese style, driving the Kurgan away from the smithy, away from MacLeod and Heather.

INT. SMITHY - NIGHT

Flames engulf the entire thatched ceiling. MacLeod grabs blankets, rushes to Heather, covers her with the cloth and holds her close as the flaming roof collapses on top of them, completely obscuring them in burning wreckage.

IN AN ALLEY

The Kurgan slashing at Ramirez, forcing him to retreat -- Ramirez falls and rolls out of the way as the Kurgan's blade splits the ground inches from his head -- Ramirez springing to his feet and backing onto:

A HILLSIDE

They fiercely fight their way up it.

EXT. SMITHY - NIGHT

BUCKETS OF WATER are passed along a line of Edinburgh's grimy CITIZENS, the buckets thrown on the blaze that is MacLeod's smithy. The fire has spread to neighboring dwellings.

The jaws of the people in the bucket line go slack at an amazing sight:

A BURNING APPARITION appears from the blaze -- MacLeod carrying a smoking bundle of wrapped blankets. He lays the bundle on the ground and falls on his face, flames rising off his back.

Buckets of water are thrown on MacLeod and the blanket bundle, dousing the flames.

The blanket is opened revealing HEATHER, alive. MacLeod, eyes open and glazed, lies still as people gently lay wet rags on his terribly burned back.

ON THE HILLSIDE

Ramirez on defense, weary and barely able to fend off the Kurgan's crushing blows -- Ramirez holding his scabbard out to parry -- the Kurgan's sabre cutting right through it and:

With one mighty thrust the Kurgan runs Ramirez through, the curved blade a hook holding Ramirez there. The Kurgan pulls Ramirez in close, blood running from the old man's lips.

RAMIREZ

You'll never win the Prize.

KURGAN

(dismissive)

MacLeod? He's a newborn -- a child.

RAMIREZ

Everything I know I gave to him.

KURGAN

(furious)

Each man according to his own ability.

RAMIREZ

I live by no code.

Ramirez places a foot up on the Kurgan's chest and pushes with all his might, pushing himself off the sabre -- Ramirez tumbling backwards down the hill --

The Kurgan chases Ramirez who rolls to a stop. He uses his last strength to stand and raise his blade:

CLANG! The Kurgan flings the Katana from Ramirez's hands.

Defeated, Ramirez hangs his head.

The Kurgan raises his sabre high and as LIGHTNING FLASHES in the stormy night sky we go:

EXT. SMITHY - DAWN

RAIN now mercifully falling on smoking dwellings. Citizens doing the grim work of piling up the dead. MacLeod and Heather stare at something in the pile of bodies:

A headless corpse in fine Spanish attire: RAMIREZ.

Heather puts a comforting arm around MacLeod who burns with fury at seeing his dead mentor.

MacLeod's anger only grows when he turns to Heather who now wears a permanent mark: a RED BURN curling up the side of her neck and touching the bottom of her cheek like a tendril.

MACLEOD

We have to leave. It's not safe here. As long as you're with me you'll never be safe.

HEATHER

(unconcerned)  
You'll protect me.

INT. BEDROOM - MACLEOD'S CONDO - DAY (PRESENT)

MacLeod leaned against the rifle, eye to the scope. Been in this position for hours. He sits up and rolls his neck. Takes a bite of a sandwich on a plate. And then:

A familiar feeling -- a slight uptick in his heart rate. He presses his eye against the scope again.

SCOPE POV: PANNING across the teeming crowds outside THE MET, passing over a COUPLE, landing on a TRENCHCOAT GUY, false alarm, panning back past the COUPLE -- wait. Come back. The man turns. It's THE KURGAN. He holds a WOMAN tightly by the arm. Incredibly, it's BRENDA. She is terrified.

MacLeod at a loss -- how can this be? He springs to his feet and moves into the HALLWAY to a steel-reinforced door. He punches a security code into a keypad and opens the door, stepping into:

AN ARMORY

Walls filled with swords, daggers and guns. A swatch of MacLeod tartan hangs from the ceiling. MacLeod finds the weapon he needs:

A long, slim, rectangular handle inlaid with ivory about two feet in length. With a sudden snap of the wrist a razor-sharp BLADE whips out of the handle and snaps into place -- a folding DIPLOMAT'S SWORD.

INT. GREAT HALL - THE MET - DAY

Met denizens, groups of chaperoned schoolchildren. Security Personnel abound, but most took the job because it gets them in free. In the ticket line -- the Kurgan tightly holding his hostage, Brenda, by the arm.

*QUICK FLASH: (St. Andrew's Pub, Last Night) BRENDA watching MacLeod talk to Julian. MacLeod looks at her and leaves.*

*A MAN at the bar with his back to us turns revealing the KURGAN. He stares coldly at Brenda.*

THE KURGAN

Receives two Met Medallions from an attendant. He's unsure of what to do with the medallions until he sees a mother affixing one to her daughter's sweater. The Kurgan dutifully affixes a medallion to Brenda's blouse:

KURGAN

If you try to signal anyone I'll  
kill the nearest child.  
Understand?

Brenda nods numbly. The Kurgan leads her into the EGYPTIAN ART section, Brenda trying to hold onto her sanity:

BRENDA

Why are you doing this? Why me?

KURGAN

MacLeod set a trap. You're my  
insurance.

BRENDA

Who? I don't know what you're  
talking about --

KURGAN

Your boyfriend from the bar.

BRENDA

The professor?

KURGAN

Professor. I should try that one  
on -- very respectable.

INT. GREAT HALL - SAME

MacLeod, clutching the innocuous Diplomat's Sword, squeezes through the front doors past patrons and pivots directly for Egyptian Art. Moving along the coat check line he effortlessly swipes a medallion from an OLDER LADY and puts it on in time to move past security.

INT. ARMS AND ARMOR - THE MET - DAY

The Kurgan guiding Brenda through the most popular hall for young boys: swords, maces, lances, poleaxes -- full sets of armor sitting atop wooden horses in battle poses.

The Kurgan studies cases until he finally sees her: his SHASHKA SABRE under thick glass.

KURGAN

Isn't she beautiful? I made her  
with my own two hands from Cossack  
steel.

FLASHBACK: AMERICAN TRENCH - BELGIUM - NIGHT - 1918 (WWI)

*MacLeod (U.S. Uniform) and the Kurgan (German Uniform) fight with swords, American and Hun soldiers fighting hand to hand around them. MacLeod tries everything he's learned, but the Kurgan bashes away, knowing every move, much better than MacLeod -- MacLeod tripping over the dead -- the Kurgan raising for the kill stroke as a SCREAMING comes across the sky and then a massive EXPLOSION of earth and:*

*MOMENTS LATER: a HAND appearing out of churned earth -- MacLeod crawling out of the dirt grave created by the unseen mortar. He stands to see that the Kurgan is gone.*

*But the Kurgan's SABRE remains. MacLeod picks it up.*

BACK ON - THE KURGAN'S SABRE

Under glass, the Kurgan and Brenda reflected in it.

KURGAN

He won't escape this time.

BRENDA

You're not making any sense --  
please, let me go...

KURGAN

Lady, sometimes you just meet the  
wrong guy.

The SOUND of a FIRE ALARM. The Kurgan instinctively draws Brenda in close, puts the Glock we didn't even know he had to her side, spinning around, looking for MacLeod...

BIG OLD SECURITY LADY  
 Ladies and gentleman! Please make  
 your way to the exits in a calm and  
 orderly fashion!

CLOSE ON - MACLEOD

We're not sure exactly where he is, but he stands up close against a life-size TURKANA WARRIOR (now Kenya) -- the PULLED FIRE ALARM in view. MacLeod's eyes fall to the sleek STONE BRACELET on warrior's wrist. MacLeod yanks the bracelet free and removes the outer strip of goatskin leather revealing the razor sharp edge of the stone -- a very rare wrist knife.

BACK ON - THE KURGAN

Watching people evacuate:

KURGAN  
 (in Brenda's ear)  
 He's clever, your professor.

The Kurgan SMASHES the glass museum case with the base of the Glock and now:

A much LOUDER alarm goes off as security gates drop from doorways -- meant to prevent theft -- locking a dozen patrons (most of them kids) inside the hall.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - THE MET - SAME

Assistant Museum Director ALEXA PURI (30, tall, Indian, long hair in a tight, professional pony-tail) notices the new alarm -- along with the fire alarm -- on one of a dozen of her Security Captain's screens:

CAPTAIN  
 Now we've got a breach in arms and armor.

ALEXA  
 Probably some kid trying to take home a souvenir. I'll go down there.

