

Sands of Lanikai

Greg Blair

gregorioblair@gmail.com

SANDS OF LANIKAI

FADE IN:

EXT: IOLANI PALACE, HONOLULU - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Golden spikes crown emerald fencing. KOA and PALM trees shudder in the wind.

Birdsong. Waves crash against distant cliffs.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Honolulu, Hawai'i. Iolani Palace - January 17, 1893"

A silk drape snaps open in an upper window.

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Pikake blossoms decorate polished wood. Crimson carpet muffles footsteps. Gilded chairs invite.

Candelabras cast a warm glow. King Kamehameha murals watch with stoic eyes.

QUEEN LILI'UOKALANI (50s) grips the drape, knuckles tightening, staring beyond the glass.

In her reflection: ghostly images of protesters tearing down Hawaiian flags.

She releases the drape, dropping it like an anchor.

BUTLER KAHALE (60s), more friend than steward, materializes beside her.

KAHALE
(softly)
Your Majesty, guests have arrived.

Queen Lili'uokalani stops short, hesitates.

QUEEN
(anxious)
Guests? Now?

KAHALE
Iwalani. With a "haole" boy.

QUEEN

I see.

(smoothing her holoku)

Let them enter.

The queen glides to her elevated throne. A GUARD opens a grand wooden door. The koa wood creaks a tired sigh.

Pretty IWALANI KAMAKAWIWO'OLE (20s) bursts through, Jasmine lei bobbing, eyes sparkling.

Handsome WILLIAM SANDS (20s) hesitates, stumbles after her, wiping sweaty palms on trousers.

WILLIAM

(hissing)

Iwalani, the guards are watching
the gate like sharks. This isn't-

She whirls, silencing him with blazing eyes.

KAHALE

Miss Iwalani Kamakawiwo'ole and Mr.
William Sands.

Iwalani rushes forward, kneels before the queen. William hovers behind, troubled, as if the room might swallow him whole. Iwalani presses her forehead to the queen's hand.

QUEEN

Rise, my child. You're radiant. How
is your sister?

IWALANI

She sends her aloha, your Majesty.
You won't believe what I have to
share.

QUEEN

Does this news involve your
companion?

Iwalani glances back at William, whose rigid stance betrays discomfort.

IWALANI

Yes! William-

She beckons him forward.

IWALANI (CONT'D)

William works at the shipyard. I
was there for fish, but the rally
started-

He moves closer, swallows hard.

IWALANI (CONT'D)
(lowering voice)
Like you said, I was taking notes.
Then the Honolulu Rifles-

William flinches at the name. His boot taps a frantic rhythm.

WILLIAM
Iwalani, please... tell her why
we're here.

He shifts in place, neck craned toward the outside.

IWALANI
We're going to get-

QUEEN
(firmly)
The rally? And the riflemen?-

WILLIAM
(cutting in)
I overheard them. While hiding
behind crates.
(eyes darting)
They plan to surround the palace.
Before sundown!

Outside a gull shrieks, knifing through the silence.

QUEEN
Sundown...

A distant drumbeat echos.

QUEEN (CONT'D)
(studying William)
And you risked bringing this to me?

Iwalani blanches. William stares at his boots, trembling.

EXT. IOLANI PALACE - DAY

From distance, U.S. MARINES stride toward the Iolani Palace entrance. Polished gear glints in the sharp sunlight.

An AMERICAN MILITIA follows in tight formation, a fierce intensity radiating from their ranks.

The PALACE GUARDS, ashen with fear, raise rifles but waver. Silence hangs in the balance.

In a quick retreat, they ascend palatial steps, wide-eyed, seeking refuge within.

A BATTERING RAM slams against the entry gate, crashing like thunder. It bursts open in a collapse of spiked metal.

Marines and militia take combat positions, training guns at the palace. The mechanical whirring of a GATLING GUN, swiveling into place.

INT. THRONE - DAY

CAPTAIN AKAMU (30s), loyalty etched on his features, rushes forward, removing his helmet.

He kneels deeply before the Queen. Urgency and respect fills his voice.

AKAMU

Your Majesty. The American haoles
have soldiers arriving. Should we
notify-

The queen straightens with resolve, a vulnerability beneath her facade.

QUEEN

No. No Hawaiian blood shed today.

She exhales, turns toward Iwalani, an edge of fear in her eyes.

QUEEN (CONT'D)

I'll prepare to meet them.

Iwalani steps forward, her voice laced with concern.

IWALANI

But your Majesty, will they listen?

The queen holds Iwalani's gaze, a shared understanding.

QUEEN

Take the carriage... before it's
too late.

Her command has weight. Iwalani nods once, her jaw set with determination.

QUEEN (CONT'D)
(to guards)
Make it so.

STAIRS

The guards lead Iwalani and William down a swift flight of royal stairs, faces set with purpose.

An ADJACENT GUARD (30s) waves them forward, the faint SOUND of approaching footsteps growing louder.

ADJACENT GUARD
Hurry!

They slip through the back door, urgency propelling them into the uncertain world outside.

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

A CARRIAGE door swings open. Iwalani and William scramble up into the quilted compartment.

Shoulder to shoulder, eye-to-eye... hers anxious, his determined.

IWALANI
What if they stop us?

Iwalani clings to his arm, knuckles white. William straightens, wearing a false calmness.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
I can't let anything happen to her.
I'll do whatever it takes, even if
it risks everything.

The door SLAMS shut behind them.

EXT. CARRIAGE - DAY

The GUARD flicks the reins. The carriage careens forward. WHEELS CREAK against the ground, kicking up dust.

They veer away from the palace. MILITIA rush into position. Rifles bristle through the fencing.

The air erupts with SOUNDS of GUNFIRE. Bullets WHIZ through the air. SMOKE curls up, thick and acrid.

CARRIAGE

The jarring ride tosses them about. Iwalani leans out, eyes darting back toward the chaos. SPARKS from bullets ping off the carriage metal frame.

WILLIAM
(urgent)
Iwalani, get down!

William throws himself over Iwalani. A bullet strikes her shoulder. Iwalani gasps, her body folds against him, a marionette with cut strings.

IWALANI
(weakly)
William, I - I...

He cradles her, desperation threading through his voice.

WILLIAM
Hold on! We'll make it, I promise!

GATE

GUARDS swing open back gates. Spooked horses rear up, the carriage leaping forward down the narrow path.

The vehicle SCREECHES and rocks, almost overturning. It lurches into the open, onto the road beyond.

As the carriage vanishes into the distance, guards bolt the gate shut.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
(grips her hand)
I'm here for you. I'm here,
Iwalani.

A Hawaiian flag drops down low on a distant staff.

EXT. SS LURLINE - O'AHU, HAWAII - DAY

The SS LURLINE glides through dark, rolling waves. An ocean breeze ruffles the silver hair of WILLIAM SANDS (70s).

SUPERIMPOSE: FORTY-EIGHT YEARS LATER - "NOVEMBER 5, 1941"

William, once robust, now frail, leans against the deck railing, his weathered face etched with memories.

In the distance, Diamond Head looms over the lush, tropic coastline of O'ahu.

WILLIAM
(softly, nostalgia)
I'm here, Iwalani... I'm here.
(smiles)
I'm here, as I was then.

PAUL SANDS (20s) approaches from behind. Tall, good-looking, his movements are fluid, athletic, vigorous.

Yet there is tension in his posture, tragedy in his eyes. He leans in beside William, binoculars in hand.

PAUL
That must be Diamond Head.

William's face brightens with his voice. He straightens, reaching to rest a wizened hand on Paul's shoulder.

WILLIAM
Memories...

PAUL
You've been here before?

William pauses.

WILLIAM
(softly)
-Miss your mom and dad, don't you.

Paul's grip on the binoculars tightens, a shadow crossing his face.

PAUL
You think its easy? I'm here,
aren't I?

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
The sands of the beach change with
each new wind. Listen closely.

Paul leans back.

PAUL
All I hear is my heart breaking.
The memories are too painful.

WILLIAM
Learn to hear what isn't said, see
what isn't seen-

Paul rolls his eyes, looks back out to sea.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Know what isn't known... let the
ways of Aloha guide you.

A distant breach in the water captures his attention.

PAUL
Wait, what is that?

Paul raises the binoculars. A sleek steel-gray submarine
breaks the surface, red disc and I-24 insignia glistening.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Japanese? What are they doing here?

William's expression tightens. He moves toward an access
door, lingering for a moment, pausing to look back at Paul.

WILLIAM
Aloha nui loa, my grandson. Our
bond is stronger than the tide.

He looks off into the distance. A thin smile.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
As promised, my heavenly seabird...
together again.

He slips inside, leaving Paul to scan the sea.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

William approaches a stateroom (bedroom) door. Passengers
with luggage weave past, conversation a distant hum.

A faint discussion drifts from an adjoining stateroom.
William hesitates, intrigued.

Cautious steps position him against the wall. He peers
through the open door jam.

STATEROOM

ISAMU ANZAI (20s) Japanese, sinewy strong, predatory, stares
at a portal window.

A sinister smile creeps across his face, his image
reflecting power and control back at him.

Beside him, OTTO KUEHN (40s) German, dark-eyed and withdrawn, carefully packing a suitcase.

ISAMU
They wait for us.
(assesses Otto)
You understand what's at stake?

Otto hesitates, a flash of uncertainty.

OTTO
Ja, report on U-S Navy... but the risks-
(swallows hard)
We could be compromised.

ISAMU
Compromised? This is our chance.
Seize the future... my future! With the correct information, we will defeat them.

Otto flinches, betrayal in his eyes.

OTTO
At what cost? Why should I risk everything for your ambitions?

ISAMU
They will never accept you. Are you willing to die for nothing?

Otto's eyes darken, hands twitching as he packs.

OTTO
Only for the information-
(stiffens)
I will not be your pawn.

ISAMU
(leaning in, deadly whisper)
Disappoint me and you won't live to tell anyone.

Otto's bravado crumbles, resumes packing in silence. Isamu removes a SMALL POUCH from his pocket, extracts a SMALL VIAL filled with WHITE POWDER.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
If you're caught-

A LOUD CREAK of a floorboard pierces the air. The old floor betrays William. Isamu's head snaps toward the sound, he spots WILLIAM.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
Someone's listening!

William's internal struggle: Should he flee or stay? The dark conspiracy captivates, thoughts of Iwalani pull him back.

WILLIAM
(whispers)
I can't let this go.

He steels himself and runs.

CORRIDOR

William bolts down the hall. Isamu gives chase, vial in hand, glass gleaming menacingly.

The pouch slips from his grasp. It bursts open, white powder swirls, sinister snow adrift in the air.

EXT: SHIP DECK

William bursts through a hatch, desperate for an escape. Isamu shoves the door open with a feral snarl. William stumbles back toward a railing, eyes widening.

ISAMU
You cannot run from this!

Isamu lunges, raining down hard strikes. William struggles to deflect them.

Fingers grip his throat. Panic washes over him. On the back of Isamu's hand, a SICKLE SHAPED SCAR.

The vial's contents spill into William's mouth.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
Now you die-

William chokes, the loving eyes of Iwalani flashing back at him.

Gasping for air, life deserts his body. A final breath escapes, lost to the ocean winds.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A body tumbles over the ship railing into the ocean below. Water crashes, reverberates, swirls and swallows.

Paul leans over the rail, staring wide-eyed into the whirlpool, breath hitching in his throat.

The world around him stands still, replaced by the chilling reality of what just occurred.

The color drains from his face as he processes the shocking sight.

PAUL
(whispers)
Was that a body?

Pushing back from the rail, Paul braces himself, masking his confusion beneath a layer of bravado.

EXT. HONOLULU PORT - LURLINE - PAUL - DAY - (LATER)

The SS Lurline settles into its pier, enthusiastic onlookers garnished with colorful leis. They wave at the vessel, anxious smiles concealing their worry.

A MARCHING BAND plays jubilant tunes. Hula dancers sway rhythmically. Hawaiian men dive into iridescent water.

Paul frowns, the earlier jolt still weighing on him.

PAUL
(to himself)
All these flowers. Are we
celebrating... or mourning?

Ramps are secured. Officials board, large BANNER unfurls: A-L-O-H-A. Paul scans the crowd, brow furrowed.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(tinged with unease)
Was that really Japanese... that
submarine? Why would they be here?

He spins around, searching for a familiar face.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Gramps? Grandpa?

Paul leaves the railing, weaving through an indistinct mass of passengers. Some glance with rough expressions.

Isamu and Otto's conversation stands out, sharp, conspiratorial against the festive atmosphere.

ISAMU
(to Otto, low)
Everything's in place. It's a perfect opportunity. The Americans won't know what hit them.

Paul brushes past Otto, overhears, narrows eyes. He bumps into Isamu.

PAUL
Sorry.

He locks eyes with Isamu, who scowls. The crowd around them holds its breath, a sudden hush to their chatter.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(assertively)
Americans? What are you planning?

ISAMU
Mind your business. It's not your fight.

The crowd shifts, sensing conflict. Paul's eyes narrow, he postures forward.

PAUL
If you intend to harm others, it becomes my business. I won't let you put innocent lives at risk.

Isamu smirks, a wild gleam in his eye, signaling this is far from over. They hold each others stares.

Energy of the departure slowly resumes around them.

EXT. LOCAL BEACH - DAY

HEALANI LUIS (20s) an exotic, lithe beauty, guides her well-groomed steed as it gallops along shoreline surf.

Connected to the land, she rides with confidence, her sleek silhouette moving swiftly across the landscape.

Healani brings the horse to a halt, rhythmic waves slicing through the tranquil calm.

Her sharp eyes scan the aqua-blue seas. Something unusual is drifting in the shallows! Unease tugs at her lip.

HEALANI
(to herself)
What could that be?

Refined, yet cautious, Healani dismounts. She moves closer, curious, opaque tide pools reflecting her image.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
Clothing?

She leans in. Eyes widen, horror in her face as she discovers the truth.

The lifeless body of William Sands sways in the shallow eddy, ashen-colored skin stark against the blue water, eyes fixated on the sky.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
Oh, my God.

Healani braces herself... recovers from the shock. Hand shaking, she steadies the mount and climbs on.

With urgency, she commands a gallop. The steed thunders away, sand spraying from quickened hooves.

INT. HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

A bustling command station. The air is thick with footsteps and typewriters. The central hub is a well-lit room, partially open to a hallway.

Checkered flooring gleams under the pulse of fluorescent lights. Stale air stirs in the weak breeze of a desk fan's whirring blades.

DETECTIVE JACK BURNS (30s), a lanky man with sharp features, a stubbornness in a focused scowl, sifts through paperwork on his cluttered desk.

An unlit cigarette dangles from the corner of his mouth, a forgotten thought. His handwriting is precise, his movements efficient, as he notes details from a phone call.

JACK
Burns here.
(pause)
Yes... when was this?

Jack's posture stiffens. He flicks the cigarette onto the desk, jaw clenching.

JACK (CONT'D)
Found where?

He jots down the information. A memory drags him back to a time... a coastal town, where waves whispered siren songs, and a young Jack almost drowned.

JACK (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Another day, another body in the
water.

Shaking off the recollection, he hangs up. Outside, the sky is darkening, heavy clouds gathering to threaten a storm.

Jack stands abruptly, grabbing a lightweight rain jacket from a coat rack of well-worn garments.

With a final glance, and a kick to close an open file drawer, Jack strides out.

JACK (CONT'D)
(to the room)
Let's see what trouble we can find
today.