INT. ARMS AND ARMOR - SAME

Patrons, realizing they're stuck inside jail cell-like gates, do not yet take notice of the Kurgan with his Glock to Brenda's side, spinning around, looking for MacLeod and we:

RACK FOCUS past the Kurgan to the KNIGHT OF ARMOR standing behind him as MACLEOD steps from behind the knight and THROWS something that hits the Kurgan in the back, the Kurgan dropping the Glock -- Brenda running away -- RACK FOCUS back to the WRIST KNIFE now embedded in the Kurgan's back --

MacLeod walks swiftly at the Kurgan, the blade of the Diplomat's sword snapping into place --

The Kurgan, seeing MacLeod, rips the wrist knife from his back and throws it -- MacLeod DEFLECTS it with his blade, the wrist knife flying high and just missing a RED-HEADED KID --

RED-HEADED KID tugs a CLASSMATE'S jacket, Classmate turning and seeing every boy's dream:

CLASSMATE

Cool.

Warriors come to life: MacLeod and the Kurgan facing each other -- standing absolutely still -- the Kurgan with his sabre in a low ward, MacLeod in a countering high ward --

BIG OLD SECURITY LADY

Put those down! Those are museum property!

Captive patrons (hostages) all turn and gasp --

Brenda stares directly at MacLeod, but he does not acknowledge her, his total concentration on the Kurgan.

Neither warrior moves an inch, waiting for the other to move first -- a samurai stand-off:

MACLEOD

(off hostages)  
Let them go.

KURGAN

You always had a weakness for them.  
I never understood that.

MACLEOD

This has nothing to do with them.

KURGAN

This has everything to do with them. If you win, they live. If I win they die.

MACLEOD

They're innocent.

## KURGAN

Innocent? Is the man who murders  
his only son innocent? Or the  
people who gather to watch him die?  
They're all guilty. Every last one  
of them.

The Kurgan attacks -- steel meeting steel -- the Kurgan a whirlwind, forcing MacLeod defensively across the room, all he can do just to block the blows -- the Kurgan much faster than Ramirez ever was, and suddenly:

The Kurgan spins and cuts right through the Diplomat's Sword and kicks MacLeod backwards into a knight on horseback --

Domino effect -- all the king's horses and all the king's men crash to the ground, arms and armor everywhere --

The Kurgan slashes at the defenseless MacLeod -- MacLeod barely rolling out of the way and grabbing the ornate ITALIAN SHIELD in front of him --

The Kurgan slashes again, MacLeod blocking the blow with the shield and swinging a MACE on a long chain, wrapping up the Kurgan's legs, MacLeod yanking -- the Kurgan falling --

MacLeod already on his feet with the mace expertly winding it over his head and swinging, the mace a serpent striking at the Kurgan who now barely spins out of the way and stands...

...the two warriors experts at using and defending against every instrument in the room...

MacLeod swinging again, the Kurgan letting the mace wrap around his blade and he yanks it from MacLeod's grasp -- MacLeod thrusting with the shield and hitting the Kurgan square in the face with it in rapid-fire blows -- the Kurgan stumbling backwards, MacLeod advancing --

The hostages utterly amazed at what they're seeing --

## ALEXA

Stand back!

She's just outside the gate, opening a box on the wall -- Brenda pulling kids away from the gate -- Alexa inserting a key into the override slot and turning it:

The gates begin to rise. Brenda and Security Lady help children escape before the gate has totally risen --

MacLeod using the shield to tackle-run the Kurgan against a wall -- the Kurgan swinging his sabre and hitting the nearest glass case -- SMASH! and:

The gates begin to LOWER again:

MacLeod runs to the nearest suit of armor and uses a foot to SLIDE it across the floor to Brenda who wedges it under the lowering gate -- stopping it -- but the armor won't hold forever --

The Kurgan grabs a hefty MORGENSTERN (mace on wooden shaft) --

BRENDA

Look out!

MacLeod turns with the shield just in time to get BASHED by the Morgenstern -- MacLeod stumbling back across the hall -- the Kurgan coming at him on offense again and swinging:

BASH! MacLeod is thrown violently to the ground --

Brenda helps kids wriggle under the gate, Alexa pulling them through to the other side --

EXT. THE MET - DAY

Hundreds of evacuees pouring out of the museum. FIRE ENGINES pulling up. A team of FIREFIGHTERS runs in formation into the museum.

INT. GREAT HALL (CONTINUOUS)

...still with the firefighters who spread out. We stay on a cold looking FIREFIGHTER carrying an ax as he runs into EGYPTIAN ART -- something not quite right about this guy.

INT. ARMS AND ARMOR - SAME

All the hostages out save for Brenda who looks back at MacLeod fending off the Kurgan with a POLEAX:

ALEXA

(to Brenda)

Come on!

Screw this. Brenda wriggles under the gate but:

The suit of armor holding the gate up begins to GIVE WAY, threatening to crush her --

MacLeod runs for Brenda -- grabs a solid steel BURGONET (English Helmet) along the way -- dives and slides across the marble floor, wedging the burgonet under the gate just in time to allow Brenda to escape --

BRENDA  
Get out of there!

MacLeod sees the Kurgan stringing an arrow into a longbow and lining up on BRENDA:

MACLEOD  
Get down!

Brenda drops to her stomach as an arrow whizzes over her head and hits the wall --

MacLeod, on his back, pulling himself under the gate, trying to wriggle through --

Brenda suddenly flabbergasted at Alexa:

BRENDA  
What are you doing?!

MACLEOD'S POV: ALEXA stands over him, a Turkish Yataghan in hand and raised over her head and coming down at MacLeod's neck because Alexa is an Immortal and:

MacLeod does a sit-up into the gate -- SMASH! Alexa's blade hits marble --

THUD! An arrow hits MacLeod in the shoulder, forcing him back down to the ground, which is lucky in its own way because Alexa is swinging at MacLeod's head against the gate:

SMASH! the Yataghan hits the bars of the gate and this time MacLeod's quick hands firmly grasp the sharp blade, blood flowing from MacLeod's hands but he ignores the pain, pulls hard on the blade and tosses Alexa over him to the ground.

MacLeod pulls himself out and stands with the arrow in his shoulder and grabs Brenda and moves her out of the way as:

Another arrow hits the wall -- and another -- the Kurgan fast as lightning -- THWIT THWIT THWIT -- MacLeod and Brenda just barely outrunning them only to come face to face with:

Alexa, sword at the ready, but MacLeod stops short -- looking beyond Alexa, which makes her turn and duck as:

An AX just misses her head and hits the wall --

FIREFIGHTER (IMMORTAL)

On the other end of the ax and rearing it back and swinging again -- Alexa diving to the ground --

MACLEOD

Grabs Brenda's hand and they run.

ALEXA

Rolls out of the way of the ax, stands and fights back with the Turkish blade -- Firefighter parrying deftly with the head and shaft of his ax, an artistry to the movements until he has another opportunity to swing for the fences and:

Alexa ducks, and then swings for Firefighter's head --

THE KURGAN

Bathed in the AMBIENT GLOW of a Quickening as he pulls himself free of the gate and stands, sabre in hand.

ALEXA

On her knees in the orgasmic throes of the Quickening. When it's over:

Alexa turns sharply and frowns. A SHADOW looms over her.

MACLEOD

Pulling the arrow free of his shoulder while running with Brenda through the TEMPLE OF DENDUR, moved brick by brick from the shores of the Nile. They keep moving, as fast as they can through...

THE EGYPTIAN ART HALL

MacLeod leading the way, knowing exactly where he's going -- pushing through a STAIRWELL DOOR and coming to a FIRE EXIT and they keep moving through it --

EXT. NORTH END - THE MET - DAY

...MacLeod and Brenda pop out the fire escape door and soon they're on the sidewalk half a block north of the main entrance and the real chaos. They breathe heavily.

Only now does Brenda notice that she is still clasping MacLeod's bloody hand. She pulls it out of his grasp.

MACLEOD  
We have to keep moving.

BRENDA  
We? Are you nuts?

MACLEOD  
I'll explain later --

BRENDA  
Explain now!

The fire escape door flies open, time SLOWING as the Kurgan appears like a demon from hell, sabre in hand, time SPEEDING UP as Brenda, horrified, turns back to MacLeod:

MACLEOD  
(deadpan)  
That guy wants to cut my head off.

But a TEENAGE GIRL (The Yearling) -- dressed a little too adult for her age -- is suddenly in MacLeod's face:

YEARLING  
Can you feel it, MacLeod? The end  
is finally near.

And with that the Yearling pushes MacLeod, much harder than we think she's capable of, MacLeod stumbling into the street:

WHAM! A fire engine smashes into MacLeod, ripping him out of frame like a bird on a windshield and everything goes

BLACK.

The now familiar sound of a heartbeat growing louder...

A RED LIGHT

Appears in the distance -- a burning wall torch. We move toward it. A beckoning PROSTITUTE, standing under the torch, gives us a look as we pass.

MACLEOD

Doesn't give her a second glance as he moves through the fog of:

DE WALLEEN

Amsterdam's famous red-light district, circa 1540. He comes to a heavy wooden door: 420 De Wallen Street.

MacLeod knocks. A square under iron bars opens and a pair of suspicious, but familiar, eyes appears. The door opens:

JULIAN

(Dutch; subtitled English)  
[Hey, Mac. You don't look so good.]

MACLEOD

[I need something more -- for the pain.]

JULIAN

[Get in here.]

INT. JULIAN'S HOUSE - AMSTERDAM - NIGHT (1540)

...MacLeod steps inside. Anxious and pale, he is not himself, and in no mood to interact with the motley group of actors and artists that are having themselves a good time.

Julian goes to a shelf full of jars filled with roots and God knows what else. He fishes mandrake root out of a jar (oddly human shaped) and brings it to MacLeod.

JULIAN

[Boil a pot of wine and drop that in. You do not want to smoke it. Trust me.]

EXT. COTTAGE - COUNTRYSIDE - NETHERLANDS - DAWN (1540)

A modest cottage. Windmills spin in the distance.

INT. COTTAGE - DAWN

MacLeod carries a pot of boiling wine, the root bobbing in it, to Heather. Pale, feverish and now past her fiftieth birthday, Heather is still a stunning beauty. But plague is destroying her body. She coughs before sipping the anaesthetic brew.

MACLEOD

All of it.

Heather tries her best to finish, but refuses the dregs.

HEATHER

Read to me.

LATER

MacLeod reading a poem to Heather who now has a dreamy look on her face. Slow and deliberate, MacLeod corrects himself when he makes mistakes, but Heather has taught him well:

MACLEOD

'Patience, though I have not  
The thing that I require,  
I must of force, God wot,  
Forbear my most desire;  
For no ways can I find  
To sail against the wind.  
Patience, do what they will...'

THAT NIGHT

Heather squeezing MacLeod's hand white, trying to drink more brew, the pain nearly unbearable.

THE FINAL HOUR

The dreamy look back on Heather's face. MacLeod kneels by her side. Try as he might, he cannot ignore the Kurgan's scar that mars her neck and creeps under her perfect cheek.

HEATHER

You see him when you look at me. I  
hate that.

MACLEOD

I'll join you in the after. After  
I find him I will join you.

HEATHER

No. I won't have you.  
(then)  
There's more to life than  
vengeance, Conner.

MacLeod cools Heather's forehead with a wet sponge, struggling to hold it together.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

...she can't be too pretty, of  
course, or I'll be jealous.

MacLeod is unsure of what she means.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
 Promise me you'll open your heart.

MACLEOD  
 I won't.

HEATHER  
 I release you.

MACLEOD  
 No.

HEATHER  
 A life without love is no life at  
 all. Promise me.

MacLeod meets her fierce gaze. He will do anything he can for her, but he can't do this.

EXT. HILLSIDE - WEST HIGHLAND COAST - DAY (1540)

MacLeod finishes placing a simple headstone into the ground in front of Heather's freshly filled-in grave. She has a beautiful plot in her home soil.

MacLeod stands and takes a drink from a bottle. He says a silent prayer and as his lips move we can see that familiar feeling come over him -- the sound of his heart growing louder in his ears. On the next hill he sees:

A RIDER APPROACHING

Bearded, grizzled, Bavarian armor and a long sword astride a black horse and staring MacLeod down.

Fury clouds MacLeod's face. Even in this moment, they come for him. He draws his sword. He takes another drink. We get the feeling this is the beginning of a deep, dark slide.

CNN INTERNATIONAL REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Witnesses barely had words to  
 describe the amazing scenes of  
 violence they witnessed today...*

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - TOKYO - DAY (PRESENT)

A stern-looking JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN takes his Katana blade off its stand, CNN on a flatscreen in the BG: security camera footage of MacLeod and the Kurgan fighting in the Met -- the army of cops and NYFD outside.

CNN INTERNATIONAL REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Two bodies were found inside the  
 museum...*

INT. LOCKER ROOM - FENCING CLUB - LONDON - DAY (PRESENT)

Sweating after an athletic match, a FENCER picks through the sporting foils in his locker until he finds an ivory handled true blade, the same CNN report on a nearby TV:

CNN INTERNATIONAL REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Police refused to comment on what  
 killed the victims, though grisly  
 details have emerged...*

INT. MAIN CABIN - YACHT - DAY (PRESENT)

Open sea passing by out windows, an ARAB SHEIK, polishing his scimitar, watches the same report:

CNN INTERNATIONAL REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Another victim was found out on the  
 street...*

INT. CUSTOMS - JFK AIRPORT - DAY (PRESENT)

A Customs Agent curiously inspects a sword. A BRAZILIAN WOMAN, from Amazonian stock, hands over papers. Everything appearing to be in order, Customs Agent hands her the sword as the report drones in the BG:

CNN INTERNATIONAL REPORTER (V.O.)  
*Though his identity is not yet  
 known, his condition has been  
 listed as critical...*

INT. HOSPITAL - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

Brenda looks through a window into an ER: an ATTENDING pulls a sheet over Macleod's pale, unmoving face. She notes the time for her intern. The room empties out, Brenda stepping away from the swinging doors.

Brenda stares at MacLeod lying lifeless under the sheet. Something passes in her expression -- perhaps regret.

LT. KING  
 Ms. Wyatt?

Brenda turns to King.

LT. KING (CONT'D)  
Thanks for coming down here. I  
know it's been a long day.

BRENDA  
Sure.

LT. KING  
(hands her security camera  
image of Kurgan)  
Is this the man who kidnapped you?

BRENDA  
Yes. He came into my store this  
morning with a gun.

LT. KING  
And he never said what he wanted?  
What his beef was with Nash?

BRENDA  
He said it was because Professor  
Nash stole his sword.

LT. KING  
I guess if you live long enough you  
see just about everything.

Brenda smiles thinly.

LT. KING (CONT'D)  
(off MacLeod)  
You seemed upset just now when they  
called it.

BRENDA  
Yes.

LT. KING  
But you said you barely knew the  
guy.

BRENDA  
(annoyed)  
He saved my life and then died  
right in front of me. Can I go  
now?

LT. KING  
Sure. I'll have one of my men  
drive you home.

BRENDA  
No, thank you.

Brenda walks away. King looks at the lump that is MacLeod one more time, then joins Detectives Malloy and Hines.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Brenda pulls her Prius up to the guard gate. She fishes around for her ticket, frustrated. Finally she finds it and pays the guard and suddenly:

The passenger door opens and MacLeod gets in. Brenda backs away -- like she's literally seeing a ghost. MacLeod is pale and weak and still hurting like hell.

MACLEOD

Drive.

BRENDA

You -- you're dead.

MACLEOD

No, you are unless you do exactly what I tell you.

Brenda fumbles for the door -- MacLeod grabs her firmly.

BRENDA

I saw you die!

Cars HONK -- a line of them wondering what the hell the hold up is -- Brenda even more frazzled.

MACLEOD

I know you're scared, but you have to drive now.

His eyes hold hers: firm, but reassuring. She hits the gas.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

The Prius rolls out into traffic.

MACLEOD

Keeps his eyes on headlights in the side-view mirror --

BRENDA

You can have the car. Just let me out.

MACLEOD

He wants you. To get to me. He's  
hunting us right now.

Brenda stops at a red light, cross traffic flowing.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Go.

BRENDA

I can't!

MacLeod moves his foot on top of hers and presses.

THE PRIUS

Hurtles into the intersection, horns blaring and tires  
screech as the Prius lurches through the maelstrom.

A FAMILIAR BMW

Darts out of line and screams through the intersection,  
clipping a car but continuing: the KURGAN.

BRENDA

Sees the BMW gaining --

BRENDA

He's right behind us!

MacLeod's foot still on the gas, he grabs the wheel and pulls  
a hard right:

THE PRIUS

Swerves onto a ramp and merges onto:

THE FDR

Once in the fast lane, MacLeod gives control of the car back  
to Brenda:

MACLEOD

Don't let off the gas.

Brenda accelerates.

## THE KURGAN

Plows up the shoulder, scraping between cars and the center divider -- a heat-seeking missile:

## INSIDE THE PRIUS

BRENDA  
What does he want?

MACLEOD  
I'll explain later.

BRENDA  
You said that already! It is  
later!

MACLEOD  
I never should have come into your  
store. I'm sorry you have to be  
part of this.

BRENDA  
Who were those people? Why do they  
want to kill you?

MACLEOD  
(off lights in mirror)  
He's gaining.

But Brenda EASES OFF the gas.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

BRENDA  
What happened in the museum today?

MACLEOD  
Just go!

BRENDA  
Who are you?

## THE KURGAN

Is right up the Prius's ass now --

## MACLEOD

Understands that Brenda means business:

MACLEOD

If we get out of this I'll tell you everything. I promise.

A beat. Then Brenda rips a HARD RIGHT --

THE PRIUS

Tears across the FDR, traffic honking -- BOOM! -- nails the water barrel at an exit divider and somehow manages to careen onto the exit ramp.

THE KURGAN

Rips the same turn and suddenly his face is bathed in the bright glow of a Bronco's HEADLIGHTS -- a look of annoyance on the Kurgan's face -- then a metal-crunching SMASH!

INSIDE THE PRIUS

MACLEOD

Nice move.

Brenda doesn't respond. She wants this to be over.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Let's go to my place.