EXT. LOCAL BEACH - DAY

Paniolos (Portuguese cowboys) inch forward toward the resting body. Healani stands before them, ocean air whipping through her hair.

HEALANI (V.O.)
The sea has always been a source of
life, yet today it has claimed one.
Why here? It should wash away
sorrows, not create them.

She raises a hand. They halt their advance. JACK approaches from behind, the spit of rain a warning of things to come.

JACK
Who is Healani?

HEALANI
That is me.

Jack kneels down, drops an evidence bag onto the beach, the crunch of sand resonates beneath it. He snaps on gloves.

JACK
Did anyone touch it?

HEALANI
No, I've kept them away. Poor
soul... he deserves respect, even
in death.

JACK
Know him?

HEALANI
Never met him. It's so sad. Where
did he come from? What brought him
here?

Jack turns the bloated figure slowly, assessing the pockets.

A WALLET and wet C-notes clutched by a silver MONEY CLIP. He
flips open the wallet. A California I.D. spills forth:

INSERT: I.D. CARD

In official lettering, WILLIAM SANDS.

BACK TO SCENE

JACK
Mm-mm.

Rain peppers the ocean. Jack removes his rain jacket, hands
it to Healani.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hold this... over him.

Healani hesitates but complies. Jack removes a scallop-edged
PHOTOGRAPH from a shirt pocket, shakes it to dry.

He drops the items into the bag, zips it closed, stops
short. A brief stillness. Discolored lips draw his
attention.

He slides a finger under an upper lip, over teeth and gum. A
tacky white PASTE reveals itself.

JACK (CONT'D)
(realizing)
Well, look at this.

Healani gasps softly, eyes widening as she processes the
implication.

HEALANI
What does it mean?

Jack meets her gaze, a shared question forged in tragedy.

JACK
We're about to find out.

INT. SHIP STATEROOM - NIGHT

DOCTOR PETERSON (60s) peers over bifocals scribbling notes on a clipboard. Paul sits, gripping his head in despair.

A wall clock ticks, a metronome passing time. Peterson leans in, concern creeping into his voice.

PETERSON
Paul, I know this is difficult...
Is your grandfather nearby?

PAUL
What? He's here... on the ship.
We're from California. Hollywood.

PETERSON
Hollywood? He's in the film
industry?

PAUL
No-
(pause)
Shipping.

PETERSON
I see. And you... have you
registered for the draft?

Paul wavers, a spark of anxiety crosses his face.

PAUL
I'm 4-F. Knee problems. Sixth
man... Columbia University.

The door bursts open. Jack and two muscular POLICEMEN stride in, their presence commanding attention.

JACK
Paul Sands, Detective Burns,
Honolulu Police Department.

Paul unfolds his length, eyes wide with concern.

PAUL
Where's my grandfather?

JACK
You need to come with us. It's
about William Sands.

PAUL
What do you mean? What happened?
The clock's ticking seemingly grows louder.

JACK
A formal inquiry has been opened
into the circumstances of his
death.

Paul's jaw drops, a tempest of emotions unraveling.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm sorry to inform you. We need to
ask you some questions.

The gravity of the situation settles in. They shift,
opposing gunfighters circling in a corral.

PAUL
No... this can't be happening.

Paul sways, as if absorbing a punch.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(a beat)
Give me a minute.

JACK
We must go... now.

INT. HONOLULU POLICE STATION - DAY

The clamor of ringing telephones fills the air. Jack leans
back against his desk, lost in thought.

FBI AGENT DAUGHTRY (30s) strides past the open entryway, the
weight of the world visible on his shoulders.

JACK
How's my favorite G-man? Up against
the desk again?

Daughtry pauses, brow furrowed as he turns back.

DAUGHTRY

Hey, Jack. Same old chaos. Makes the war in Europe feel like a picnic. D-C's talking internment now. Not just the mainland, right here, too. Germans, Italians and get this-

He glances around, lowering his voice as if walls have ears.

DAUGHTRY (CONT'D)

Japanese. We have orders to follow up on it.

Jack flares at the edict, jaw tightening.

JACK

As if you have nothing better to do. Got enough work as it is.

DAUGHTRY

That name you asked about-

Daughtry, duty focused, scans a clipboard, flips a paper over.

JACK

Otto Kuehn.

DAUGHTRY

Germanic?

JACK

My gut says German, but could be Dutch.

DAUGHTRY

He's on the list.

Jack nods tersely. Daughtry, sensing stress, moves off and away. DESK SERGEANT HONAN (40s) leans in, folder in hand, eyes darting.

HONAN

Got a moment?

JACK

Any update on the Sands work-up?

HONAN

(voice low)

Here's the prelim... don't flip your wig. We can't hold him. He's being released.

Jack takes the folder, skims through it with increasing frustration. He halts on a page, disbelief in his voice.

JACK

No way... inconclusive? You've got to be kidding. Substance requires further testing? What the-

Jack glances around, resolve oozing from his pores.

JACK

We're not letting this slip through. Not on my watch.

Honan nods once. Jack stands firm. Daughtry observes from the hallway opening, a glint of camaraderie in his eyes.

EXT. HONOLULU PORT - NIGHT

A soft breeze drifts over the dimly lit port. Waves slap against the Lurline's hull. Shadows scatter from ship spotlights sweeping across the scene.

Paul sits slumped on a weathered bench, liquor bottle resting against him. He lifts it to his lips... a long swig, swallowing hard from the burn of alcohol.

He sets the bottle down. It slides through his fingers with a hollow thud.

Eyes flutter closed, a heavy sigh triggering a swirl of memories. Parents, Grandfather. Laughter, joy... loss.

Paul opens his eyes, pain easing from his brow. He reaches into a shirt pocket, pulls out a photograph, backside up.

The words "ALL MY LOVE FOREVER, LANI", written in feminine cursive.

He frowns, gently returning the photograph. Paul shifts uncomfortably, fishing out a folded pamphlet from a rear pants pocket, unfolding it with a shaky hand.

INSERT:

In decorative lettering:

SOUVENIR PASSENGER LIST

F DECK

S.S. LURLINE

SAILING FROM LOS ANGELES HARBOR, NOVEMBER 1, 1941

FOR HONOLULU, T.H.

BACK TO SCENE

Paul's breath catches as he skims over the manifest of names, one standing out: WILLIAM SANDS.

PAUL (V.O.)

What other secrets did you hide?

He looks out toward the twinkle of lights bordering the port entrance, closing his eyes once more.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. HONOLULU PORT - LURLINE - DAY

Paul weaves through the bustling crowd. Isamu and Otto converse, press forward, faces unreadable.

He bumps into Isamu, who scowls. Paul shifts his attention to OTTO, whose features show alarm as the face-off unfolds.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. HONOLULU PORT - NIGHT

Paul sits up straight, a spotlight capturing the realization. His FINGER slides down the manifest, pausing on a name.

INSERT:

In formal type:

BERNARD J. OTTO KUEHN

BACK TO SCENE

VOICES approach in the distance, snapping Paul from his reverie, panic gripping him.

He slips backs into the shadow behind the bench, folding the list, sliding it into his back pocket.

He peers through the bench slats, breath caught in his throat.

AUSTRALIAN STEWARDS, CORBYN (20s) and HANLEY (20s) stroll toward the boarding ramp, laughter drifting in the air.

CORBYN

I'm going to chuck a willy if we
don't depart soon.

Hanley flicks a lit cigarette into the water, watching it
sizzle against the brine.

HANLEY

Why the rush? You carry on like a
pork chop... must be love.

Corbyn grins, the unlatched gate swings wide as Hanley
slides it back, bold and carefree.

Both move through, leaving the gate ajar. They ascend the
ramp, stepping onto the ship.

Paul watches them vanish, his eyes betraying a desire to
investigate. Warily, he wanders over to the gate, squeezing
through the opening.

PAUL

(whispering)

I will find out the truth.

He weaves his way up the gangplank, plodding into the night,
gambling on his future.

EXT. SHIPYARD PARKING LOT - JACK - NIGHT - HIGH AERIAL

The stark, cold light from tall posts brighten an empty
parking lot. Shadows shift to a secluded corner, hinting at
a mystery.

CAR

Inside the POLICE CRUISER, Jack sits pensively, brow
creased, sipping coffee poured from a thermos.

Eyes narrow, he spots movement through the windshield. He
drains the cup, setting it aside.

With an anxious hand, he raises binoculars. Lenses reveal
Paul, unsteady on his feet, zigzagging up the gangplank.

His jaw tenses as Paul disappears into the Lurline.

JACK

(quietly)

Don't do this, Mr. Sands. It
doesn't end well.

Jack lowers the field glasses, a conflicted look on his face. He keys the ignition, hesitating for a moment, before accelerating forward.

PARKING LOT

The police cruiser ROARS to life, lights flashing across the empty expanse. Jack's expression is grim as he propels himself into the encroaching darkness.

INT. SHIP STATEROOM - NIGHT

Paul stands before the locked stateroom door, desperation tattooed on his face.

He checks the handle. Locked. Frustration bubbles forth. He steps back and KICKS.

The door bursts open, splintered wood flying. A distant SHAPE on the hallway floor catches his eye, draws him in.

Paul staggers over, bends down to inspect... a BROKEN VIAL and POUCH, white powder shimmering in the faint light. He boldly leans in to sniff, recoiling in an instant.

PAUL
(whispers, dismayed)
What the-

CAPTAIN EDWARDS (50s) and Jack appear near the doorway, their presence overshadowing his shocked surprise.

EDWARDS
What are you doing?

Wobbly, Paul rises, his voice filled with panic and regret.

PAUL
I thought I could find something, a
secret to explain it all. To make
sense of the pain.

EDWARDS
By breaking in? Real smart, genius.
You'll pay for this.

Paul clenches his fists, edges of anger and despair surfacing.

Jack steps forward, his voice hardening as he notices contraband on the floor.

JACK
It's more like hiding, hiding
evidence. Paul Sands, you're under
arrest for the murder of William
Sands.

HANDCUFFS SNAP tight around his wrists. The sound echos
through the distressed silence.

PAUL
I couldn't... I didn't. You've got
to believe me. I was looking for a
reason, to make things right.

The atmosphere is suffocating. Distant swells lap against
the ship, a chilling reminder of reality closing in.

JACK
Good... so am I.

Jack turns with authority and leads Paul away.

INT. HONOLULU JAIL - DAY

A thin strip of light cuts through the coolness of a
corridor. A PRISON GUARD (30s) strides forward, skeleton
keys jangling, reverberating off the painted brick walls.

A smaller Scotsman, MR. G (50s) shuffles behind, rosy cheeks
perched high on top an infectious smile. A twinkle in his
eye, he whistles a cheerful Scottish tune.

The guard halts before a thick jail door, peering through
the barred peephole, a sentry guarding lost hope.

GUARD
(gruff)
In there.

Inside, Paul paces the length of a cramped prison cell,
anxious steps reverberating off concrete walls.

PAUL
Arrested for something I didn't do.
Will I ever get out?

The guard grimaces as he keys the lock. The door swings
open, the sudden flood of light blinding Paul. A rich brogue
cuts through.

MR. G

Paul?

Paul stiffens. The guard, a hulking barrier to the familiar.

PAUL

Mr. Gillespie? Is that you?

With an unexpected spring, Mr. G pops out from behind the guard, adding a breath of fresh air to the dreary cell.

MR. G

Aye, it's been far too long. What's it been... five, six years?

PAUL

Mr. G! Last time on campus, right?

They embrace, a silent connection of unspoken fears.

MR. G

I hear you've rolled into quite a spot o'trouble.

Paul's eyes drop, shame in his posture, as the weight of Mr. G's concern blankets him.

PAUL

I didn't think I'd see a friendly face again.

Mr. G offers a reassuring smile, a lighthouse in Paul's storm.

MR. G

I can see you need more than just a jolly tune at the moment. It's just a bend in the road, me friend. You'll figure it out.

They exchange a look of camaraderie. A pause hangs between them.

MR. G (CONT'D)

How 'bout we start with getting ye out of here.

Mr. G beams with a spark of mischief. He motions for him to follow. Relief washes over Paul, igniting a flicker of brightness within sad eyes.

EXT. HONOLULU JAIL - DAY

The scorching Hawaiian sun beats down on the towering barb-wired JAIL. The air, a humid heat mixed with the rumble of pounding waves.

Mr. G approaches a parked 1941 HUDSON convertible, its smooth curves a testament to his free-spirited nature.

Paul lags behind, dragging a tattered suitcase. He casts a final glance back at the jail, a marked brow mixed with relief and regret.

MR. G

Poor fella. In the news, no less-

(softer)

I came as quick as I could.

Catching up to Mr. G, Paul stares off into the distance.

PAUL

I can't stop thinking about him.

(sighs)

He's gone... forever-

(choking up)

It was his body that went over the side... I should get the hell out of here!

Mr. G softens, with empathy.

MR. G

And be wanted for the rest of your life? Let it all blow over. Stay with Nan and me.

Paul's eyes well up.

PAUL

I never got to apologize. How did this happen?

(then)

I should've told him I loved him.

Mr. G nods once, his voice gentle and encouraging.

MR. G

Come along, laddie. Let's load up the car and be off with you.

TIRES spin, pebbles spit, the car speeds away, leaving shadows of guilt behind for an uncertain beginning.

EXT. WINDWARD OAHU - KANEOHE RANCH - DAY

JORGE LUIS (30s) rides a spirited quarter horse on a sun-drenched hillside. Cattle graze peacefully nearby.

He personifies the Paniolo life, rugged, defiant, and passionate - a self-proclaimed guardian of the land.

HEALANI trails on horseback, hawk-eyed, vigilant, sensing the unease radiating from him.

From the curve of the landscape, the HUDSON, top down, barrels around a bend.

A whisper of wind rustles through tall grass... only for the serenity to be shattered by the ROAR of military vehicles.

His eyes harden as the SOUND of JEEPS closes in.

JORGE

Damn you! This ain't your road.

G.I.s in the jeeps zoom past, laughter mingling with jeers, led by G.I. MORGAN (20s).

G.I. MORGAN

Hey, Joe! Look at the wannabe cowboy.

Jorge pulls hard on the reins. The horse bucks beneath him, sensing his frustration and outrage.

JORGE

It's Jorge Goddamn Luis!

He swings off the horse, gripping the saddle as he approaches the road.

A trailing jeep clips a fence post, chips scattering. Jorge reacts with an obscenity.

HEALANI

Don't do this... just let them go.

ISAMU approaches on horseback with a chilling confidence. He sneers at the departing caravan.

ISAMU

American devils. They'll eat dirt one day. Clowns, all of you.

His temper soaring, Jorge spins around, fists clenched.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
Healani, we must talk.

JORGE
You think you're so clever? Get
down. I'm tired of your bullshit.

Before he can act, the HUDSON rolls to a stop, drawing
attention. Mr. G leans out, a calm amidst the chaos.

MR. G
Olá. Como você está?... Is
everything all right?

JORGE turns, caught off guard by familiarity, anger
faltering.

JORGE
Mr. G-

His eyes dart to Isamu, fighting to regain his focus.

JORGE (CONT'D)
(resolute)
Isamu was just leavin'.

Paul rises from the front passenger seat, recognizing Isamu.

PAUL
I've seen you before.

His gaze meets Healani's. A flash of concern crosses Isamu's
face. In a sudden movement, he whips out a knife, spinning
an expert toss.

JORGE ducks instinctively as the KNIFE embeds itself into a
fence post, quivering ominously.