INT. MACLEOD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ANGLE ON the front door. A beat, and the door is kicked open by Lt. King. His Detectives follow him inside.

King marches through the place, taking it in -- sees the RIFLE on a tri-pod at the bedroom window -- pokes his head into the armory and turns on the light revealing all of MacLeod's weapons. Wow.

EXT. FDR - NIGHT

FIREFIGHTERS use the jaws of life to saw the crumpled door off the BMW. The Kurgan is pinned down inside, bloody and annoyed at having to wait.

FIREFIGHTER

Don't move, buddy! We'll get you out of there!

The door comes away and the Kurgan steps out -- swaying like a drunken sailor, but on his feet.

FIREFIGHTER (CONT'D)

(amazed)

Easy, pal! You all right?

KURGAN

(nonchalant)

I'll live.

Firefighters step toward the Kurgan who draws his sabre and waves them back. The firefighters back off, saying "whoa!" and "take it easy" and:

The Kurgan backs up against the concrete divider, turns and hops over it, disappearing.

Firefighters run to the edge, looking twenty feet down at the EMPTY STREET below them. The Kurgan is gone.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

MacLeod leads Brenda down the hall. Still hurting and exhausted he stumbles, using the wall for support. Brenda instinctively offers him a hand. He takes it.

They arrive at MacLeod's door, not knowing that the cops lie just behind it. MacLeod opens the door and they walk inside.

INT. MACLEOD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

...complete silence. Brenda's jaw drops.

REVERSE ANGLE reveals MacLeod's 25 million dollar penthouse in the famed DAKOTA BUILDING. Original art on the walls. Antique furniture (MacLeod's "backup" safehouse).

MACLEOD

We're safe here. Nobody knows about this place.

BRENDA

What do they pay history professors these days?

MACLEOD

I made a couple of good stock investments over the years.

BRENDA

...you promised me the truth.

MACLEOD

This will all be over soon. Either he'll be dead or I'll be dead and you'll be safe.

BRENDA

Do you hear yourself when you say this stuff? What will all be over soon?

MacLeod turns away from her.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I'm out of here.

MACLEOD

...wait.

MacLeod reaches into his pocket and pulls something out that we can't see. He turns back to Brenda.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

I think my wife is playing a cruel joke on me.

BRENDA

(maybe disappointed)  
You're married.

MACLEOD

Was. ...I think she wanted us to meet. Through this...

MacLeod opens his hand revealing the Luckenbooth.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

I gave it to her on our wedding day. She gave it back to protect me. I was going to a fight and she didn't want me to go.

BRENDA

She sounds like the smart one.

MACLEOD

Yes. She was much smarter than me. She could read and write and she had all kinds of ideas.

Brenda isn't sure how to respond to that.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)  
 (unbuttoning his shirt)  
 I went anyway. The man in the  
 museum was waiting for me.

MacLeod has his shirt open just enough to reveal the vertical  
 scar in the middle of his chest. Brenda grimaces.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)  
 The blade went in right here...

MacLeod takes the shirt off revealing all of the scars  
 accrued through time (ribs black and blue from today's  
 accident) -- Brenda's eyes going wide and wet with empathetic  
 horror --

BRENDA  
 Oh my God.

MacLeod turns around revealing the burns and the EXIT SCAR  
 where the blade went all the way through.

MACLEOD  
 It came out back here. Sepsis and  
 blood loss should have killed me,  
 but I woke up. That was 506 years,  
 five months and twenty-three days  
 ago.

BRENDA  
 (backing away)  
 What?!

MACLEOD  
 You saw me die today. They  
 pronounced me.

BRENDA  
 Just stop. Stop talking --

MACLEOD  
 I have things.  
 (off his art)  
 Matisse, Renoir, Degas. A home in  
 every city. I've seen things. The  
 wheat made red at Gettysburg. The  
 air on fire in Dresden. The woman  
 I loved worn down to nothing by  
 plague. I've known thousands of  
 people. I remember their names. I  
 can still see their faces.

They're close now, Brenda trembling, but she meets his gaze. His insane words do have the ring of truth. And despite the scars he still has the kind face that came into her store.

BRENDA

I need a drink.

MacLeod leaves to oblige her. Brenda eyes the door, but she's more intrigued by the art on the walls. All originals, worth millions. Damn.

MacLeod returns with a bottle of wine, glasses, and an ice pack against his ribs. Seeing he needs help, Brenda takes the bottle from him. It's covered in dust. She blows on it revealing the year: "1789."

MACLEOD

I hope it's still good.

Brenda opens the wine.

*DET. MALLOY (V.O.)*

*"India, 1855. I ride the new  
railroad built by the East India  
Company..."*

INT. MACLEOD'S APARTMENT (OPPOSITE MET) - NIGHT

CSI pores over and bags everything from swords and guns to books. King and his Detectives sit at a table engrossed in hardcover journals written by MacLeod:

DET. MALLOY

(reading)

"Mortals continue to amaze me with their technical feats, and yet I've never seen such poverty and hunger. Some days I want to lay my neck on the track when the steam engine rolls past, but I can't. The Kurgan waits for me somewhere."

(to King)

What do you think? Paranoid schizophrenic?

But King seems distracted, something eating at him.

LT. KING

You a doctor now?

DET. MALLOY

Tell me you're not buying into any of this.

DET. HINES

(reading)

"Manchuria, 1932. I fight against the Japanese hoping I am on the right side. I took my two hundredth head today. Without the aid of the rice wine I'd go mad. I'm afraid I won't find him again until the Gathering, but when will that be? Another four hundred years? A thousand? More?"

King is already on his phone:

LT. KING

...it's Al King, homicide. Your attending around?

Malloy and Hines ask King what he's doing but King holds a finger up.

LT. KING (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hey darling, sorry to bug you. Can you get an eyeball on my DOA: name Nash, Russel ... I know, I know, I'm under a pile of it too.

(beat)

Really? When? ...thanks.

King hangs up.

LT. KING (CONT'D)

Nash is gone. Disappeared an hour ago.

EXT. DAKOTA BUILDING - DAY

The storied piece of North German Renaissance architecture built in 1880.

INT. BEDROOM - MACLEOD'S PENTHOUSE - DAY

MacLeod rises from deep sleep on top of the made bed. He wipes sleep from his eyes and gets his bearings.

MACLEOD

wanders through the penthouse, checking bedrooms and couches -- the kitchen. Brenda is nowhere to be found.

An open book out on a table catches MacLeod's eye. He picks up the book. Inside:

Faded sepia-tone pictures show MacLeod in a hard hat posing with fellow workers by the pylons of the Golden Gate Bridge under construction.

MacLeod looks to the door and it sinks in: Brenda left him.

CLOSE ON - MACLEOD

Bathed in warm reddish light. We're not sure where he is, but it seems nice. Peaceful. Soon he turns to see Julian approaching:

JULIAN

I had Crystal stop by Brenda's store. It was closed. My guess is she blew town.

MACLEOD

I think the best thing I can do is stay away from her.

Julian takes a seat next to MacLeod. Always prepared for any occasion, Julian produces a bottle of scotch and glasses. He opens and pours as:

JULIAN

Dalmore 62 Single Highland Malt, 1943.

MACLEOD

One of only twelve produced.

JULIAN

Sixty grand at auction. I believe I set some kind of record.

As they clink glasses we REVEAL that they're sitting on a ledge on top of:

THE MAGNIFICENT MANHATTAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Legs dangling over the edge, hundreds of feet up, watching the most spectacular SUNSET you've ever seen.

JULIAN

(off sunset)

They never get old, do they? ...if you had to pick one...

MACLEOD

If I had to pick one? ...Paris?

*QUICK FLASHES: (Paris, 1888) MacLeod and Julian on scaffolding near the top of the Eiffel Tower under construction watching the sunset with a fine bordeaux.*

MACLEOD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Or maybe Athens...

*(Athens, 1600s) MacLeod and Julian toasting glasses of Ouzo, watching the fiery red ball extinguish itself in the Aegean.*

JULIAN (V.O.)

I'm going to have to go with Bangkok...

*(Bangkok, mid-1900s) MacLeod and Julian watching the sunset on a beach, Julian really watching the curvaceous local women.*

BACK ON - MACLEOD

MACLEOD

It's been a good ride.

Something elegiac in the tone. Something final. They drain their glasses. Julian refills them.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

They're coming out of the woodwork. Two hit me at once.

JULIAN

The rules are out the window, man. Not cool.

MACLEOD

Then this little yearling comes out of nowhere and pushes me in front of a truck.

JULIAN

(shakes head)  
Was she...  
(makes hourglass motion)

MACLEOD

Gorgeous.

JULIAN

They always are. That's how they get you.

But any mirth soon fades away. MacLeod places a sheathed sword between them.

MACLEOD  
 (off sword)  
 Made her myself. She'll serve you well.

It takes Julian a while to pick it up, but he does.

JULIAN  
 Thanks, Mac.

MacLeod nods, gets up and walks away.

Darkness clouds Julian's face as he comes to a hard decision. He thrusts his hand into the drain and pulls a PISTOL from under layers of muck.

WITH MACLEOD

Walking away but the click of the hammer stops him. RACK FOCUS to find Julian, pistol leveled at MacLeod, sword unsheathed in his hand.

JULIAN  
 You won't feel a thing. I promise.

MacLeod turns around, disappointment written on his face.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 It's the only way. For both of us.  
 You understand that, right?  
 (no response)  
 Come on, man. Say something.

MacLeod says nothing.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 What do you care anyway? There's nothing for you here. You've wasted all this time living for a dead woman for God's sake. I have something to live for. That's my edge. All I need to know is how to be a killer. How to be like you.

Adrenaline up, Julian pulls the trigger: CLICK.

MacLeod opens his hand. BULLETS fall to the ground.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
 You knew.

MACLEOD

I've always known.

Julian tosses the sword at MacLeod's feet and sinks to his knees, hanging his head.

JULIAN

Make it quick.

CLOSE ON Julian, waiting for the blow. Each second is agony, Julian trembling at what he's done.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Mac. I'm so so sorry.

But the blow still doesn't come. Eventually he looks up:

The sword is there, but MacLeod is gone. Julian picks up the sword and stares at his reflection in it. He gulps, knowing that to survive, he must fight.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

We can almost smell the mildew on the old stone walls in this cramped, dark office filled with books.

At a mahogany table the Kurgan sits close to a dissipated OLD MAN. He has wispy gray hair and milked over eyes. Old Man's trembling hands find the glass of sherry on the table and he sips. We realize now that he is blind.

KURGAN

Blessed are the peacemakers -- am I right? You've saved the lives of those closest to you -- and your own.

REVEAL a small group of OLD WOMEN and a couple of KIDS tied up and gagged in the corner of the room, eyes wide with terror.

INT. MACLEOD'S PENTHOUSE (DAKOTA BUILDING) - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS of MacLeod preparing for his last fight:

Macleod buttons up a shirt over his scars -- slips a scabbard onto his belt -- slides a dirk into the scabbard -- shoves a Sig Sauer in his belt.

MacLeod slips into straps that connect to a sheath that runs down his back.

MacLeod takes his CLAYMORE off a wall -- the sword he carried into battle against the MacDonald's. Place names and the dates of kills are etched in the blade from top to bottom:

*QUICK FLASH: (Highlands, 1503) The Kurgan runs MacLeod through with MacLeod's own claymore.*

MacLeod slides the claymore into the sheath and puts on a long coat, covering the sword. He regards himself in the mirror: could be any working stiff in New York.

A KNOCK on the door. MacLeod turns sharply.

SECONDS LATER

MacLeod, approaching the door, draws his sword. A beat and he opens the door revealing:

BRENDA. MacLeod is stunned...

*QUICK FLASH: (Edinburgh, 1505) MacLeod looks up from hammering a red-hot blade to see that HEATHER has returned.*

BACK ON - MACLEOD

Regarding Brenda, a catch in his throat:

MACLEOD

You came back.

Brenda steps inside. MacLeod closes the door. She meets his gaze but she seems -- conflicted.

BRENDA

Where are you going?

MacLeod doesn't answer. Brenda sees the sword in his hand.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

You're going to fight him again.

MACLEOD

Yes.

BRENDA

(more to herself)

-- I must be out of my mind --

(then)

What if I say I don't want you to go?

MACLEOD

I have to go.

BRENDA

No you don't. You could stay right here -- with me.

MACLEOD

I'll come back.

BRENDA

And if you don't? We'll never have a chance to know each other --

MACLEOD

What do you want to know? My favorite color? ...it's blue.

BRENDA

That's not what I meant --

MACLEOD

My favorite food then. Haggis.

BRENDA

(can't help herself)  
-- what is that exactly?

MACLEOD

Sheep's stomach stuffed with meat and barley.

BRENDA

That's revolting.

MACLEOD

It's an acquired taste.

They chuckle in spite of themselves.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

I've waited my whole life for this night. After tonight I'm free.

BRENDA

I saw him in the museum. He's colder than you. And faster.

She turns away from him.

MACLEOD

What is it?

BRENDA

...I think you're right. I think there's a reason we met.

She moves in close and lays a hand on his hand that holds the sword, urging him to drop it. MacLeod lets the sword fall.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I think I'm supposed to protect you.

She's trembling now. They kiss hesitantly.

When their lips part MacLeod seems reborn -- awakened by feelings he hasn't had in five hundred years. Then:

BAM! the sound of something heavy rammed against the door and cries of "POLICE!" and "OPEN UP!" --

MACLEOD

What did you do?!

BRENDA

Nothing! -- I stopped at home to --

BAM! the hinges on the door popping this time --

MACLEOD

They followed you.

BAM! the door is BASHED IN by fully kitted SWAT guys wielding a battering ram -- SWAT pouring through the door -- cries of "FREEZE!" and "DROP TO THE FLOOR!" and:

MacLeod clocks the nearest guy and drives him to the ground while unsheathing his baton and he turns on the next guy and cracks him across the chest -- MacLeod using the baton as a proxy sword, engaging the next guys, smashing their batons and cracking their hands, sending their batons flying and then smacking his baton across helmets -- an all out melee --

SWAT guys coming at MacLeod -- MacLeod beating them back -- but eventually...

There's just too many. SWAT beats MacLeod down, cracking him with batons, MacLeod a bucking bronco -- visually reminiscent of the Kurgan beaten by MacLeods in 1503 --

BRENDA

Don't hurt him! Stop!

LT. KING

ENOUGH!

SWAT backs off at the command leaving MacLeod lying on the ground, hands cuffed behind his back. He looks up to meet King's unsympathetic gaze.

INT. JULIAN'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Julian, standing in the kitchen doorway, watches his beloved:

Crystal -- preparing a feast for a party tonight. She is beautiful and happy and she has no idea just how much she means to Julian in this moment.

Crystal turns as if feeling Julian's eyes on her. But no one is there. Julian is gone.

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

The iconic view of the Gothic Revival church as seen from the narrow canyon of Wall street.

A glass-enclosed sign tells us that Trinity is the "Oldest Church in New York."

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

An OLD CARDINAL wearing a tall miter faces the altar, saying the "Latin Mass" (his back to us as is the custom). The ancient words ECHO throughout the church. A smattering of old parishioners sit devoutly in the front pews.

The CREAK of an opening door draws our attention to the entrance where a stunning woman strides through: BRAZILIAN WOMAN (the Immortal who had sword problems at JFK customs).

Two long tables dressed with candles stand behind the last pews. Wicker collection baskets sit under the table.

Brazilian Woman takes an empty collection basket, places two pistols and a dagger inside and covers them with the scarlet silk cloth in the basket.

She silently withdraws her sword and places it in an ornately carved, felt-lined umbrella stand that stands behind a pew. Half a dozen hilts protrude from the stand (there is another stand full of swords on the opposite side of the aisle).

The Latin incantations of the Cardinal add a solemnity to the affair as Brazilian Woman dips a hand in the holy water and blesses herself. She takes a seat in a rear pew, next to:

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN. He regards her and nods. Brazilian woman nods. As they turn back to the mass we WIDEN to reveal fifteen or so other Immortals in the rear pews (including Arab Sheik, British Fencer and the sexy Yearling).

And so "The Gathering" begins.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT

Unis shove MacLeod into a crowded holding cell. Lt. King undoes MacLeod's cuffs through the bars.

MACLEOD

You're making a big mistake,  
Lieutenant.

LT. KING

I put a toe tag on you twenty four  
hours ago. Explain to me why  
you're breathing and we'll talk.

MACLEOD

You've read my journals by now.  
It's all there.

LT. KING

What is it, Nash? PCP? Meth?

MACLEOD

If that's what you want to believe.

King studies MacLeod, then walks away. MacLeod grabs the bars, shouting after King:

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

People are going to die tonight,  
Lieutenant! Your men are going to  
die! Do you hear me?!

King joins Brenda. She meets MacLeod's stony gaze, then follows King into a STAIRWAY:

BRENDA

I know it sounds crazy but you have  
to listen to him. He's telling you  
the truth.

LT. KING

(boiling over)  
Nobody lives forever. Nobody.

They continue up the stairs and through a door into HOMICIDE. Hines is here, holding MacLeod's claymore wrapped in plastic.

LT. KING (CONT'D)

That the one he had on him?  
 (Hines hands over sword)  
 And I thought my .45 was heavy.  
 (to Brenda)  
 Think you ought to stay with us,  
 Ms. Wyatt. You've proved a pretty  
 popular girl.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

Parishioners on their knees for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Cardinal (back still to us) holding up the blessed host in a gold monstrance, chanting Latin rhythmically.

Entrance doors open again and the Kurgan enters. Takes the place in. He places a hand in the Holy Water, brings it to his lips and drinks. He swishes the water around and gargles it. He spits the water out, the sound of it hitting the ground audibly, and now:

Every single Immortal stares daggers at the Kurgan, except for the Yearling who blows him a deadly little kiss.