PAUL
What the hell?!

Paul prepares to leap from the car. Healani's sharp voice
halts him.

HEALANI
Enough! You're like children-
(turning urgently to Paul)
Please, just leave.

ISAMU
(grinning darkly)
Save yourself, haole.

JORGE, fists still clenched, grapples with an urge to retaliate, glaring at Isamu.

JORGE
(to Mr. G)
We're good. Everything's just fine.

Mr. G nods, sensing the heavy undercurrents of tension.

MR. G
Paul, let's go.

Paul glances between Healani and Mr. G. in disbelief. Reluctantly, he sinks back down into the seat. The Hudson roars away, leaving the echos of unrest behind.

KANEOHE RANCH

Healani looks at Jorge, disappointment evident in her eyes. She backs her horse, turning it toward Isamu, defiantly.

HEALANI
The answer will always be no,
Isamu. Stop stalking me.

His eyes narrow, a wolf sizing up his prey.

ISAMU
Choose your words carefully, ko'u
aloha. One day, you might regret
them. Only a fool defies destiny.

A hard kick to the horse's flank, Isamu and mount disappear over the hillside. Jorge grimaces, stares after him.

JORGE
We aren't fools.

A shared history swirls around them, like dust in the wind.

EXT./INT. PALI HIGHWAY - DAY - (LATER)

The warm glow of late sun bathes the landscape, casting long shadows as the HUDSON crests the PALI. Mr. G angles the vehicle to one side and parks.

A column of ARMY TRUCKS thunder past, reminders of a world in turmoil. Paul gazes out, lost in thought, watching them disappear around a bend.

MR. G
You've had a run of it, haven't
you, lad? First your parents, now
this.

Paul turns slightly, meeting his eyes, vulnerability carved
into his features.

PAUL
(softly)
I wonder if I could've changed
things.

Mr. G nods, sensing the turmoil. He opens the car door and
steps out, taking in the splendor of the Nu'uaniu Pali.

MR. G (CONT'D)
I stop right here when I'm feeling
blue. Mark Twain said it's the best
view in the world.

Paul hesitates, glancing at the last of the trucks, then
back to Mr. G's reassuring smile.

PAUL
(skeptical)
I don't know, Mr. G.-

MR. G
(with warmth)
Trust me. Let it speak to you.

They ascend a grassy hill in silence, shadows stretching
along side them, the beauty surrounding them.

Mr. G and Paul reach a clearing, revealing a vista of
coastline, its serenity enveloping Paul. A gentle breeze
ruffles his hair.

MR. G (CONT'D)
Don't let the past darken your
journey. Out there... hope is just
over the horizon.

Paul looks back at Mr. G, nods once, clarity in his view.

EXT. PALI LOOKOUT - DAY

PAUL and MR. G move along a short, rugged stone wall. A
cavernous ravine yawns like an open wound, filled with a
rainbow of native flora.

Paul inhales deeply, the crisp, salty air revitalizing him.

MR. G
It won't erase your troubles, but
it's a reminder that beauty
endures.

PAUL
It's... stunning.

MR. G
Kamehameha the Great stood right
here. He fought fiercely for his
people.

Paul's expression becomes thoughtful, a connection firing
across his eyes. The wind increases, swirling about him. He
absorbs the moment, closing his eyes...

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. SHIPYARD - WILCOX RALLY - DAY

A harbor market buzzes with human energy, filling the air
with grilled fish, pineapple and sweet coconut.

SUPERIMPOSE: "FORTY-NINE YEARS EARLIER"

A sea of HAWAIIANS, faces painted with unity, stand united
in front of a makeshift stage, banners fluttering.

Their hands are raised high with signs - *REFORM*, *EQUAL
RIGHTS*, *LIBERTY*, *VOTES ARE POWER*.

Young WILLIAM strains to see over the pulsing throng.

SUPERIMPOSE: "WILCOX RALLY - MAY, 1892"

The audience hangs on every word of CHARISMATIC ROBERT
WILCOX (30s), striking in an ITALIAN MILITARY UNIFORM.

He raises a fist, his voice powerful, aimed at the heart of
inequality.

ROBERT WILCOX
What kingdom? What elections? These
aren't elections. Where is your
power?

The multitude roars its approval, yet William's gaze slips
to IWALANI. She scribbles notes, eyebrows contracted, as if
to hide her eyes beneath.

ROBERT WILCOX (CONT'D)
Where is your right to vote? Send
those letters! Demand reform!

The crowd chants, "No more tyranny!" as William captures Iwalani's attention, their connection instant, timeless amidst the clamor.

The atmosphere shifts as a military WAGON thunders into view. HONOLULU RIFLES spill out, advancing toward them.

CLARENCE ASHFORD (40s), a hard-edged man on horseback, brandishes a RIFLE at Robert.

CLARENCE
Arrest that man!

The crowd stiffens, time standing still. William grimaces, twists instinctively toward Iwalani, grasps her elbow. He feels her tremble, sees her resolve harden.

WILLIAM
(urgent whisper)
Stay close!

A loud CRACK of gunfire shatters the air. Screams erupt, the terrified mob scatters, solidarity crumbling like dry earth.

CLARENCE
(with megaphone)
This is an illegal assembly.
Disperse or face arrest.

Iwalani stands firm, defiance in her eyes as they lock on William, fear battling courage within her depths.

IWALANI
We can't let them do this!

Two riflemen advance. One lunges, grabbing her arm. She struggles, undeterred, breaking free from his grip.

WILLIAM
(shouting)
Run! I'll hold them off!

For a heartbeat, their desperate eyes meet, before she sprints away. William stands ready to confront, fists flying before they overwhelm him, striking him down.

Collapsing, Iwalani shrinks from his view. His eyes follow her, as if tracking a lantern in a storm. The butt of a RIFLE descends, darkness devouring him.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. PALI LOOKOUT - DAY

The lush Pali scenery sharpens into focus. Paul steps back, shaken by cryptic reflections, turning toward Mr. G.

PAUL
What the hell was that?

MR. G
Aw... the Kama'aina. The locals.
They say the mountains sing to
those who must listen.

Paul raises an eyebrow, the corners of his mouth tighten.

PAUL
Just echos, or real secrets worth
hearing?

Mr. G smiles warmly, sensing the confusion within Paul.

MR. G
Perhaps both... look around you.

He sweeps an arm across the landscape, eyes sparkling with affection.

MR. G (CONT'D)
This is all Castle property.
Kaneohe Ranch, The largest ranch on
the island.

He points out Kailua Bay, its jeweled waters beckoning.

MR. G (CONT'D)
And that's Kailua - "Two Waters." A
perfect balance... just like we
should strive for in life.

Turmoil surfaces. Paul pulls out the faded photo and the money clip. He thrusts them toward Mr. G.

PAUL
I can't make sense of it, Mr. G.
These were with him. The photo is
ancient! Who are these women?

Mr. G takes them, holding up the photograph.

Two women pose in elegant dress, the oldest one wearing a jeweled BUTTERFLY HAIRPIN-

INSERT:

Black and white photograph:

SNAPSHOT OF IWALANI AND QUEEN LILI'UOKALANI

BACK TO SCENE

He lowers the photo, returning the items to Paul.

MR. G
I wish I could help. I don't know
these wahine.

The moment hangs in the air. Mr. G studies Paul, offering a comforting invitation.

MR. G (CONT'D)
I can smell me missus cooking from
here... how about we grab a bite?
Clear the mind a bit?

Paul nods. As they head back, the majestic Pali recedes in the background, holding its songs close once more.

EXT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - DAY

Paul returns from a swim, sun glistening off bronzed skin.

He approaches a quaint 1930s beach house nestled amid tropical flora,

Its spacious yard bordered by a riot of flowers bending to a gentle breeze.

At the edge of the yard, Mr. G and a meticulous Japanese landscaper, KENJI FUJIMOTO (40s) labor under the sun, broad-rimmed hats casting shadows over sweat-stained clothes.

MR. G
Hope you didn't miss breakfast,
laddie. Nan was ready to send out a
search party!

Paul's gaze drifts to Kenji, who prunes a hibiscus, his touch both tender and purposeful .

MR. G (CONT'D)
Kenji-

Kenji glides over, careful and composed, as if every moment matters.

MR. G (CONT'D)
Paul Sands... meet Kenji Fujimoto.

Kenji bows deeply, Paul extends a hand. Kenji meets it with a gloved one, shaking fingers with a gentle firmness.

MR. G (CONT'D)
Tell Paul your secret for keeping
the Hibiscus blooming.

KENJI
Coffee grounds-
(sparkle in his eye)
Missus say it's magic.

Kenji beams with pride, bows again. Paul surveys the thriving yard, a hint of longing in his eyes.

PAUL
(sighs)
Gramps once said life is much like
a garden, it needs constant care...
that damn detective wouldn't know a
flower from a weed!

Mr. G exchanges a knowing glance with Kenji before dismissing him with a wink.

MR. G
Thanks, my friend.

Kenji bows, resuming his work. Mr. G pulls Paul aside, his tone shifting, infused with gravity.

MR. G (CONT'D)
Remember, beauty can bloom even in
the toughest soil.

PAUL
Doesn't change the fact they don't
listen. That powder seemed almost
sweet... then it turned nasty. A
real headache, you know?

MR. G
Trust me, I had a run-in with the
the H-P-D once. You lose their ear,
it's a long way back. I found that
out the hard way.

Paul's expression softens, but the frustration remains. Mr. G sheds his gloves, slapping them together.

MR. G (CONT'D)
First things first. Let's see what
Nan has for you.

Mr. G throws his hat and gloves on a nearby bench. Paul
grabs his shirt off a porch railing.

They stride inside, gravel crunching beneath them. Paul
lingers for a moment.

PAUL
Maybe it's time I made my own
garden.

As the screen door closes behind him, a wave crashes and
seagulls cry, fortellers to the evil steaming their way.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Otto pilots a small skiff, the sun glinting off the
turquoise swells like shards of glass.

The distant silhouette of windward O'ahu shimmers, blurring
at the horizon.

The boat slows to a stop, idling, a curl of oily smoke
drifting up into the ocean air.

Otto squints at his watch, the steady tick-tock and gentle
rhythm conflicting with the worry engraved on his face.

A rubber raft slices through the glare of open sea. Isamu
materializes, his face a blank canvas.

OTTO
Guten Tag.

ISAMU
Konnichiwa... we speak English.

OTTO
It's taking too long. Every second
feels like a warning. What if they
miss the window?

Isamu's eyes narrow, assessing the rising panic.

ISAMU
Focus... it will happen. The codes
have changed. We need updates. Now,
not later.

He tosses a satchel into the skiff with precision. Otto intercepts it, frustration boiling over.

OTTO

Again? We just changed them! This operation is a mess. Such incompetence. What if they catch on?

Isamu glares at him, anger snapping like a whip.

ISAMU

Are you questioning my orders?

Otto realizes his mistake, voice trembling.

OTTO

Alles klar. Ich verstehe... I do my job, okay? Even if it risks-

ISAMU

(cuts him off)

No mistakes! Your life depends on it. Protect the mission, understood? The goal is clear... Hawaii. Don't stand in my way!

The icy command strikes deep, piercing Otto's resolve.

OTTO

(strained)

Glory to the fatherlands.

ISAMU

(coldly)

I remain undercover.

Isamu's expression hardens, sensing the wavering loyalty as he pushes away with a paddle.

The raft retreats, swallowed by the skyline, leaving Otto staring blankly into the dark-blue sea.

INT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - DAY

NAN GILLESPIE (50s) petite. with styled silver hair, stands before a proud kitchen. Radiating warmth, she is gentle, reserved, the yin to Mr. G's unabashed yang.

The table is set with fine china and matching chairs. Everything is pristine, like her nature.

Mr. G, in a cheerful spirit, grabs a chair and plops down. Paul bends down to hug her, sensing her soft nostalgia. A calming accent welcomes him.

NAN

You look so relaxed today. Is the room to your liking?

Paul winks, though stress lingers in his eyes.

PAUL

Bed's a little short.

They settle into their seats. Nan scans Paul for something more.

NAN

You've been through so much lately, my dear. Don't hesitate to talk... we're here for you.

Paul puts up a brave face, but his facial expression drifts to reflection.

MR. G

Now's a good time. Show her, show her what you showed me.

Paul slides over the PHOTO and the MONEY CLIP, tarnished yet still striking. Nan catches a glimpse of Iwalani, her brow rising in admiration.

NAN

She's attractive.

Reading glasses hang from a chain around her neck. She studies the clip, a gleam of understanding in her eyes.

NAN (CONT'D)

You should take this to Kailua Town. The jeweler might help you.

A deep sigh escapes Paul.

PAUL

I can't shake the feeling time is running out... that if I don't figure this out, I might lose everything. Or worse, never really know who I am.

Nan nods, empathetic, her gaze steady and reassuring. She hands the items back to Paul.

MR. G

Let's do that later. I got me an idea. Just what the doctor ordered. Who needs a mystery when we can have a little adventure? You and I, lad, are going to the horse races!

Paul leans back, surprised yet intrigued.

PAUL

Horse races?

Nan rolls her eyes playfully, a smile widening across her lips.

NAN

Just don't let him bet the house!

The moment lightens, they share a laugh. The lingering concern floats over them, an eery ghost haunting Paul.

EXT. KAILUA RACE TRACK - OTTO - DAY

The sun hangs high above a swaying coconut grove, casting dancing shadows over an oval horse racing track.

The ocean air mingles with the sounds of thundering hoofbeats and the chatter of eager guests.

A car crunches into a dirt lot, kicking up plumes of dust above the rows of haphazardly parked vehicles.

It veers in-between and parks. The engine rumbles to silence. The driver's door swings open.

Otto steps out, camera slung over a shoulder, scanning the frenetic scene. A mix of curiosity yet something darker in his gaze... an extreme caution.

OTTO

(to himself)

"Take pictures", you say. So, I take pictures.

Snippets of conversation and smells of fresh hay float closer on a breath of wind. Otto lingers at a truck headlight, scoping out the lively atmosphere.

KAILUA RACE TRACK ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

Across the way, a line of eager patrons snakes its way forward toward an entry gate, vibrant outfits sharp against the natural backdrop.

Mr. G hustles toward the entrance, glancing back at PAUL, who trails a few paces behind, expression guarded.

MR. G

You go ahead, I'll catch up.

He nods to a short man sporting an over-sized hat, hands fluttering with bills like captured butterflies.

In a swift movement Mr. G discreetly exchanges a small wad of cash for a sliver of paper. Returning to Paul, he grins, eyes glimmering with mischief.

PAUL

A winner, or a dreamer?

MR. G

Just you wait. Jorge Luis rides
Paniolo Pleasure. Best horseman in
these parts!

The crowd noise swells, rising like a tsunami. Paul glances over Mr. G's shoulder, scanning for the familiar, an unease washing over him.

He spots Otto, snapping photos of the crowd.

PAUL

(recognizing Otto)

He was on F Dec-

MR. G (CONT'D)

C'mon, hurry... races are about to
start. I can smell me a winner!

They pass through the gate, losing themselves amidst the sea of pulsing spectators. Yet for Paul, a question lingers.

PAUL

(to himself)

What are you really after, Mr.
Kuehn?

The moment crystallizes. The excitement is contagious.

EXT. KAILUA RACE TRACK INFIELD - DAY

Paul and Mr. G lean against an infield barrier. Riders parade horses in a paddock. The air buzzes with a nervous energy, fueled by the worry of speculation.