The Kurgan makes a show of removing his pistol and placing it in a basket. He draws his sword -- tosses and catches it with flourish -- slides it into a stand.

As the Kurgan walks to a pew:

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN

We'll have the dagger in your coat.

The Kurgan finds the dagger in a coat pocket.

KURGAN

Whoops.

The Kurgan tosses the dagger into an umbrella stand.

JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN

It begins when the last arrives and we leave sacred ground. Not before.

The Kurgan bows mockingly to Japanese Businessman, then sits in an empty pew in front of the other Immortals. They bore holes into his head with their eyes.

The Kurgan suddenly whips around to British Fencer sitting directly behind him, Fencer flinching, startled:

## KURGAN

Boo.

INT. HOLDING CELL - PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT

A combustible mix of bangers, bikers and drunks, all of them with their eyes on:

MacLeod -- pacing like an animal, sweat glistening on his brow -- centuries of waiting and now he's forced to sit it out -- anger and aggression boiling over as he grabs hold of the bars and lets out a primal SCREAM that sends shivers down the spines of these hardened men.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: a watch. The Kurgan looking at it, then he turns around: still no MacLeod. And the Cardinal is in the midst of the closing prayer.

Even the Kurgan is anxious when the doors open again:

But it's Julian who enters the church.

Julian is calm and sure of himself as he places the sword MacLeod gave him into a stand. Julian also looks around, in vain, for Macleod before taking a seat.

Immortals crack knuckles and roll their heads from side to side, loosening up, and finally:

The Cardinal turns around to face those gathered before him. We're surprised because the Cardinal is none other than:

THE MILKY-EYED OLD BLIND MAN

the Kurgan met with. Two altar boys help Old Man find his way next to a large candle that is lit and standing in front of the altar. They hand him a candle snuffer attached to a long brass pole.

OLD MAN

My friends, it is with great regret  
that I now perform the  
decommissioning rite...

Immortals aren't quite sure what's going on, but the Kurgan's hand creeps underneath the pew in front of him and slowly withdraws another SWORD he has hidden as:

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

(raising snuffer)

By the power given to me by the  
Holy See in Rome, and knowing that  
He needs not walls to dwell within,  
but only the hearts of good men and  
women: I ask the Lord and his  
Spirit to leave this place!

With that, Old Man snuffs out the candle, signifying that this is no longer sacred ground:

The Kurgan stands, spins and rears back gleaming steel,  
British Fencer totally exposed:

FENCER

You can't! We're on Sacred Gr--

KURGAN

Not anymore.

The Kurgan swings -- a BRILLIANT FLASH of Quickening light  
blinds the Immortals, the Kurgan continuing to move into the  
aisle even as he feeds off Fencer's energy --

Screams from scattering parishioners heading for exits, urged  
on by Old Man who is desperate to protect his flock --

Immortals standing and making a rush for steel --

The Kurgan, way ahead of them, plants himself between the  
weapons and the Immortals -- Japanese Businessman nearly on  
him and:

The Kurgan throws the sword, the blade spinning as it whips  
through the air, right at Japanese Businessman's neck --

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - SAME

A brilliant QUICKENING FLASH through stained glass.

INT. KING'S OFFICE - NIGHT

King unwraps the sheathed Claymore and studies the etched  
name on the quillion: "MacLeod." King coughs -- guttural and  
phlegmy.

Malloy winces, her eyes drifting to the trash where half a  
dozen phone sheet notes are crumpled up.

DET. MALLOY  
Maybe you should call that doctor  
back.

King unsheaths the sword and raises it, wondering what it  
would actually be like to fight with it.

LT. KING  
(posing)  
What do you think?

DET. MALLOY  
I think you're not telling me  
something. You quit smoking your  
Lucky's cold turkey, but you're  
pulling fifteen hour shifts.

LT. KING  
Leave it alone.

DET. MALLOY  
And this guy Nash really gets under  
your skin. Now why is that? We've  
seen crazier than him.

King puts the sword down. A beat.

LT. KING  
When they went in to take out the  
bullets they found something. It's  
not the kind of thing that goes  
away.

Takes a second for Malloy to absorb the shock.

DET. MALLOY  
...Lieutenant -- with the  
treatments they have these days --

LT. KING  
I don't want chemo. I want to  
enjoy what I've got left. End of  
discussion.

DET. MALLOY  
You won't live forever but it could  
still be a long time.

LT. KING  
End of discussion.

Uncomfortable silence. Finally, Hines pokes his head in:

DET. HINES

Hey --

Hines hesitates, seeing he interrupted something.

LT. KING

What is it?

DET. HINES

Disturbance down at Trinity Church.

LT. KING

Yeah...

DET. HINES

The kind involving swords.

King rushes out with the others, past Brenda sitting in a chair outside the office.

BRENDA

What happened? What's going on?

LT. KING

Everything's fine. Stay here.

Brenda, watching them go, knows she has to do something.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

Scattered Immortal bodies and the Kurgan firing a pistol -- BANG! -- an Immortal drops -- the Kurgan swings through his neck -- Quickening FLASH -- the Kurgan turning the pistol on another Immortal -- BANG! Immortal goes sprawling -- the Kurgan following and swinging for the wounded Immortal's neck -- another FLASH -- The Kurgan grabbing the spare sword and:

Wielding two swords, the combination of ten Quickenings like rocket fuel, the Kurgan turns on the remaining FIVE and takes them on at once -- a mesmerizing flurry of moves:

The Kurgan blocks Sheik -- swings at the Yearling -- elbows Brazilian woman back and we're:

INT. HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

MacLeod gripping cell bars, watching unis gearing up and rushing out of the station.

HELL'S ANGEL

Why don't you sit your ass down  
like the rest of us?

MacLeod ignores the biker, his eyes meeting King's -- conflict on King's face, hating the fact that MacLeod was right. King leaves.

A beat, MacLeod's mind racing. Finally an idea. He slowly turns to the hulking Hell's Angel:

MACLEOD

Why don't you make me sit down.

Hell's Angel comes swinging at MacLeod, MacLeod ducking and delivering a powerful punch -- Hell's Angel stumbling back into a Banger who pushes him hard and all of a sudden:

It's a full-fledged brawl in the holding cell -- MacLeod mostly playing defense while pushing more guys into each other, turning it into a real cage match.

COPS burst into the cell -- a flurry of crackling stun guns and pepper spray -- cell mates clutching their eyes or falling to the ground --

MacLeod gets TAZED, his body spasming as he falls. The cops move on to other prey and:

MacLeod dashes out of the cell and locks it behind him.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

ON JULIAN as he crawls along the far aisle toward the back, past a slew of bodies on the floor.

Back against the rear pew now, mere feet from the exit, Julian raises a wary eye to see the Kurgan and the remaining five in furious combat.

Julian eyes the doors. So close now.

THE KURGAN

Is a whirling dervish, the blades in his hands extensions of himself, thrusting and blocking -- parrying blows behind him that he can't even see coming and suddenly:

The Kurgan spins with brute force, extending his arms and we're CLOSE ON his blades cutting through Immortals' blades and necks -- CLINK THWIT, CLINK THWIT, CLINK THWIT and:

We go WIDE as the remaining five, including Brazilian Woman, Sheik and even the Yearling all fall backwards at once -- like petals opening on a rose -- revealing the Kurgan in the midst of a massive five-fold Quickening.

When the unearthly light dies the Kurgan stands alone, eyes crazed, chest heaving, knowing there is no one on this earth who can beat him, not when he feels like this.

His eyes are drawn to the doors of the church creaking shut. Someone escaped. Our hearts drop because we know it was Julian running scared and then:

A PRIMAL SCREAM from behind the Kurgan -- JULIAN rushing him with his sword -- the Kurgan caught unawares raising his sabre -- Julian swinging madly -- a clash of steel on steel -- the Kurgan backing away -- with each wild swing Julian comes closer -- he just might be able to do this and then:

The Kurgan meets Julian's blade with his own, slides his blade into Julian's quillion and sends the sword flying across the church.

JULIAN  
To hell with you.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

COPS racing down Broadway, Trinity now in view through the windshield and they see:

The eerie glow of the Quickening (Julian's death) through stained glass:

COP #1  
Jesus Christ...

THREE POLICE CRUISERS

Screech to a stop outside the church, first responders getting out and pulling their pieces.

INT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

Doors fly open, half a dozen cops streaming in in formation with pistols and shotguns ready to fire. Stepping carefully, the cops can hardly believe the carnage: headless bodies strewn around the church.

Cop #1 turns away from Yearling's body, shaking his head, to see the Kurgan sitting in a pew -- blood on his face, catatonic -- looking like a victim:

COP #1  
Hey -- you all right? You hurt?  
What the hell happened here?