Jorge leads Paniolo Pleasure by the reins, waving at a packed grandstand. An announcement booms, slicing through the din.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Last call for the Kailua Stakes.
Last call!

Unnoticed, Jack approaches. His hand clasps Mr. G's shoulder firmly.

JACK
Never one to miss out on a little action, eh.

Startled, Mr. G turns. Jack's sternness melts into a grin.

MR. G
Well if it ain't Jack Burns! You gave me a right start, ol' friend.

JACK
Betting on the sweepstakes?

MR. G
Just thinking-
(to Paul)
What's your take, Paul?

Paul's glare is steely, filled with the unresolved.

PAUL
You think a horse race matters right now?

MR. G
What's life without a bit of fun?

Paul stiffens, exasperation boiling just beneath the skin.

M.R. G (CONT'D)
(Stepping in)
Sorry, Jack. We're a bit on edge.
Paul is dealing with questions about his grandfather.

JACK
The autopsy will tell us what we
need to know.

MR. G
How long might that take?

JACK
Could be a few more days-

PAUL
Stop the charade. Just arrest me.
We both know why you're here.

JACK
You don't call the shots, Sands.
These aren't your islands.

Paul surges forward, but Mr. G steps in, expression fierce
with concern.

MR. G
Apologies, Jack. Just getting to
the bottom of things. Did you know
his grandfather had a history here
on O'ahu?

JACK
Can't say that I did.

MR. G
Any chance you could dig up some
records for an ol' Scotsman?

Jack glances at Paul, who shifts warily.

JACK
For you, I'll see what I can find.

His eyes wander to Otto, who weaves through parked cars,
taking photos.

JACK (CONT'D)
Who's that man with the camera?

MR. G
That would be Otto Kuehn. A real
odd fellow, if you ask me.

Jack nods, respect for Mr. G in his smile.

JACK
Catch you later, Mr. G.

He turns but pauses, looking back at them.

JACK (CONT'D)
-And good luck with Jorge.

Jack melts into the crowd, leaving an uneasy silence in his wake.

KAILUA RACE TRACK - LATER

Horses and riders gear up at the Start Line. Jorge and Paniolo Pleasure stand poised, determined.

A hush sweeps over the crowd, anticipation consuming oxygen from the air. A single HOOOF paws the ground.

A START GUN BLASTS. They're off! Paniolo Pleasure jostles against the rail, lead horses surging forward, pulling away.

Mr. G's shoulders slump, excitement and angst mingling, as he glances at Paul.

RACE TRACK - HORSES

The pack makes a wide turn into the backstretch. Jorge fights his way through, subtly guiding Paniolo Pleasure.

Thundering hooves create a chaotic symphony, filling the air with dirt and noise.

FLASH BULBS pop, each snapshot a moment of euphoria. The roar of the crowd sledge-hammers Paul.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
It's a blanket finish!

The crowd freezes. A collective breath is held, senses suspended by uncertainty.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Paniolo Pleasure, winner by a nose!

Cheers erupt, a jubilant wave lifting up the infield. Mr. G skips a jig, ecstatic. Hats soar into the sky.

Out of the celebration, Healani glides into view, her presence magnetic. Paul tracks her every move, eyes narrowing as he can't help but watch.

Jorge holds the reins to Paniolo Pleasure, grinning and waving amidst the celebration.

Healani glides toward him, gracefully draping a lei over his head. They embrace, the warmth of connection a direct opposite of Paul's intensity.

He steps back, revelers swirling past him, obscuring his view, isolating him. Somewhere between the fun and the hardship, he is lost.

EXT. ROAD TO KAILUA TOWN - DAY - (MOVING)

The Hudson glides along a winding road that hugs the aqua-marine coastline. Afternoon sun mixes warmly with the ocean air.

Paul grips the wheel with one hand, a crimp in his brow. He gazes at the road ahead.

The wind tussles Mr. G's hair as he leans out, reveling in the ocean breeze.

MR. G
(shouting)
Can you smell that? It's paradise!

Sunlight glints off a weathered stone pillar -

LANIKAI

BACK TO SCENE

Ironwood trees whip past, leaves whispering hello. The road curves inward, the sky deepening to an orange and gold, foreshadowing the evening.

A prominent BURMA-SHAVE billboard traipses by only to be replaced with a large, colorful wooden sign:

WELCOME TO KAILUA TOWN

BACK TO SCENE

Kailua Town unfurls before them, an intoxicating blend of island charm and thriving spirit.

The Hudson rolls to a halt, its engine echoing against the backdrop of military vehicles parked near the KAILUA TAVERN.

A charming BEER sign's neon, unsteady yet inviting, brightens to life as if to tease their thirst.

PAUL
(nervous)
You think the military is here for
a reason?

MR. G
Beer... they're thirsty.
(laughing)
Best not think too much about it.

The glow of a theater marquee showcases HOPALONG CASSIDY,
hinting at the simple thrills the townsfolk seek.

Across the street, a HARADA STORE window reflects a
kaleidoscope of parked cars.

Paul's gaze drifts to a small, quaint building draped in
lush foliage, where a JEWELER signboard flickers out. Mr.
G's expression sharpens, urgency in his voice.

MR. G
If you're gonna find answers,
better hurry.

Paul parks and with a nervous fumble, tosses the keys to Mr.
G, who catches them deftly. Mr. G swings the door open and
strides toward the store.

MR. G (CONT'D)
I'll meet you at the bar.

PAUL
You sure about this? What if-

MR. G
Relax, just a quick stop - breathe!

Dark clouds swirl above the tavern with a flash of
lightening, followed by a sudden clap of thunder.

Both men freeze, sharing glances of amazement and unease,
unaware of the more ominous warning: A storm from hell
approaches... a human storm.

INT. JEWELER - DAY

A door strap jingles. Paul bursts into the shop, urgency
etched on his face.

The warm light bounces off glass showcases, brightening a
chaotic display of glittering treasures and jeweler's tools.

JEWELER WATANABE (60s), distinguished in a frame of grey hair, looks up from behind a glass counter.

PAUL
(slightly out of breath)
Excuse me, still open?

WATANABE
About to close, what do you need?

Paul edges closer, sliding the money clip across the counter, eyes sparkling with anticipation.

PAUL
I need your help to read the
inscription.

Watanabe deftly inspects it, dipping it into a polishing solution, uncovering years of tarnish. He retrieves an eyepiece, focusing intently.

WATANABE
Sterling silver. Nineteenth
century. Only a royal palace could
afford such craftsmanship.

He examines the object, fingers tracing its contours with reverence.

WATANABE (CONT'D)
I-W-A-L-A-N-I. Iwalani...

PAUL
Iwalani? Lani... royal palace? What
does that mean?

Paul slides over the weathered photo. Watanabe scrutinizes it, looks back at Paul, solemn eyed.

WATANABE
You not know? The diamond
butterfly, worn by a great woman...
the queen. To be in picture?
Special friend.

His words hang suspended in the air. Paul's eyes drop, the gravity of his quest dawning on him.

PAUL
(whispers)
I was hoping for answers.

Watanabe studies him, his gaze softening. He places a reassuring hand on the counter.

WATANABE

Sometimes the past waits on us to
uncover the truth.... these are
just part of your journey.

Paul straightens, the revelation sinking in. A moment
lingers, his features caught between introspect and purpose.

INT. KAILUA TAVERN - NIGHT

The vibrant roadhouse bursts with life as military and
locals mingle. An enormous juke box bellows big band tunes,
struggling to be heard.

Paul leans against the bar, waving for attention. KIMO
(30s), a massive bartender, ignores him, lost in serving
others.

Mr. G scans the raucous menagerie spotting JORGE across the
room, laughing with a rowdy group of Paniolos.

JORGE

(booming)

Mr. G! Over here!

Mr. G elbows Paul. They push through the sea of partiers.
JORGE springs from his seat pulling Mr. G into a bear hug.

MR. G

You were magnificent today, my man!

JORGE

Not bad for a Portugee, huh?

Mr. G gestures toward Paul, still catching his breath.

MR. G

This is my buddy, Paul Sands.
Hollywood's finest!

Jorge hollers a warm greeting, slapping the table for
attention.

JORGE

Hollywood! Get over here, you movie
star!

Heads turn, eyes glinting with curiosity.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, drinks on me!
Sir Hollywood!

Jorge points toward Kimo, raising his voice above the hubbub.

JORGE (CONT'D)
Mais um para mim e meus convidados,
por favor!

Kimo lifts a nod, acknowledging Jorge's order.

KIMO
Comin' right up, Jorge.

MR. G
No thanks, amigo.

Mr. G leans closer to Paul, a conspiratorial wink.

MR. G (CONT'D)
Missus wants me sober tonight.

PAUL
You sure? This place looks like a
blast.

MR. G
You'll be fine here, right?

PAUL
Don't worry - get back to Lanikai.

Mr. G waves a farewell, merging back into the crowd.

TAVERN

The atmosphere thickens with spirits. Paul and Jorge dive into camaraderie, toasting glasses.

A BUZZING ARMY PRIVATE (20s) leaps onto a table, belting out an off-key tune to cheers.

MUGS crash, BEER spills. A beefy, DRUNK SAILOR CHASE (20s), chip on his shoulder, stumbles onto them and glares at JORGE.

CHASE
(slurring)
Think you're better than us, you
stinkin' Paniolo!? Look at you, all
hugs and laughs.

Inflamed, Jorge lunges to throw a punch - he miscalculates - his fist landing square on an ARMY SERGEANT (30s).

ARMY SERGEANT
(shocked)
Damn! What the hell?

Suddenly, a BEER BOTTLE SHATTERS against the head of Jorge.
Paul's eyes widen as he throws a haymaker at CHASE.

PAUL
You picked the wrong fight, sailor!

A melee erupts. Tables flip, chairs crash. CHASE, fueled by
payback aggression, dives toward PAUL.

PAUL ducks under a wild swing, his movement fluid as he
counters with a brutal uppercut, sending CHASE reeling.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Don't start what you can't finish!

Jorge and Paul find a moment beside the door, catching their
breath amidst the free-for-all.

JORGE
Ain't this just the bee's knees?

PAUL
Feels like I'm in a movie all
right.

They share a laugh, the tension easing for a moment. A
sudden noise jolts them back - a G.I.s punch sends Jorge
flying across the doorway.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Jorge!

Paul rushes forward, helping him to his feet.

JORGE
It ain't over yet!

They stagger toward the exit.

EXT: PORCH

Jorge and Paul clamber onto steps, the cool night air
hitting them. JORGE clutches the back of his head.

JORGE
(Grinning)
Welcome to Hawaii, Hollywood.

They stumble into the street, bruised yet standing. That former smirk returns -

PAUL
More like, "Welcome to fight
night."

JORGE
Damn dogfaces.

A rusty 1930s PICK-UP TRUCK skids to a halt. HEALANI storms out, hands on hips, fierce and protective.

HEALANI
Are you out of your mind, Jorge?

JORGE (CONT'D)
Little sis to the rescue, huh?

He tries to climb into the truck but she blocks his way.

HEALANI
Get in. Now!

She slams the door after him, eyes narrowing on PAUL.

PAUL
Little sis?

Coolly, she glares back, ready to defend her brother.

HEALANI
Family comes first.
(to Jorge)
Stay close, he's trouble.

She swings up into the cab, guns the engine and speeds off, TAILLIGHTS disappearing into the evening gray.

PAUL
Trouble, huh?

Paul watches the truck vanish, regret gathering in his eyes.

EXT. LANIKAI BAY - DAY

From the shoreline, PAUL scans the shimmering water. The SOUND of AIRCRAFT fills the air. NAVY P-40 fighter bombers pass by in formation, shadows gliding like precursors to conflict.

With a decisive breath, Paul dives into the surf. Long arms cut through the water with rhythmic grace, propelling him forward.

He pauses, treading water, refreshed in the coolness of the water. In the distance, Healani slips through the surf with seamless strokes.

Paul draws closer, intrigued, an impulse to connect in his features. Healani halts, her body taut, studying him warily.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

What's your deal? Following me?

PAUL

Just wanted to say I'm sorry.
I'm... Paul. Paul Sands.

He gestures to reduce the gap between them, only it widens.

HEALANI

You're Paul. Right... whatever.

Before he can respond, a large shadow sweeps beneath them.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

Shark. Swim slowly, toward the
shore.... stay calm.

Paul smirks.

PAUL

I get it... I deserve that.

Terror creeps across on her face, alarming him, reality setting in. The ocean transforms, predator versus prey.

HEALANI

It's coming!

Fear tightens his throat. He spins to see a massive TIGER SHARK breach the surface, fin slicing through like a sharp blade. The unrelenting aggressor locks onto them.

PAUL

(gritting his teeth)

Go!

Paul thrusts Healani forward with a powerful push, instinct overriding hesitation. With each kick, he fights to survive the moment.

The shark lunges, but Paul channels his strength into a forceful strike that sends it veering off.

Emerging from the mayhem, they both stumble onto the sandy beach, panting hard.

HEALANI

We need to warn everyone... it's a Tiger!

Urgency blazes in her eyes as she stands tall, determination radiating. Paul scrambles up the shoreline, brushing sand off a bruised foot, glancing back at her.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

You head up the beach and tell the locals. I'll get the fishermen.

PAUL

Sure. Understood.

HEALANI

The ocean can be unpredictable, like... life.

Their eyes lock, time seems to halt, vulnerability hovering in the marine air.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

What you did back there was very brave. I wouldn't have thought... thank you. I'm Healani, by the way.

PAUL

Nice to meet you, Healani.

Threads of a bond ignite them. Their shared peril, the solace of survival, drawing them closer.

EXT. BAY HOMES - DAY

Small hillside cottages dot a deserted, sandy street. Paul stands nearest to one, scanning the tranquil view, a concern marking his brow.

PAUL

(calling out)

There's a shark in the bay.

A HAWAIIAN FAMILY spills out of the small, adjacent home.

Laughter fills the air as CHILDREN race about, encircling Paul like a small swarm, cupped hands reaching up for candy.

Paul directs his attention to the adults. Among them a tall hapa man, KEONI KAMAKAWIWO'OLE (50s) who watches intently.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Keep the children out of the water!

A soft poke in the ribs pulls his focus. He looks down to IWALANI KAMAKAWIWO'OLE (70s).

Her deep, probing eyes study him, the once youthful enthusiasm now replaced by the wisdom of a matriarch.

IWALANI
You have no fear, young one. I see the koa of a warrior... fierce strength. But even warriors must respect the sea.

PAUL
I'm just trying to warn everyone.

She places a hand over his heart.

IWALANI
(smiling gently)
A warning is only as strong as the heart behind it. Bravery is knowing when to place your trust.

She leans closer, her voice lowering as if sharing a secret.

IWALANI (CONT'D)
Long ago, there was a fisherman who feared the ocean. One day, he discovered his power wasn't just in his hands, it came from within. That day, he caught the biggest fish he had ever seen.

Paul nods, curiosity piqued, processing her words.

PAUL
(softly)
Are you... Lani?

Iwalani's smile falters. Her stare shifts and she withdraws, retreating back to the small home, children in tow. Paul gazes after her.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Iwalani.

She pauses to glance back, an instant of recognition passing through her eyes, before she vanishes around a corner.

PAUL (V.O.)
(reflective)
Strength from in here.

A DISTANT SHOUT cuts through the serene calm, snapping Paul from his thoughts.

He pivots onto the sandy road, taking a deep breath, each step fortified by this new sense of hope.