When the Kurgan looks up maliciously into Cop's eyes we go:

EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

A full army of cops, ambulances -- even the mobile command unit -- has arrived, all manner of responders running into the church, but we're much more interested in

THE KURGAN

Exiting the church, now in policeman's uniform. He carries his sheathed sabre as if it were evidence -- right past everyone else -- across Broadway -- and soon he's strolling down WALL STREET and turning a corner, free of the chaos.

The Kurgan closes his eyes and concentrates -- feeling for his remaining opponent: MacLeod.

After a beat the Kurgan walks North.

EXT. PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT

MacLeod walks out and turns a corner, putting as much distance between himself and the cops as he can.

When the coast is clear MacLeod stops and closes his eyes, concentrating, and then: he's got a lock on the general vicinity of the Kurgan. He starts off again.

BRENDA

MacLeod.

MacLeod spins around on her. She holds his sheathed claymore. Eyes glistening, she hands it to him.

MACLEOD

Will you be here when it's over?

(she nods 'yes')

Then smile. I didn't come all this way to lose now.

THUNDER CRACKLES AND LIGHTNING STRIKES

Over Manhattan. A storm is coming.

THE KURGAN

Heads down into a subway station.

MACLEOD

Passes through a subway turnstile.

ON A SUBWAY PLATFORM - A YOUNG BOY

Looks up at the policeman -- the Kurgan. The Kurgan regards the boy whose eyes fall on the sheathed sabre dangling from the policeman's belt. The Kurgan brings a finger to his lips: *shhh*. A blast of wind as a train arrives.

MACLEOD

Stepping through opening subway doors.

THE KURGAN

Moving through a crowded subway car.

MACLEOD

Moving through a car -- the two warriors pulled toward each other like magnets.

THE "3" TRAIN

Comes to a stop in 72nd Street Station. A crowd spills onto the platform followed by MACLEOD.

THE "1" TRAIN

Stops on the track directly in front of MacLeod, a throng walking out of the car revealing THE KURGAN.

No ceremony. No words. Coming at each other, both men draw their blades and:

SWORD MEETS SWORD

MacLeod fast and furious -- the Kurgan expertly parrying the blows --

Civilians scattering like ants --

MacLeod backing the Kurgan onto an ESCALATOR and thrusting -- The Kurgan backing up the moving staircase -- people climbing out and onto the down escalator to get out of the way --

The Kurgan is off the escalator and backing through a turnstile -- MacLeod following and they fight --

OUT ONTO 72ND STREET

Each man pulling out every attack and defense, whirling around each other -- like watching a master fencing class -- steel hammering steel -- fighting their way east --

INT. STARBUCKS - NIGHT

Soothing Starbucks soundtrack and a soy latte-sipping WRITER working on his MacBook looking up suddenly to see the unbelievable out the window:

MacLeod and the Kurgan going blow for blow -- a fucking sword fight for God's sake -- the Kurgan ducking and MacLeod...

SHATTERS THE PLATE GLASS WINDOW

Writer backing away (protecting his laptop) -- the sounds of the city and the fight destroying the calm inside --

THE KURGAN

Lands a punch, sending MacLeod stumbling down the sidewalk -- the Kurgan swinging his sabre --

MACLEOD

Dodges the blow, stepping into a REVOLVING DOOR --

The Kurgan wedges his blade into the seam as the door revolves, trapping Macleod inside and the Kurgan draws his policeman's service pistol -- MacLeod pressing himself against the outer glass wall as the Kurgan FIRES:

SMASH! glass explodes -- MacLeod brings the pommel of his sword down hard on the Kurgan's hand -- the pistol clatters to the ground -- MacLeod punches with quillion edge out, the sharp metal connecting with the Kurgan's face and cutting it open and sending the Kurgan stumbling backwards --

MacLeod hops out of the door and attacks -- the Kurgan parrying and backing onto:

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

A terrible honking of horns and screeching of tires -- rear end collisions -- smoking engine blocks and:

Still the two men fight -- MacLeod raising a leg and KICKING the Kurgan who stumbles back yet again as a cab passes and:

The Kurgan hits the side of the cab and the SIDE-MIRROR grabs the Kurgan and whips him down to the ground --

MacLeod kicks the Kurgan in the gut -- the Kurgan bloody and rolling away -- MacLeod kicks him again -- the Kurgan still rolling -- MacLeod raising his blade and he brings it down with full force --

THUD! the blade hits the RAISED CURB, the edge millimeters from the Kurgan's neck --

HOOOONK!

MacLeod turns and jumps back in the nick of time as a car passes and when it does:

The wounded Kurgan is already up and stumbling for the Central Park WALL -- throwing his sword over -- scrambling up the wall and sliding over it --

MacLeod follows to the wall and looks over: steep drop into the woods. MacLeod picks himself up over the wall and hops down into the park.

## EXT. FOREST - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

...MacLeod hitting rocky, uneven ground and it's like landing in a different world. The dark forest stretches out before him, the sounds of the city gone. And so is the Kurgan.

A steady RAIN starts to fall.

## EXT. TRINITY CHURCH - NIGHT

King yelling into the phone, eyes on a wounded cop as he's wheeled out of the church on a gurney:

LT. KING

Well how the hell did he get out?!  
... I told your people not to try  
and handle the guy one-on-one!

The radio in King's car chirps to life:

RADIO DISPATCH (V.O.)  
10-35 at Central Park West and  
76th. All available units respond.

King chucks the phone into the car, gets in, fires her up.

EXT. FOREST - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

MacLeod stalks his way through the trees, trying to feel as much as see his opponent -- there:

Something darts behind a tree. MacLeod rushes over but finds nothing. He closes his eyes, feels the Kurgan's close and:

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING captures the Kurgan behind MacLeod, sword raised:

MacLeod's eyes pop open and without turning he swings his sword up and behind him -- CLANG! he blocks the blow --

The two warriors engage ferociously -- nothing artful about it -- they hack at each other like timber --

MacLeod slams into a cherry tree and rolls off the trunk mere inches in front of the Kurgan's blade as it slices through the tree like butter and:

The ancient enemies charge each other, swords back like baseball bats -- they swing at the same time, blades colliding with such force that both swords go flying and:

They throw themselves at each other -- slamming each other into trees -- trading blows that would knock any mortal into tomorrow -- blood flowing down their faces --

The Kurgan stomps a foot into MacLeod's knee. We can practically hear it come apart, MacLeod yelling in pain, buckling -- the Kurgan brings two fists down like a hammer on MacLeod's back, slamming him to the earth --

MacLeod swings his good leg, sweeping the Kurgan's feet out from under him --

MacLeod pounces, pounding the Kurgan's face --

The Kurgan brings his knee into MacLeod's gut, clocks him hard across the jaw --

Mud mixes with blood. If we didn't know better we'd think they were somewhere in Scotland 500 years ago and:

The Kurgan rolls on top of MacLeod, grabs his neck and CHOKES him -- he'd squeeze MacLeod's head off with his bare hands if he could -- MacLeod teetering near unconsciousness.

A flash of LIGHTNING brings hope: MacLeod's sword lying in the mud.

Energized, MacLeod lands a haymaker and scrambles for the sword, grabbing it but:

The Kurgan is on MacLeod's back --

MacLeod rolls them over and as the Kurgan lands on his back with MacLeod on top of him the Kurgan grabs hold of MacLeod's hilt with one hand, the blade with the other and:

The Kurgan pulls the blade toward MacLeod's neck -- MacLeod getting his BARE HANDS on the blade as it opens a cut along his Adam's apple, blood also running from MacLeod's hands --

MacLeod struggles and kicks and tries to force the blade away from his neck -- the Kurgan knowing he almost has him and:

MacLeod whips his head back into the Kurgan's nose and uses the relative advantage to push the blade away from his neck and slide his head out from under. He turns right around, hands back on the sharp blade and now:

MacLeod pushes the blade toward the Kurgan's neck, the Kurgan trying desperately to hold it off --

Blood flows from MacLeod's hands, the pain unimaginable, but somehow he holds on -- the Prize mere millimeters away and:

The Kurgan thrusts up with the hand that holds the hilt and rolls MacLeod off, the sword falling away.

Both men lie on the ground, exhausted, not wanting to get back up but when they meet eyes their mutual hatred forces them back onto their feet, each of them scrambling for and reaching their fallen swords at the same time.

We wince as MacLeod uses hamburger hands to grip his hilt and pick it up.

Wobbling, bloodied and bruised they turn to face each other.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - NIGHT

King talking to sword fight witnesses who point in the direction of the park. King hustles over to the wall and looks over it into the darkness. Breathing heavily, he climbs over the wall.

## EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

The Kurgan advances, slashing -- MacLeod backs away out of the trees, on defense, exhausted and wounded --

## A DOOR

Appears through the rain and darkness behind MacLeod and before he realizes it he's up against it --

The Kurgan thrusts -- MacLeod curves his torso away -- the sabre catches the side of MacLeod's flesh and impales the door, crashing it open --

MacLeod tackles the Kurgan into darkness -- a struggle on the stone floor -- MacLeod rolls off the Kurgan and stands and slashes --

The Kurgan jumps back from the blade and UP into a narrow STAIRWAY -- MacLeod following --

The passage too NARROW to swing away -- MacLeod thrusting -- the Kurgan backing up the steps and out onto:

## THE MAIN FLOOR

Of the old stone building -- we're still not quite sure where we are exactly as they fight their way through another door, out onto:

## A LARGE STONE PATIO

Rain coming down in sheets -- steel meeting steel as lightning strikes revealing they fight out on the main patio of:

## BELVEDERE CASTLE

In the middle of the park -- an oddly appropriate place for a sword fight -- feels like we've travelled back in time until another bolt of lightning reveals:

## THE UPPER WEST SIDE

In the background -- the center of the park a nexus of past and present -- the swordsmen hacking away at each other.

LT. KING

Running across the Great Lawn, but he has to stop. Catch his breath. When lightning strikes he can see the gleam of blade meeting blade up at the castle.

THE KURGAN

Smashes MacLeod's sword and kicks him --

MacLeod backs away and regains his footing, breathing hard --

*QUICK FLASH: (Edinburgh, 1508) MacLeod, Heather and Ramirez in the smithy:*

RAMIREZ

*We cannot help the way we were  
made. We fight because we must.*

BACK ON - MACLEOD

He re-engages the Kurgan -- a dizzying series of brutal moves and counter moves -- and they part again.

The Kurgan comes in this time and MacLeod parries and they separate. It's a stalemate, both men equally skilled, equally weary to the bone --

MacLeod not at all sure if there's a way to win --

*QUICK FLASH: (Highlands, 1503) Heather and MacLeod by the shore, apart from the men preparing for battle:*

HEATHER

*(Gaelic; subtitled  
English)*

*[You have a choice, you know.]*

MACLEOD

*[What choice do I have?]*

BACK ON - MACLEOD

Torn between Heather and Ramirez -- the two angels that sit on his shoulders. A beat. He lowers the sword to his side.

The Kurgan, smelling an opportunity, rushes MacLeod who ducks the blow and backs away, blade still lowered.

MacLeod tosses his sword to the ground. The Kurgan has no idea what to make of this.

KURGAN

Pick it up.

MACLEOD

Because they told us to? For the Prize?

KURGAN

Pick up your sword, Highlander.

MACLEOD

It's right here -- all around us.

KURGAN

Spare me the transcendental crap.  
It's not the place, it's the people.

The Kurgan rushes the defenseless MacLeod and it's a violent ballet -- MacLeod anticipating every stroke -- he ducks, dodges and weaves away from the sabre --

The Kurgan grows more and more enraged, his swings becoming more wild --

Backing away from the next swing, MacLeod is suddenly up against the castle wall -- nowhere left for him to go:

MACLEOD

Go ahead then, kill me. Your prize will be your anger.

A beat, the Kurgan on the verge of an epiphany, and:

KURGAN

(shrugs)

Okay.

The Kurgan rears back and swings with all the power that over a dozen Quickenings have given him --

TIME SLOWS as the blade comes at MacLeod who, at the last second, tilts his head, the edge of the blade nicking his ear and the locks of his hair and time SPEEDS UP as:

The sabre STICKS into the corner of the wall, it was swung with so much force, the Kurgan trying to pull it free and:

MacLeod grabs the Kurgan's head in a lock and twists with brute force, a CRACK audible, the Kurgan dropping to the ground, his head askew on his broken neck, eyes open and:

MacLeod removes the sabre from the wall, unceremoniously raises it and swings.

We hear the impact but we STAY ON MacLeod. He tosses the blade to the ground, swaying, exhausted. And then:

EXT. GREAT LAWN - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

...the sound of heavy bass as a wave of purple-blue light comes at us from Belvedere Castle, blanketing the park --

Rustling leaves --

Swaying tree trunks --

Blinding Lt. King --

Exploding every lamp in the park --

THE QUICKENING

to end all Quickenings leaves MacLeod on bended knee. Weak and trembling. He stands.

MacLeod regards his sword lying on the ground.

LT. KING

Uncovering his eyes, can see MacLeod up on the castle patio. But MacLeod walks in the opposite direction, disappearing.

MACLEOD'S SWORD

Still lies on the patio, the engraved "MACLEOD" visible. We can see MacLeod walking away from us, and soon he is gone.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. WAITING ROOM - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON: a NEW YORK POST photo of MacLeod. Headline: "Hunt is on for Fugitive 'MacLeod.'"

King peruses the article. He sits in a drab waiting room.

A NURSE appears from the door that leads to patient rooms:

NURSE

Al King?

King looks up.

NURSE (CONT'D)  
Dr. Coleman will see you now.

A beat and King stands. Armed with a reason to fight for more life, he heads back with nurse.

EXT. COACH & HORSES ALE HOUSE - EDINBURGH - NIGHT (PRESENT)

The pub where MacLeod met Ramirez still stands.

INT. COACH & HORSES - NIGHT

Crowded and boisterous. A Digital Juke Box plays modern music (maybe Queen's "Who Wants to Live Forever"). Flatscreens hang over booths and benches, but the layout still retains the old feel of the place.

MacLeod and Brenda sit in a booth drinking pints and eating comfort food. An older gentleman in a red and brown kilt passes by.

BRENDA  
(playful)  
Do you have one?

MACLEOD  
A kilt? Like that? No.

BRENDA  
I thought you all wore them.

MACLEOD  
The red and brown means he's a MacDonald. I wouldn't be caught dead in one.  
(then)  
Mine's yellow and black. A man's kilt.

She laughs. They eat, comfortable in each other's company. MacLeod looks over toward the crowded benches:

*MACLEOD'S POV: for just a second it's 1508 and we see HEATHER there -- beautiful, face flushed. She looks at us and smiles. When we turn back around...*

Brenda is in front of us.

BRENDA

It's still so hard to believe.  
You're really just -- the only one  
left?

MACLEOD

When you say it like that it's  
almost sad. I won't miss the  
others, believe me. Well, maybe  
one or two.

BRENDA

So now what?

MACLEOD

I'm not really sure.

Finally liberated, MacLeod smiles...

...but the music that's playing slowly fades away as the  
sound of MacLeod's HEARTBEAT grows in volume and speed...

MacLeod looking like he might be sick. He was never supposed  
to feel this again -- another Immortal's presence...

BRENDA

Hey -- you okay?

MACLEOD

(forcing a smile)  
Save my seat?

He stands and walks through the bar, heart pounding in his  
ears now and...

The sounds of the bar come back up -- laughter -- the music --  
and the sound of a FAMILIAR VOICE:

RAMIREZ (O.S.)

(in verse)  
'Let me, quod he, lie in your lap...'

MacLeod rounds a corner and stops cold:

RAMIREZ, drunk, charms a beautiful Scottish Lass by  
pretending to fall asleep in her arms:

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

'His head was heavy, such was his hap,  
All drowsy dreaming, drowned in sleep,  
that of his love he took no keep.'

SCOTTISH LASS  
 (delighted)  
 Where did you learn that?

RAMIREZ  
 I composed it this very day for  
 you, my dear...my darling --

SCOTTISH LASS  
 You're so smart.

RAMIREZ  
 And funny too.  
 (turning)  
 Highlander! Come join us!

MacLeod's shock turns to fury.

MACLEOD  
 Get up.

RAMIREZ  
 (to Lass)  
 He's terribly rude, isn't he?  
 Don't go anywhere.

Ramirez walks to the bar with MacLeod.

MACLEOD  
 You died. I saw you.

RAMIREZ  
 It was the strangest thing...

*FLASHBACK: HILLSIDE - EDINBURGH - NIGHT (1508)*

*Ramirez tumbling down the hill to a stop. He uses his last strength to stand and raise his blade but:*

*CLANG! The Kurgan flings the Katana from Ramirez's hand.*

RAMIREZ (V.O.)  
 He had me dead to rights...

*Defeated, Ramirez hangs his head. The Kurgan raises the sabre:*

RAMIREZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 But lo and behold, we were standing  
 in the middle of the King's  
 cemetery -- sacred ground!

*REVEAL that Ramirez and the Kurgan are surrounded by GRAVESTONES. Ramirez looks up. The Kurgan, surprised, does not swing his sword. Ramirez runs away.*

BACK ON - MACLEOD

Smoldering.

MACLEOD

What about the Gathering? The Prize?

RAMIREZ

Your skirmish on the island? Who said it was the Gathering?

(then)

You really think I'd miss it? After five thousand years of waiting? No. The Prize still waits to be claimed. There's so much more for you to learn, MacLeod. But for the rest to happen the Kurgan had to go.

MACLEOD

You used me.

RAMIREZ

-- certainly took your time with it though.

MACLEOD

(grabbing Ramirez)

You lying son of a bitch.

RAMIREZ

(hand on the short blade in his jacket)

Don't start something you're not prepared to finish.

MacLeod reluctantly lets go. He meets Brenda's questioning gaze from across the bar.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

Smile, boy. This is only the beginning.

MacLeod forces a smile for Brenda, as if everything is just fine.

CUT TO BLACK.