BAY HOME - OTTO

Continuing down the sand-packed road, Paul glances at distant aircraft landing on Mokapu.

An upper level door on a seaside cottage opens and OTTO steps out, binoculars in hand.

Paul hurries over to the side of a house, ducking behind a bush to spy.

OTTO surveys the ocean with a practiced eye, hangs the field glasses on a peg, then creeps down the steps.

He approaches a clothesline, uneven sheets billowing like sails. OTTO removes and rearranges them with precision.

From dense growth, ISAMU emerges. OTTO nods once, an intense acknowledgment exchanged between them.

He retreats up the stairs, picking up the binoculars. Paul crouches low. Otto opens the door, slipping back inside.

ROAD

Isamu strides down the street, glancing back at Paul who rises to watch him disappear around a corner.

Paul hurries after him, stopping before a hedge to peek. Isamu confers with a gang of LOCALS, their laughter mingling with the sounds of the ocean.

Paul hesitates, then leans forward. Without warning, the cold tip of a knife presses up against his chest.

ISAMU
(voice low)
What do haole say? Curiosity kills
the cat.

PAUL
(raising hands, backing up)
Don't threaten me.

Isamu brandishes the knife, his eyes blazing.

ISAMU
Moron. Healani is mine. Leave
Hawaii... now.

Paul focuses on the gang, silent sentinels observing. He nods toward them, steeling his resolve.

PAUL
(defiant)
The hell she is... who are they?

Isamu lunges, swiping his arm wide. Paul twists, just avoiding the blade as it shreds a gash in his shirt.

ISAMU
(snarling)
Haole deaf? Leave, or die!

Paul scrambles back, anger simmering as he checks his shirt.

PAUL
You were there. On F Deck... with
the German. What happened to my
grandfather?

Fever bright, Isamu growls at Paul, sheathing the knife. The danger recedes, yet his gaze lingers.

ISAMU
You are nothing.

The gang joins him, shadows rising behind them as they fade into the distance, Paul's question lingering in the air.

EXT. KAILUA BAY - DAY

Paul strides down a sloping path toward a group of fishermen who stand rigid, eyes darting across the water. Weathered faces reveal a mix of concern and focus.

The men nod in unison to HEALANI, her presence commanding, as they scramble for gear, boarding moored boats with urgent speed.

A truck rumbles to a stop above them. JORGE bursts out, slamming the door behind him. He stomps downhill with purpose.

The commotion catches Healani's attention, her posture worried, as she heads uphill, spotting Paul.

PAUL
Jorge... didn't expect you out here.

Jorge dismisses Paul with a wave, the action sharp and loaded with apprehension.

JORGE
This has nothin' to do with you, Hollywood. Just stay out of it.

PAUL
Out of what, exactly?

Before he responds, Healani steps in, her expression firm.

HEALANI
Enough! You can go.

JORGE
Go? There's a shark in the bay!

Healani glances at Paul, her eyes drawn to the cut in his shirt. She reaches for it but balks, gratitude and worry dominating her features.

HEALANI
I can handle myself... let the fishermen do their jobs.

JORGE
You think I can just sit back? You were out there alone!

HEALANI
I'm not a doll. You can't protect me like I'm porcelain.

JORGE
Healani-

HEALANI
We reported the shark. Paul helped me. Can we please discuss this later?

As she pleads, Jorge's shoulders slump, defeated but conflicted. He turns to stride up the hill, voice tinged with dejection.

JORGE

Helpful, huh? Then be at our ranch
house at nine A.M.-

(then)

Hope a movie star can ride a horse.

He climbs back into the truck, slamming the door with finality. The vehicle lurches away, kicking up dust. Paul swivels toward Healani, eyes narrowed by concern.

PAUL

He's just looking out for you.

HEALANI

(starting toward the ocean)

And I'm grateful, but I need to do
this on my own.

Healani inhales, the breeze tousling her hair. She stares out over the now-still water and scattered fisherman boats.

A distant warning siren echos along the beach. She nods once, determination flaring back to life.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

Let's go.

They hurry toward the sound, the alarm fueling their pace, their relationship, as well.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

The warm sun spreads over a sprawling lot, beams of light dancing through the rustling leaves of Ironwood trees.

A horse neighs, the distant sound riding on a breeze, tugging Paul back from the chaos of the previous days.

He walks a private entry road, absorbed in the serenity, yet unease pools in his eyes.

A Navy jeep loiters near the largest house. Jorge appears in the doorway of the smaller home, arms crossed, a smirk dancing on his lips.

JORGE

Wonders never cease. Our hero is
even on time. Too bad I don't have
a white one.

He tosses Paul a weathered cowboy hat.

JORGE (CONT'D)
It'll block the sun.

Paul catches it, a grin breaking through his concern. He plops the hat on his head, feeling its weight, the emblem of change returning a confidence to his step.

PAUL
Better than swimming with sharks,
right?

JORGE
(playful)
Don't count your money before the
horses run. Can't get ahead of
yourself.

Jorge angles off toward the barnyard as Healani strides in, guiding two horses past him.

A cowgirl hat hangs from her neck like a badge of honor. Her presence stirs something new inside Paul, coaxing him away from his worries.

HEALANI
Here you go.

She hands a rein to Paul, her fingers brushing against his... the electric moment lingers.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
They don't bite... unless, you
provoke them.

With effortless grace, she climbs onto her filly, donning her hat with a flick of independent spirit. Jorge rides up, another horse in tow.

Paul loops long legs up and over, settling into the saddle, the hat now a metaphor for courage. Jorge hops off, tying the trail horse to his steed.

JORGE
We'll take the beach road across
the Kawai Nui... watch out for the
dips, they sneak up on you. I'll
take my colt to Kailua. You two
drop these horses off, hitch a ride
back.

As Jorge swings back up onto his saddle, he casts a knowing side-glance at Paul, gravity behind his playful demeanor.

HEALANI
(teasing)
You ready to keep up, hero?

PAUL
Just try to stay in front of me.

The small parade breaks into a trot, cantering off into the distant glare, new companions unaware of the threat soon to change their lives.

EXT. SEASIDE ROAD - DAY

The caravan trots along a rugged dirt path. Sunlight glimmers on the ocean, plumeria blooming. JORGE maneuver's his horse closer to PAUL'S.

JORGE
Kailua and Lanikai are changin',
amigo. They're talking about a
hotel on the beach... makes me
sick.

Jorge gestures toward MOKAPU, where navy planes slice through the sky, their engines growling.

JORGE (CONT'D)
And the military snatched our best
grazing land. I've watched the
future disappear, piece by piece.
What a mess.

The trail veers toward a bridge. They traverse, slowing to a stop. Jorge squints through binoculars, then snaps them down in alarm.

JORGE
Caramba! You two keep goin'. I'll
catch up!

He kicks his ride into a sprint, sending up a cloud of golden dust.

JORGE (CONT'D)
Haw!

Jorge disappears down the trail, leaving a whirlwind in his wake. Healani and Paul's horses twitch with excitement, shifting into a swift trot.

TRAIL

Healani and Paul weave through thick foliage. Vibrant green canopies, a fluted spine of the Ko'olau range ascends in the backdrop. The trail bends downward, opening up to reveal a MILITARY BASE.

HEALANI

Kaneohe Naval Station.

An entrance bustles with ground drills. PBX CATALINA planes taxi a runway, engines humming.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

They're busy. Jorge thinks it's a big operation. Our navy tenants are rarely home, but when they are, they're just so... loud.

PAUL

I thought he hated the military!

HEALANI

Business is business. But the grazing rights? That's personal. The Castles have a thousand head. Jorge would fight tooth and nail for them.

His eyes drift toward the horizon.

PAUL

Change is inevitable, but what's different since Gramps was here?

HEALANI

I'm sorry about your loss. We talked about it last night.

A shadow darkens his face.

PAUL

It was sudden. I'm still in shock.

HEALANI

Will you have a service?

PAUL

Tomorrow. I can't believe it.

HEALANI

(pause)

Did you know I was the one-

His anger flares and simmers.

PAUL

(interrupting)

They're rushing me to bury him. I haven't seen the autopsy report. What's the cause of death?! The whole thing's a fubar.

Her gaze sharpens: does he know?

PATH

Trees arch overhead, leading to a clearing nestled beside a meandering stream. Healani observes Paul intently.

HEALANI

My forefathers have called this home for centuries. My dad's side is Portuguese from the Azores, but my heart aches for the places I've never seen.

Paul blinks, pulls back from his thoughts.

PAUL

So you're both Portuguese-Hawaiian?

HEALANI

Jorge is my half-brother... same father.

PAUL

What about you?

HEALANI

My mother was pure Hawaiian, full of stories and tradition. Makes me a hapa girl.

PAUL

That's beautiful.

She slows her horse, a hint of curiosity in her eyes.

HEALANI

Tell me about your grandfather.

Paul fumbles in a pocket, retrieving the weary photo.

PAUL

This was with him when he died.

She takes the photo delicately, her eyes darting over the image, then recoils subtly.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You okay?

HEALANI

I'm fine. Just... reminded me of something.

(glancing at the photo again)

Beautiful girl. If her name is Lani, it means heavenly.

PAUL

I think it's short for Iwalani.

HEALANI

Heavenly seabird.

She hands it back. Her expression, wistful.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

Her dress looks royal. A gift, perhaps?

PAUL

Did my grandfather know the queen?

HEALANI

There are records-

(then)

Maybe it's just about a girl.

PAUL

A lot of things are just about a girl.

She flips her hat back, kicks her horse into a canter.

HEALANI

C'mon.

Paul hesitates, caught between curiosity and desire. With a curl of a smile, he spurs his horse forward.

BYPATH - (LATER)

The air hangs thick with humidity. Healani halts her horse, tying her hair back. She motions at the trailing horse.

HEALANI

Paul, could you hand me a towel
from the saddle bag?

He reigns in his horse, dismounts and fetches the towel, handing it to her. He removes his hat with an awkward smile.

PAUL

I was thinking, what if we... hung
out? Without Jorge, that is.

Healani wipes her neck, arching an eyebrow at him.

HEALANI

You're tall. Play basketball?

Paul leans in, hope blooming. A playful toss of the towel, Healani hits him square in the face.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

Git.

With a bold kick, she sends her horse into a gallop. Stunned, Paul holds the towel in hand, eyebrows raised.

Returning hat to head, he climbs back on, grabs the rein, kicks a flank.

The trail horse resists. Giant hooves rear, his steed rises high on hind legs.

PAUL

Whoa! Wait... was that a yes?

She fades into the colors of the horizon. Cheeks flushed, Paul scrambles to catch up.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A small, rural graveyard. Frugal headstones lean at odd angles, worn by time, each a eulogy to a loss.

PAUL, hand trembling, leans forward to place a delicate rose upon a wooden casket.

PAUL
 (whispering)
 How can I ever say good-bye?

Eyes cast down as grief overwhelms him. Flashbacks flood back: moments of fishing trips, warm laughter, shared gifts.

He steps back, unsteady, breathing heavily. Mr. G approaches, an arm wrapping around PAUL. A gentle breeze stirs, soft symphonies of sorrow surrounding them.

CEMETERY - JACK - CONTINUOUS

At a distance, JACK leans against a police car, arms folded. His expression, a complicated mix of sympathy and professional detachment.

He checks his wristwatch, taking a drag from a cigarette, watching the smoke twist in the breeze. MR. G breaks the silence, nodding toward JACK.

MR. G
 Paul... let's speak with Jack.

They stride toward him. JACK straightens, snuffing out the cigarette, shedding his layer of discomfort like old skin.

JACK
 Mr. G.... Mr. Sands. My condolences
 for your loss.

MR. G
 What have you got for us, Jack?

JACK pulls a manila envelope from his jacket, his tone now more serious.

JACK
 I wish I had better news. The
 autopsy didn't confirm a cause of
 death... its still undetermined.

He hands the envelope to PAUL whose eyes are red from mourning.

PAUL
 (voice cracking)
 What about the other thing?

JACK lifts a hand, urgency seeping into his voice.

JACK

The investigation remains open. A blood sample is with the university, analysis pending.

PAUL

Am I still a suspect?

MR. G places a firm hand on PAUL'S shoulder, grounding him.

MR. G

Breathe, Paul. Remember our talk.

JACK

Regarding your inquiry, Mr. G, no record of a William Sands exists. But a William Sanderson... was noted back in '93.

MR. G

Much obliged, Jack. I knew it to be a strange request, but we appreciate your help.

Jack nods, moving to the driver's side door. PAUL hesitates, a moment of doubt clouding his features, before speaking.

PAUL

That man at the race track, the one you asked about, he was at a beach house moving sheets on a clothesline, using field glasses. Something about him felt... off.

Jack's brow furrows, recognition dawning. A simple nod confirms an understanding between them. He slips into the car with a solemn thud.

The engine revs up, pulling away, leaving PAUL and MR.G to the quiet echos of the cemetery, more questions than answers still hanging in the air.

INT. OTTO KUEHN HOME - DAY

Morning light filters through sheer curtains. It casts scattered rays across a dusty living room filled with family photos, stillness in a world about to shatter.

OTTO stands by the mantelpiece, his fingers tremble over an outdated photograph of his children. Their laughter haunts him, as does the grinding sound of ISAMU sharpening a knife.

ISAMU

We need more detail on the harbor movements.

Otto swallows hard, youthful joy lingering... before Isamu, before these demands. He turns slowly, his breath quickening, to face Isamu.

OTTO

I was just there! I'm not just some... "schleichen", some ghost ready to be caught.

He takes an involuntary step back as Isamu surges closer.

ISAMU

Stop your whining. Victory is near. You will have glory-

OTTO

Glory? At what cost?

ISAMU

(with icy conviction)
And I will rule Hawaii.

Otto clenches his fists, anxiety coursing through his gaze, guilt dampening his speech.

OTTO

No. "Nicht mehr". I can't do this. Tell your Kapitan, I quit. I'm done. "Fertig".

Otto turns away, breathless, the crash of a wave breaking the stillness. Isamu's eyes narrow, his rage white-hot, heating the air with contempt.

He catapults forward, seizing him from behind. The KNIFE's cold steel grazes Otto's neck, a line of sweat mingling with a trickle of blood. Isamu growls in his ear.

ISAMU

You quit, your family dies. Maybe you die, too.

OTTO

"Meine Familie?" "Bitte" - don't hurt them.

The knife shifts under his jaw, a grim touch of truth. Raw fear consumes Otto. His eyes widen.

ISAMU
What did you say?

OTTO
(voice trembling, barely a
whisper)
I... I said nothing. They are
innocent. I'll make the report. No
mistakes.

Isamu tightens his grip, tension now a physical thing. Otto stiffens in alarm.

ISAMU
(menacing)
Remember what's at stake.

Isamu shoves him forward, the knife's bloodied blade a final warning to betrayal, snuffing out all glimmer of hope.

EXT. KAILUA SCHOOL YARD - DAY

The sun beams down on a sprawling playground, the rhythmic thud of a basketball echoing through the shimmering heat.

PAUL stands at the edge of a weathered basketball court, watching HARUTO SUZUKI (14) dart past a group of teenagers.

He smiles, eyes bright with the memory of playing ball, youthful days of fun and freedom.

MIKE CACCAVALE (15) lunges for a steal, his swing ferocious, but uncoordinated.

MIKE
Stop hogging the ball! Ball hog!

The other boys groan, rolling their eyes, others already drifting away willingly.

PAUL
Hold on fellas! Just a minute!

They hesitate, then return, curiosity piqued. Haruto pulls the ball back, fires a fast one at Mike.

Paul deftly intercepts, maneuvering into a slick dribble, soaring into the air as if still in his prime, nimbly swishing it through the net.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Alright, lets keep it moving.

He snaps a two-handed pass at Haruto, who catches it, eyes wide with awe.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Handling the ball is fun, but it's
also about sharing the court.

A grin spreads across Healani's face as she approaches, sun catching the shine in her hair.

HEALANI
Looks like someone is keeping busy.
I hear they lost their coach to the
military, right?

HARUTO
Mister, you should be our coach!

Paul pauses, rubbing a knee, hiding the hurt. A smirk curls his lips, recalling his own doubts and struggles.

PAUL
You just work on making your
teammates better.

In that moment, Haruto pivots with precision, executing a perfect bounce pass to Mike. The basketball soars, the net sings - whoosh! The boys erupt into cheers.

PAUL (CONT'D)
That's more like it. Remember, it's
about lifting each other up-

He glances at Healani, a playful smile crosses his lips.

PAUL (CONT'D)
-And I was hoping to lift your
spirits with a date tonight.

She raises an eyebrow, feigning deep thought, a teasing snicker and a glint in her eye.

HEALANI
Hm-mm, I might be persuaded if you
were to say, coach the team.

Paul chuckles, the playful challenge now a competition.

PAUL
Sounds like you're trying to
negotiate... a little trade deal?

Healani leans in slightly, her eyes mischievous.

HEALANI
Seems more like extortion to me,
Mr. Sands.

They share a laugh, their chemistry palpable. Paul glances back, smile fading, sounds dimming to a soft hum.

PAUL (V.O.)
What if all this joy slips away,
like my family?

He stands quiet, the loss heavy in his eyes.

EXT. KAILUA TOWN - NIGHT

Healani and Paul walk hand in hand. LAUGHTER from a pool hall fills the air. A distant shout hints of unrest nearby, the atmosphere charged and on edge.

Suddenly, Healani releases his hand, stepping back and crossing her arms defensively.

HEALANI
I can't help but feel... someone
might get hurt.

Paul's brow furrows, confusion mixing with concern.

PAUL
What do you mean?

Her gaze drifts, recalling something troubling.

HEALANI
You... me. I know where this leads,
Paul. It doesn't end well.

Paul steps forward, urgency in his voice.

PAUL
I can't think of you that way.

HEALANI
(sarcastically)
Oh? You don't even know how long
you'll stick around.

Seizing the moment, he pulls her close, kisses her gently.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Tomorrow at the court... I'll be
there.

Healani raises an eyebrow, surprised but intrigued.

HEALANI
Are you really going to help the
team, or are you just being cute?

PAUL
I've played some, just never
coached... I'll give it a shot.

A smile breaks her face as she slides her hand into his.

HEALANI
You know what you need? To believe.

Healani touches her head, then her heart.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
Not just here-
(then)
In here, too.

PAUL
I've heard this before.

HEALANI
You need to dig deep, find your
inner aloha. It's not about what
you are, it's about who you are.

PAUL
Now who's being cute?

HEALANI
Who knows? Maybe you'll be the next
Hall of Fame coach.

The atmosphere chills as they pass ISAMU and his gang of
locals, the aura darkening.

PAUL
Detective Burns... it's like oil
and water.

HEALANI
I've met him.

PAUL

They sent a blood sample to the university... no idea what they found.

HEALANI

Does anyone know?

PAUL

Not a clue-

(then)

But, I truly think it killed him.

They pull up short, locking eyes, an electric silence hovering between them.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I ask for information and they turn away. Do I have the plague or something?

HEALANI

Islanders see you as an outsider first. Show them you care... about Hawaii.

PAUL

Easier said than done.

HEALANI

I should tell you, I found-

Before she can finish, Isamu and his gang encircle them, baseball bats in hand, menacing.

ISAMU

Haole, you don't belong here. Move away from my girl.

Paul is taken aback as Isamu shoves him. A vicious kick strikes him, knocking him to a knee.

ISAMU (CONT'D)

Yankee dung. You were told to leave.

Anger surges in Paul's stare. Ignoring the pain, he gets back on his feet, the warrior within now sparking to life.

PAUL

(grimacing)

I won't back down-

He swings a quick right cross, catching Isamu off-guard. The victory is fleeting as BATS strike down, staggering him forward, back to a knee.

On impulse, Healani rushes to protect Paul, desperation in her eyes.

HEALANI

Stop! You're hurting him.

Isamu lunges, grabbing a fist full of her hair, his face twisted with rage.

ISAMU

Don't be naaupo. Don't be stupid!

The distant SOUND OF WHISTLES grows louder as POLICE approach.

He throws Healani's head forward, stepping back, blood trickling from a lip. He wipes his mouth, fury in his eyes.

ISAMU (CONT'D)

Remember this, girl. The world is changing, and so will you.

He gestures for the gang to follow. They vanish into the shadows, as the POLICE pour in, urgency flooding onto the scene.

Healani, breathless and shaken, turns to Paul who is still catching his breath, anger now mixed with injury.

HEALANI

That was reckless. We need to talk about this.

PAUL

I won't let them intimidate us.

She reaches out, resting a hand on his arm, the connection deepening.

HEALANI

I know... but we need to be smart about it.

Paul looks into her eyes.

PAUL

Together, then?

HEALANI
Together.

Sirens echo, an announcement to a pledge now forged.

INT. HONOLULU LIBRARY - DAY

Paul stumbles into the lobby, wincing as he shifts his weight, a hand firmly pressed to his lower back.

He inhales, scanning the hushed aisles, feeling eyes on him. Across the organized space, a display table. One text book stands out: HAWAII.

He snatches it up, opens it, flips to the "Table of Contents". His finger stops on a bold title.

INSERT:

HAWAIIAN CENSUS Pg. 391

BACK TO SCENE

Paul makes his way over to the desk of a LIBRARIAN (30s), her chair creaking as she turns. She avoids his gaze, fixated on the wall, twirling a pen in her fingers.

PAUL
(voice edged with urgency)
Excuse me.

No response. He holds up the book, pointing at the text. She leans in, curious, breaking her indifference.

LIBRARIAN
(quiet, wistful)
The census holds many secrets.

His eyes sharpen, a kinship forming. She gestures toward a row of aisles as if to say, "Find your story there".

PAUL
Mahalo.

He scans the aisles with growing purpose, back complaining with every step.

Something catches his eye on a low shelf: a thick, embroidered hardback. He pulls it out, breath catching.

INSERT:

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CENSUS 1890-1900

BACK TO SCENE

He glances over a shoulder, wary of prying eyes, before limping toward a vacant table.

On it a colorful cover tempts him. He picks it up, curiosity triggered.

INSERT:

POISONOUS FLOWERS AND PLANTS OF THE UNITED STATES

BACK TO SCENE

Paul sets the census report down, slumps into a chair. He flips through the flora guide, pages fluttering.

He halts on a striking image: a magnified white flower with menacing prickly seed pod.

INSERT:

SPECIES: D. WRIGHTII

FAMILY: SOLANACEAE (SACRED DATURA)

BACK TO SCENE

He scans the small type, a realization dawning on him. Paul turns pale, mouth tightening with shock.

PAUL
(to himself, panic rising)
No, no-

He slams the book shut, breathing heavily. A cold sweat breaks out on his forehead. Paul scans the library, aware of the burden now carried.

He sits up, grabbing the census, a man on a mission, ready to confront the mysteries in his past.

EXT. NU'UANU HOME - DAY

The Hudson glides into the estate driveway, flanked by walls of fitted stone that lead through a lush canopy.

It opens into a circular expanse. PAUL cuts the engine, steps out.

Square-cut stepping stones lead to a handcrafted front door. He hesitates, hand poised to knock-

Without warning, the door swings wide open. HOUSE BOY JUNICHI (17) greets him with a respectful bow.

JUNICHI
Iwalani not see visitors. Keiki
come back another time.

NU'UANU HOME

Paul straightens, stepping back. From the side IWALANI, bright in a colorful mu'umu'u, approaches. Junichi bows again and steps aside.

IWALANI
It's okay, Junichi.

With a soft invitation, Iwalani ushers Paul in. She motions toward a living room chair. He takes a seat, glancing at the serene, tropical decor.

PAUL
Thank you... thank you for seeing
me.

Iwalani gracefully glides over to an interior fish pond, kneeling to swirl fingers in the water. Colored fish dart and scatter.

IWALANI
Many keiki have stirred their
fingers here, yet the fish thrive.
It's the Hawaiian in them. They
have much koa.

She meets Paul's gaze.

IWALANI (CONT'D)
We have met before. You knew my
name. What is yours?

PAUL
Paul... I'm staying with friends
outside Kailua Town.

IWALANI
I love Kailua. When I was young,
the queen and I spent time there
together. She was such a
magnificent woman.

Iwalani rises, her form elegant, eyes shadowed with longing.

IWALANI (CONT'D)

Her soul was full of ho'okipa. The spirit of hospitality. She wrote many songs-

(a thought)

Have you heard one of them?

PAUL

Can you hear them at the top of the Pali?

A wistful smile, Iwalani nods in reverence.

IWALANI

The mauna' mele sings to you? Oh, you must listen.

PAUL

I have... it's why I'm here.

The stillness hangs on a pregnant pause. Paul vacillates, swallows hard, but continues.

PAUL (CONT'D)

My grandfather came with me to Hawaii. Before he died-

(hesitant)

I think he was here to see you.

IWALANI

What was his name?

PAUL

William... William Sands. Or maybe Sanderson?

Iwalani's expression falters, a moment of disbelief. Flashes of anger cloud her face, followed by a deep, wrenching sorrow. She grapples with the leaden weight of his words.

IWALANI

No... no.

Silence consumes the room. Her eyes glisten with tears, the haunting sadness spilling over.

IWALANI (CONT'D)

My keiki, my dear keiki... no more talk.

Paul hesitates, then rises. Overwhelmed by emotion, Healani approaches him, throwing her arms wide, kissing the air on either side.

He takes a deep breath before revealing the money clip and photograph.

PAUL

But... do you remember these?

Iwalani stares at them, shock drawing her back. She bows her head, tears streaming down her cheeks.

IWALANI

Iwalani not see visitors... keiki
come back another time.

Between stifled sobs, she weeps, heart breaking, as the past slowly presses down around them.

INT. OTTO KUEHN HOME - NIGHT

Otto ascends a dim stairwell, the walls lined with lighted frames of swastikas and fervent faces from 1930s Hitler rallies.

He pauses, staring at the symbols of loyalty once admired, now nooses around his neck.... Otto loosens his collar.

Entering a loft, he pulls on a chain. A bare bulb flickers to life, illuminating a worn chair in front of a distressed desk.

A 1941 calendar hangs nearby, chaotic squares marked with an 'X' spanning December 1st-5th.

He sits down, the old wood creaking of memories. Reaching over, he clicks on a GRAMOPHONE.

A vinyl record spins slow, then fast. The needle descends, imposing its will. German MUSIC spills into the air.

Pushing the lamp toward a window sill, he pulls back the curtain, exposing a barred square of glass, trapping him in the moment.

His wristwatch ticks loudly, each second a rhythm of fleeting time. Otto releases the curtain, each interval changing.

The ritual becomes more frantic, almost desperate, until... it's done.

He exhales deeply, marking an 'X' on December 6th with a shaky hand. Otto leans back, eyes heavy, drifting into the haze of sleep.

The needle reaches an inner ring, sinister tones scratching the surface, the rhythm of war moving ever closer.

EXT./INT. SUBMARINE - NIGHT

A PERISCOPE breaks the surface of a pitch-black sea, shadowy waves glistening with distant lights on darkened shores.

CROSS HAIRS magnify, revealing a hillside home. A lone lamp BLINKS twice, then goes dark.

SUBMARINE CAPTAIN SAKURA (40s), rugged and battle-worn, pulls the periscope in decisively, locking the latch and handle with a practiced ease.

He turns to JAPANESE OFFICER TAKAHASHI (20s), lean yet resolute, saluting sharply.

SAKURA
(subtitle)
Status of decipher reports?

TAKAHASHI
(subtitle)
Sir, codes are confirmed authentic.

Sakura clenches his fist, card in hand trembling slightly.

SAKURA
(subtitle)
The American warship... confirmed?

TAKAHASHI
(subtitle)
Yes, it's entered the harbor.

Sakura's eyes smolder with intensity. He barks a command.

SAKURA
(subtitle)
Ready all crew for Operation Z. Do
it now!

Takahashi stands aghast, the command jolting him. A flicker of doubt lingers before he stiffens, saluting and stepping back, every movement precise.

BULKHEAD

ISAMU meditates on the cold, metal floor, the pounding of overhead pipes echoing like a beating pulse.

The hatch spins open, a heavy CLICK resonating in the small space. Takahashi peers through, hesitating before stepping inside.

Isamu, alert, snaps his eyes open, sensing the urgency.

TAKAHASHI
(subtitle)
Most Honorable One. Captain
requires your immediate
preparation.

Takahashi bows, the gravity of his words sinking in. He exits, closing the door with a punctuated finality.

Isamu stands swiftly, striding toward a cramped bathroom. His reflection in the MIRROR, fierce and unwavering.

He retrieves a STRAIGHT-EDGED RAZOR from a worn cup, holding it high, taking on the weight of an impending oath.

ISAMU
(subtitle)
World under one roof.

A beat.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
(English, fervently)
Soon... victory for Japan.

EXT. LANIKAI BAY - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A) Mokulua islands rise like silhouettes over Lanikai Bay, O'ahu, Hawaii.

B) A waning gibbous moon drifts between billowing clouds.

C) Anchored, a fishing boat sways gently in deep water, tossing to the melodic strum of a UKULELE.

LANIKAI BEACH

The concave beach cradles two lovers. They weave through jeweled dunes of sand, giddy with romance. PAUL catches Healani in a playful hug, bodies close.

PAUL

How'd I get so lucky?

He leans in, eyes sparkling with mischief. Healani, pushes free, laughter bubbling up as she races away, bending to collect a luminous sea shell.

HEALANI

So you think you're gonna' get lucky?

She tosses it playfully. He ducks, laughter resonating in the night. With long strides, he's upon her, their bodies entwine - a quick, heated kiss.

FISHERMAN'S BOAT

Near silence is broken by the gentle strum of the ukulele. A JAPANESE-HAWAIIAN FISHERMAN (60s) sits at the bow, lost in the glow of a dancing kerosene lamp.

It casts shadows across a small cabin. Nets curl in a pile, companions to bamboo rods dangling like plucked strings over the side.

BAY

BUBBLES rise on the still water as a shape glides beneath, ominous and undefined.

A PERISCOPE emerges some distance behind the fishing boat, lurking. A serpent in water, it swims forth, vanishing just as-

SUBMARINE

The gleaming hull of a JAPANESE SUBMARINE breaks the surface. An exhalation of air gives way to an external HATCH that rotates open with a muted CLUNK.

A DUFFEL BAG appears, landing with a CLANK of metal on the deck. The SLIM FIGURE in ninja blue springs forth into a crouch low.

ISAMU scans the sable darkness, his breath shallow. He hoists the bag over a shoulder, the hatch sealing behind.

On nimble feet he traverses the deck, stopping to balance, executing a perfect ballet leap onto the fishing boat.

BOAT DECK

Isamu lays down the duffel, drawing a gleaming knife from his belt sheath. The bright blade catches the moonlight. He rises, silent and stealthy, to slip past the cabin.

Without warning, he pounces on the fisherman from behind. The KNIFE plunges deep, muting the ukulele. It hits the deck, neck broken like the victim's final breath.

Isamu steps inside the wheel house, the lamp fading to darkness. He re-emerges, surveying the quiet night.

Reaching down, he drags the corpse across the deck, leaving a trail of murderous ink across the wood. Leaning the body against the side, he offers cynical respect.

ISAMU

Rest, rojin. Rest. Nippon-koku
applauds your sacrifice.

Isamu methodically cleans the knife, sheathing it with a soft click before hoisting the cadaver overboard.

LANIKAI BEACH

Boats toss in the shallow surf. A motor rumbles in the offing, growing louder. The fisherman's boat grinds into the wet beach, an ANCHOR dropping down into the too-still sea.

The motor sputters to a stop as Isamu slides off, wading into thigh-deep water.

Moonlight breaks free from a cloud, spilling silver across the boat. He reaches for the bow, the crescent scar glistening wet with saltwater.

PAUL

Isamu-

Isamu recoils against the boat's side, tension thick in the air.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I know it's you.

Isamu unsheathes the knife, gripping it with teeth clenched. He turns with precision, submerging neck deep into the water, gliding away.

Paul treads carefully toward the fishing boat.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Leave Healani alone. She's not
yours. She never was. Stay away
from us.

Paul steps back, turns to leave. From near the water's edge Isamu lurks, a predator stalking his next meal.

A sudden movement behind Paul, the steel of the knife presses against his jugular.

ISAMU
I should cut you open like a pua'a.

Healani gasps, stepping closer, fear engraved on her face.

HEALANI
Isamu... no!

Isamu cocks his head, a moment of conflict hesitating his dark urge to kill.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
Let him go. Please, I promise. You
and me, together. Just let him go.

He inches the knife away, shoving Paul forward.

ISAMU
Lolo... lucky for you she made a
good choice.

HEALANI
(Hawaiian)
You got what you wanted, now go.

Isamu points the knife at Healani, his resolve hardening.

ISAMU
(intense whisper)
I will deal with you later.

With snake-like speed, he sheaths the knife slipping back into the shadows. Paul scowls and moves to follow. Healani grips his forearm tightly.

HEALANI

Paul!

He resists, then eases back. They stand there, catching their breath, the passing danger weighing on them.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

Did you see that scar? That's a man
haunted by something.

Paul nods, protective instincts still flaring.

PAUL

We're safe now.

She leans into him, their forms turning, melting into the darkness.

Isamu slinks toward the boat, hoisting the duffel bag before retreating up the beach.

A dog BARKS - its sound cut short - a yelp, a wounded animal, followed by a deathly silence.

INLET - (LATER)

Healani and Paul walk hand-in-hand toward a secluded cove, moonlight waltzing on the pristine sand.

HEALANI

Isamu is so hewa... so evil.
Fishermen don't come in that late.

PAUL

(firmly)

He won't get to you. He has to walk
over my dead body first.

HEALANI

We should report this.

PAUL

Now? He's gone. Tomorrow, okay?

He pulls her closer, their connection compelling. A moments pause... Healani releases a breath she was holding.

HEALANI

What am I going to do with you?

Paul eases her down onto the sand, removes his shirt to place it beneath her.

She leans back, a strap slips from her shoulder. His mouth finds hers, their kiss deepening as inquisitive waves whisper secrets to the shore.

EXT. LANIKAI BEACH - DAY

Morning sun streams through overcast skies. Teal water shimmers as prisms of light prance across the calm water.

SUPERIMPOSE: "DECEMBER 7, 1941 7:52 A.M."

PAUL and HEALANI stroll along the beachfront, their laughter mingling with the shore break. Healani glances at him, a hint of concern hovering on her brow.

HEALANI
(biting her lip)
We should get back. Jorge will be
looking for me.

A heavy pause stretches between them, the quiet only disturbed by the distant cries of seagulls.

On a sudden, LARGE EXPLOSIONS rock the distance, MACHINE GUN FIRE ripping through the tranquil topography.

They spin toward Mokapu. Black SMOKE mushrooms above the air base, darkening the sky. Airplanes soar like predatory hawks, then sharply BANK toward the ground.

PAUL
(puzzled)
What the hell? On a Sunday?

Their eyes widen as planes peel away, slicing through the sky toward Lanikai Beach.

One aircraft veers off, DEFIES GRAVITY as it DIVES, unleashing a stream of gunfire that shatters the stillness.

HEALANI
(voice low, trembling)
What's happening?

RISING SUNS glint off METAL skin as two JAPANESE ZEROS merge, zooming low like falcons, heading straight for them.

They stumble back, fear in their eyes. Paul leads Healani by the hand as they turn and race for cover.

The ROAR of MACHINE GUNS causes water and sand to spray up about them. Healani screams, her voice raw with terror.

The aircraft spiral up into the sky, pilots mock saluting. Climbing steeply, they disappear into the unfolding chaos above.

Paula and Healani huddle together behind bushes, trembling. The sound of a truck screeching to a halt jolts them from their hiding place.

JORGE leaps out, frantic and wild-eyed, staring at a zigzag of irregular bullet holes stitched across the truck bed.

JORGE
(breathless)
The Japs are attackin'! We need to
go... NOW!

Healani and Paul sprint toward the unexpected sanctuary.

PAUL
(urgent)
Get in! We'll figure it out
together!

They leap into the cab, united by horror, numbed by their witness to war.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - DAY - (MOVING)

White knuckles strangle the steering wheel as Jorge presses the accelerator, the truck lurching forward.

JORGE
They shot at us! Can you believe
it?

A sharp explosion can be heard in the distance as he cranks up the truck radio, CHURCH MUSIC blaring, a jarring change to the mayhem outside.

HEALANI
Doesn't anyone know what's
happening?

Paul and Healani trade worried glances. Jorge's frown deepens as he shifts gears, the truck careening forward, a cloud of dust chasing their escape down the road.

INT. HONOLULU FBI BUILDING - DAY

Jack strides into a chaotic scene, a large office alive with the relentless cacophony of RINGING PHONES and agitated typing.

A RECEPTIONIST (20s) battles the confusion, her voice rising above the clamor as she cradles a receiver against an ear and shoulder, juggling a second call.

She casts a frantic look at Jack, eyes widening, nodding toward a nearby office.

He redirects his focus, pushing through the door into a small, cluttered office. On the busy desk, a NAMEPLATE gleams in gold lettering:

ROBERT L. SHIVERS

SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE

BACK TO SCENE

ROBERT SHIVERS (40s), slender, black hair center-parted, sits hunched over his phone. His expression reveals the weight of the moment.

He cups a hand over the receiver, the stress in his eyes evident.

SHIVERS
Governor Poindexter.

Jack steps further inside, closing the door with a soft click that reverberates.

Robert's speech shifts, struggling to adopt a strained calmness.

SHIVERS (CONT'D)
Yes, sir. It's necessary. I agree
with General Short.

His frown deepens, adjusting himself, bracing as if for impact.

SHIVERS (CONT'D)
Yes-
(a moment of silence)
Yes, of course. But we can't wait.
You must issue the order. Agents
are in the field.

Jack stands at the edge of the room, leaning on every word. Robert's lips tighten as he listens to a reply.

SHIVERS (CONT'D)

I understand, sir... I know.

A pause stretches, thick with uncertainty. Jack cocks an ear, alert for the words that could change everything.

SHIVERS (CONT'D)

I promise. We'll do everything in
our power.

(then)

Thank you, sir. God bless.

He hangs up, a mixture of relief and despair flooding his features. Jack sinks into a chair beside the desk, hands gripping the armrests.

SHIVERS (CONT'D)

I can't believe this. What a
nightmare. The Governor was crying.

Jack shakes his head, disbelief etched on his face.

JACK

So is it a go?

The question hangs in the air like a dark cloud, the walls almost breathing in anticipation.

SHIVERS

It's a go.

The reality of their next move looms over them. Jack leans forward, voice low, determined.

JACK

Then we need to act fast. We owe it
to the people... to Hawaii.

Jack's expression hardens, his commitment clear, underscoring the grim duties they must now enforce.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - DAY - (MOVING)

The truck cab buzzes with static from the radio. A backdrop of beach blurs past as military vehicles surround MARINES who dig foxholes.

Hedgehog barriers dot the shoreline. PILLBOXES aim machine guns toward the sea.

PAUL
That submarine... I should've
reported it.

Jorge's face darkens as he lifts his foot off the
accelerator, the truck decelerating, tension gripping like a
vise.

HEALANI
(glancing at Paul)
Look...

A military ROAD BLOCK looms ahead, armed MARINES stationed
like watchmen, weapons drawn and ready.

MARINE PRIVATE DAVIDSON (20s) steps forward, his rifle aimed
and stance alert.

DAVIDSON
Halt!

Davidson approaches, eyes scanning the truck.

DAVIDSON (CONT'D)
Where'd you come from? Where you
goin'?

Jorge leans out, sweat glistening on his brow.

JORGE
Mokapu... heading for Lanikai.

Davidson studies the truck bed, then Jorge.

DAVIDSON
You armed?

PAUL
No. Just trying to get to safety.

Davidson's eyes bore into Paul, who locks eyes with the
Marine, determined to prove they're no threat.

DAVIDSON
What's the rush?

Paul swallows hard.

PAUL
We need to check on our friends!

Davidson hesitates, the urgency of Paul's words resonating.
Finally, he relents, giving a thumbs up.

The checkpoint guardrail swings open. The Marines wave them through, suspicion still in the air, aligning with the uncertainty that lies ahead.

INT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - NIGHT

The dim glow of a SHORT WAVE RADIO TRANSMITTER as it sputters sporadic updates. MR. G and NAN sit, their hands intertwined, sharing a silent understanding.

Healani clings to PAUL wide-eyed, her breathing labored. Jorge paces the room.

SHORT WAVE RADIO TRANSMITTER (V.O.)
(filtered)
Possible Japanese parachutes seen
near St. Louis Heights. Confirm and
report. Alpha hotel six out.

An uncomfortable silence as the impact of the transmission settles in. Without waiting, Nan rises and leaves the room.

MR. G
(eyes on Jorge)
We heard Battleship Row was lit up.
The whole world is watching.

SHORT WAVE RADIO TRANSMITTER (V.O.)
Japanese mini-sub. Bellows Field...
Waimanalo Point.

NAN (O.S.)
Someone said they were landing on
the North Shore. Thank God it
wasn't true.

As she re-enters, the radio crackles again, enhancing the mood.

MR. G
They declared martial law.

JORGE
(grim)
Good reason to stay inside. We
should prep for the blackout.

Paul and Healani share a glance, speaking volumes to their fractured plans and rising doubts.

HEALANI
What if they invade us?

The question hangs in the air, a bleak reminder of reality.

PAUL
Then we fight like hell.

Paul looks out the window, darkness in his eyes.

INT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - DAY

A soft glow of first light filters through the screened Lanai. On a cot, PAUL spoons HEALANI, content and peaceful.

JORGE nudges him. Paul stirs but rolls away, feigning sleep. He bumps him again, more insistent.

JORGE
Rise and shine, Hollywood. Follow me.

PAUL sits up, yawning as HEALANI moans softly, resettling into her blankets.

PAUL
What the hell, Jorge?

He stretches, shaking off sleep, swinging his feet onto the floor.

JORGE
C'mon. No time to explain.

Jorge shuffles into the living room, Paul follows him, still half-asleep.

MR. G emerges from a hallway, rubbing sleep crust from his eyes.

MR. G
What's all the commotion about?

JORGE
Glad you're up, Mr. G. We have a situation.

He waves them forward toward a side door leading to a patio.

EXT. PATIO - KENJI - CONTINUOUS

Kenji paces in the shadows, distant ocean waves crashing behind him.

Jorge, Paul and Mr. G step out, screen door creaking. Kenji spins around, bowing with a purpose.

KENJI
Much thanks, Mr. Jorge... Mr. G,
Mr. Paul. I fear they will take me
today.

Mr. G steps closer, an edge in his voice.

MR. G
Who's coming for you?

Kenji glances around, fidgeting, wearing his nervousness.

KENJI
(hushed)
Shh... They arrest many of us.
We've heard troubling things.

PAUL
Such as?

KENJI
If you with Buddhist or make trip
to mother country, you suspect. I
make trip last year. Bury
grandfather.

MR. G
That doesn't make you a criminal.
How can we help? You tempted life
coming over here.

KENJI
Must hide personal things. No hide,
no safe.

MR. G
We don't treat our neighbors this
way.

KENJI
I know this to happen. You not
stop. There is other thing. Not
everyone good neighbor.

Kenji clasps his hands, a gesture of desperation.

KENJI (CONT'D)

Someone is here who should not be.
He look like me, not act like me.
He was with German man at temple.

JORGE

Is that a problema?

KENJI

They not go there... then bombing
start.

MR. G

Would we recognize him?

KENJI

Man have scar on hand. He is up to
no good.

PAUL

I know who it is.

JORGE

A real jerk.

PAUL

You should report this.

Kenji shakes his head.

KENJI

No! Man like me... no trust.

The look at each other in agreement. Kenji needs their help.

EXT. KAILUA SCHOOL - DAY

Overcast skies cast a gray pallor. Jorge's truck crunches
over gravel as it rolls onto the Kailua School grounds.

Paul steps out, stunned by the metamorphosis. Jorge speeds
away, leaving him behind.

Tents are strewn about. Somber women shuffle through the
haphazard disorder, some weeping softly, others crying out.

CHILDREN giggle, playing hide and seek nearby, the contrast
of innocence and grief colliding.

A RED CROSS van arrives, siren muted, its lighting a beacon
of hope that draws a crowd.

CIVILIANS and SOLDIERS cluster around it, drawn by the promise of aid.

HEALANI approaches Paul, her face a mask of anguish, and collapses into his arms.

HEALANI

All of these families. Their
husbands, their fathers-
(her voice falters)
We're losing them, Paul. The
wounded are in classrooms. The
hospitals... overflowing.

PAUL

How can I help?

She wipes a tear, her finger pointing toward MR. G, who tirelessly unloads a truck piled high with supplies.

HEALANI

Mr. G... he'll know what to do.

Paul nods once, gently releasing her, a new purpose in his eyes. He strides over to Mr. G who turns just in time to toss him a stack of blankets.

Paul snatches them out of the air, a brief smile that slips past the otherwise somber mood.

MR. G

Glad you're here. Distribute
those... help with the food. It's
all hands on deck.

A HAM RADIO broadcast crackles to life, piercing the air.

BROADCASTER (V.O.)

Now hear this! Now hear this!
Today, at 12:30 P.M. Eastern Time
the United States Congress declared
war with Japan.

A SUDDEN SQUEAL of brakes disrupts the moment as a SEDAN rolls up.

Two LARGE FBI MEN (20s) in dark suits spring from the vehicle, authority radiating from them.

Nearby, an Isamu GANG LOCAL (30s) who is unloading food from a military jeep, glances nervously as they approach him.

They wrench back his arms behind him, slapping handcuffs on his wrists, escorting him to the sedan like a hunted animal.

A POLICE CRUISER pulls in. The DRIVER'S WINDOW rolls down, Jack leaning out, scanning the area until his gaze locks onto Mr. G.

JACK
Mr. G... over here!

Paul hands out a blanket, looks back just in time to see Jack's approving nod directed at him.

Their eyes meet, an unspoken connection forged in a mire of distrust. The window rolls back up.

Both vehicles drive away, leaving a charged atmosphere in their wake.

Mr. G rushes back toward Paul, urgency marked on his face.

MR. G
It's happening everywhere. They
arrested Otto Kuehn.

Paul's expression hardens, they exchange a glance of camaraderie, a shared resolve for whatever comes next.

INT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - NIGHT

Folded cardboard shields a flickering candle, soft light caressing the walls.

A black curtain drapes a bay window, blocking the dangers beyond.

Healani and Paul sit at the kitchen table, a chasm of unspoken words between them.

The faint sound of dishes clink in the kitchen sink, punctuating the silence.

Nan cleans a dish, her hands gliding through the soapy water. She glances over a shoulder, sensing the tension.

NAN
Your letter to the coroner-

PAUL
(interrupting, weary)
I know... too much death. They're
swamped.

HEALANI
 (leaning in, intensity
 increasing)
 But you hold the key to a locked
 door! You must try.

PAUL
 (voice low)
 The war isn't going away.

HEALANI
 (searching his eyes)
 Where is it?

PAUL
 In the guest room... it won't bring
 him back.

HEALANI
 What?

Healani's temper is of the shortest, a tempest threatening
 to spill over.

HEALANI (CONT'D)
 (voice rising)
 What do you mean? It was me... me!
 I was the one who found your
 grandfather.
 (then, with intensity)
 You owe him. You owe us. You-
 (Hawaiian)
 The path is there!
 (subtly)
 You can't stop believing.

Her frustration wins out. She storms out of the room,
 leaving Paul huddled at the table, regret in his eyes.

PAUL
 I wasn't giving up.

NAN turns off the faucet and wipes her hands, voice gentle,
 yet firm.

NAN
 She's tired. We're all tired. You
 never turned back before, did you?
 The morning will bring a new day.

Nan grips his shoulder in a quiet act of comfort.

NAN (CONT'D)
In the eye of the storm, you'll
find your true strength.

A soft beat follows her words. Paul grasps her hand. He nods once, staring blindly into the shadows of the cottage.

INT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - DAY

Paul is asleep on the living room couch. The CREAK of a front door hinge disturbs his slumber.

He squints against the harsh light, looks over. Healani stands in the doorway, dressed to ride, eyes conflicted.

HEALANI
I can't stay here, Paul. Not when
things are falling apart.
(then)
I thought we could face this
together, but I can't wait for
things to unravel.

The door SLAMS shut behind her. Paul scratches his head, bewildered. He drops back down, staring at the ceiling.

EXT. LANIKAI BEACH COTTAGE - DAY

Healani moves to untie her horse from a nearby post. The mood of the morning shifts, the crash of ocean waves fading.

From the shadows, Isamu appears suddenly, yanking her back. Gloved hands cover her mouth and press a knife to her neck.

His eyes are dark as flint, filled with treachery.

ISAMU
(leans closer, whispers)
Stay silent... or feel my wrath.
You don't know what I can do.

They inch back toward an idling car, gang members lurking inside. A back door swings open.

Isamu pushes Healani down and in, a hood slipping over her head, her gasp penetrating the silence.

He scans the area before sliding in beside her, the door SLAMMING shut as the car darts away.

COTTAGE - (LATER)

The relentless RING of a telephone slices through the stillness. Paul jerks awake, scrambling to rise, wiping sleep from his eyes.

He locates the vibrating telephone and pads across the living room. He snatches the receiver, his breath quickening.

PAUL
Hello? Gillespies.

JORGE (V.O.)
(filtered)
Hollywood.... meet me in Kailua.

PAUL
What's happening?

JORGE (V.O.)
(filtered)
Just hurry. I need help with the horses.

The line GOES DEAD.

Paul stares at the receiver, alarm in his eyes. He rushes to the window, scanning the quiet outside, pressing his forehead against the glass.

EXT. KAILUA TOWN - DAY

The main street stretches empty and silent under a morning sun. Dust swirls a ghostly dance as JORGE and PAUL ride horses, the thud of hooves echoing.

At street corners, cigarette embers move among U.S. ARMY SOLDIERS, who linger, eyes flicking distrustfully.

JORGE
(voice taut with dread)
Healani didn't come home.

PAUL
She left her horse... something's wrong.

Jorge gaze darkens as it falls on the cinema marquee, once vibrant now with dull, blank signage.

JORGE

There's a vacant building behind the theater. Someone was there last night... what he said, I can't shake it.

PAUL

You mean Kenji?

JORGE

Yeah. I found him... he's in custody.

PAUL

(shock)

No way! Did he mention Healani?

His concern twists on his features.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You think it was Isamu?

JORGE

(voice low)

She called me this morning. I rode here to meet her.

PAUL

You think she's in trouble?

(slow realization dawning)

If he took her -

JORGE

The man is obsessed... we need to check that building.

They lock eyes. Sharp kicks cause their animals to gallop into action, every stride bringing them closer to the shadows of danger.

INT. VACANT BUILDING - ISAMU - DAY

Isamu pulls a trip wire across the entryway of a massive sliding door. He secures it to the firing pin of an anchored GRENADE, his breath shallow, focused.

The distant SOUND of galloping horses reverberates through the empty building. Isamu creeps to a front-facing window, eyes growing darker.

TETHER POST

Jorge and Paul gallop in, boots thudding against the ground as they dismount. The creak of leather fills the stillness as they tie up the horses.

Paul captures Jorge's eye, an exchange of resolve, but Jorge falters, hesitating.

JORGE

You sure about this, right?

PAUL

We don't have a choice. Healani...
if he's here-

Jorge nods once, determined, masking his concern. Paul signals, suggesting they split up. They part ways, approaching the building from different angles.

VACANT BUILDING

Isamu snatches the duffel bag, slinging it over his shoulder, retreating to the rear of the building.

His eyes flick back, a sinister smile curling his lips, reveling in the chaos carefully orchestrated.

In a smirk of satisfaction, the assassin slips silently into the darkness of a hallway exit.

VACANT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Jorge peers through a fixed window, communicating a plan with firm gestures. Paul, ever watchful, nods as he edges around the corner, disappearing from view.

SIDE OF VACANT BUILDING

Paul edges toward the rear of the structure, a stillness in the air.

Unexpectedly, Isamu bursts from his cover, sprinting away from a back door.

PAUL

Jorge! Jorge! Over here-

A deafening BLAST shakes the ground. Shock waves hit Paul, sending a colossal plume of smoke spiraling into the sky.

He barrels toward the front of the building, desperation in every step.

SLIDING DOOR

Within charred and smoldering ruins, Jorge lies bruised, battered, the wreck of the door surrounding him.

Paul drops to his knees, hands trembling as he cradles Jorge's head.

JORGE
Sorry, Hollywood.

Paul's eyes brim with tears, a hard gulp of disbelief.

PAUL
It's okay, amigo. I've got you.

JORGE
Take care of my sis'-
(gaze fading)
Keep her... safe.

With a faint smile, Jorge exhales, succumbing to his wounds. Paul collapses, a torrent of emotion spilling forth.

He clenches his fists, pain contorting his features. He lets out a guttural scream.

The SOUND of APPROACHING SOLDIERS slams into his consciousness, sorrow turning into a blistering anger.

He gazes into the distance, eyes narrowing with determination.

Rising, he rushes to untie his horse, resolve in every line of his face.

Swinging onto the saddle, Paul yells for speed. The horse gallops off, chasing the shadows of vengeance.

EXT: KAWAI NUI - DAY

Paul leaps off the horse, tying it up with shaking hands. Swaying reeds hiss in the wind, cloaking his search.

He tears them apart. A trampled path leads deeper into the marsh. Looking back, all is clear.

Paul slips between the tall stalks, rage motivating him forward. The leafy curtain closes, concealing a journey toward confrontation... and revenge.

EXT. MAUNA - DAY

PAUL climbs with purpose, following an elevated path. It steepens as a fogdog streams through.

The sudden jarring sound of metal scraping stone splits the air. On high alert, Paul peeks from behind an overhang.

ISAMU, knife clenched between teeth, drags the duffel bag to a level area.

Healani sits on the ground behind, bound and gagged, eyes widening, disbelief mixed with fear at the sight of Paul.

ISAMU stands tall, oozing dominance as he opens the bag. A TRIPOD unfolds with a CLUNK.

Paul gathers himself, inching closer, raw emotion painting his face.

PAUL
(with grit)
Not today, Healani. I won't let him
take you... it's time to believe.

With a burst of energy, Paul charges at Isamu.

MAUNA CREST

Caught off guard, Isamu spins just in time. The knife flies from his mouth, its lethal blade slicing close to Healani.

Paul slams a fist into the duffel bag, sending a SIGNALING LANTERN rolling out of it. It gains speed, bouncing down and away, until launching itself off a steep cliff.

He rebounds, but Isamu retaliates, landing a heavy strike that sends Paul staggering.

With a primal yell, Paul throws a solid punch, knocking Isamu back. He advances, each punch fueling his resolve.

Healani leans forward, frantic, straining against the bindings, fingers just short of the knife.

Each strained movement pulls her closer. With a final push, she closes her fingers around it.

Paul snatches the tripod, hurling it at ISAMU, but he dodges, grinning at the attempt.

In a flurry of strikes, Isamu gets the upper hand. Paul drops to a knee, down but not defeated.

Healani saws at her leg restraints, material fraying against the knife's edge, each cut closer... the strap breaks free.

ISAMU grabs a LOG from the ground, TWIRLS it, striking Paul flush on the temple. Paul collapses, dazed but still aware.

ISAMU
(disdain)
Such fools... first your
grandfather. Now you.

Isamu revels in his triumph, towering over a struggling Paul.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
Healani is mine. It's time for you
to die.
(then)
Hakko ichiu!

As the CRESCENT SCAR rises, LOG poised to fall, Healani appears behind him.

She hesitates, summoning all her courage, eyes narrowing. With a primordial scream, she stabs ISAMU in the back. He howls in agony.

ISAMU
No!

Paul spins instinctively, whipping a leg at an ankle. ISAMU hits the ground, sliding backward, hands clawing for a grip.

Eyes wide with terror, ISAMU slides off the abyss, then... a miraculous stroke of luck, an outcrop halts his fall.

ISAMU steadies himself, relief washing over him.

PRECIPICE

Healani, rag-doll limp, slides down beside Paul. With wolf-like cunning, Isamu cries out.

ISAMU CONT'D
Help!... HELP ME!

The weight of her gaze falls upon him. Paul nods with conviction.

With his remaining strength, he crawls closer to the edge, extending a hand down toward ISAMU.

ISAMU (CONT'D)
Don't leave me like this!

Paul reaches, struggling against gravity, fear of betrayal flooding him.

Isamu seizes the opportunity, grabbing Paul's shirt, pulling him to the edge.

The ground beneath Paul shifts, horror crystallizing in his eyes.

HEALANI
Paul! Watch out!

In a sudden surge, Paul wedges his shoe into a crevice, extending an arm wide. Fingers grab a resilient bush, bending but holding firm.

ISAMU'S grip falters as the rock beneath him disintegrates. He cascades off, flailing at the air.

ISAMU
(screaming)
NOOOOO!

Branches rush up to embrace. Paul leans over the edge, witnessing Isamu and the lantern disappear into the treetop canopy.

Trembling, he leans back against a rock, gasping for breath. His vision blurs, clinging to one last image of Healani, whose face is alive with concern.

PAUL
(whispers)
Healani... I thought I lost you.

Darkness spreads across him, pulling Paul into unconsciousness.

INT. QUEENS HOSPITAL - PAUL (P.O.V.) - DAY

The blurred image of a HOSPITAL NURSE (40s) in medical scrubs sharpens. She checks a chart, her face softening as she notices Paul's eyes opening. Nodding an approval, she exits the room.

Sunlight filters through a window, casting a gentle warmth about Paul. He blinks, perspective sharpening.

Healani sits in a chair beside the bed, eyes red-rimmed. She rises to give him a gentle hug.

HEALANI

I thought I lost you, too.

Paul meets her tear-filled gaze, the gravity of Jorge's loss sinking deep in the furrows of his brow.

PAUL

Jorge... I couldn't save him.

Healani stifles a sob, the enormity of the grief catching in her throat. She touches his arm, conveying comfort.

HEALANI

He wouldn't want you to carry that.
(hesitant)
I sent that letter. The one you
wrote.

A bittersweet smile flickers across her lips, hope mingling with sorrow.

HEALANI (CONT'D)

What would I do without you?

Paul leans back, a spark of light humor breaking through his earnestness.

PAUL

Fall in love with me?

HEALANI

Good news... someone special is
here.

She moves toward the door. Keoni, warm yet resilient, enters followed by Iwalani.

She radiates strength despite the sorrow in the air, hanging a LEI on the T-frame of a drip dispenser.

IWALANI

It's pikake. They smell so sweet. I hope the nurses let you keep them.

Keoni steps closer to the bed, a friendly smile on his face.

KEONI

Nice to meet you, Paul. I'm Keoni.

Paul pauses, emotions swirling.

PAUL

Nice... nice to meet you, too.

KEONI

I'm a volunteer here. I believe in the healing power of community. If you need anything-

PAUL

Any spare memory? I seem to have misplaced mine.

A shared chuckle replaces the uneasiness in the room.

KEONI

I'll check the lost and found for that one!... Aloha.

He steps back, blowing a kiss to Iwalani, who returns it with a soft smile. Keoni moves away, waves and exits.

HEALANI

Iwalani has a surprise for you.

PAUL

Nothing can surprise me now.

She shares a knowing look with Iwalani.

HEALANI

Oh, this might.

Iwalani settles on the edge of the bed, serious but gentle.

IWALANI

Remember when you came to see me? You carried such heavy news about your grandfather, such a lovely man-

Lost in thought, she gathers herself.

IWALANI (CONT'D)
I always knew he would find a way
to return again.

Healani nods, her eyes filled with understanding.

IWALANI (CONT'D)
It was such a troubled time... so
much hate. But we always had each
other. Aloha hohonu.

Iwalani gazes off, her expression a blend of remembrance and hope.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. RAIN FOREST FOOTPATH - DAY

A vibrant, tropical woodland borders the pathway where Iwalani and William walk, the sounds of nature a gentle symphony around them.

They approach a breathtaking waterfall that cascades into a crystal clear lagoon.

Eyes filled with love, their lips share a tender, yet passionate, kiss.

IWALANI (V.O.)
I had to see the queen... share our
dreams of marriage.
(then)
But then came the coup de'tat...
they shot me. I thought it was the
end.

DISSOLVE TO:

NU'UANU HOME - DAY

The distant roar of the waterfall fades into chaotic shouts.

A GUARD pulls hard on the reins of the royal carriage, bringing it to a halt. The door creaks open.

William emerges, his face a mask of urgency and fear as he lifts a comatose Iwalani from the coach, cradling her.

IWALANI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Thanks to William, I survived.
(pause)
(MORE)

IWALANI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And though he warned me, my loyalty
to the monarchy cost us both
dearly.

As WILLIAM carries IWALANI inside, her eyes fluttering under closed lids, a mirror to the turmoil surrounding her.

IWALANI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I helped them hide their guns - my
heart was divided, torn between
duty and love.

A brief SILENCE blankets the scene, lingering on the weight of Iwalani's choices and William's love.

BAMBOO HUT - DAY - IWALANI

Arm in a sling, IWALANI hesitates before opening the door to a bamboo hut. Her breath quickens.

She steels herself, pushes the door open, scanning the area, aware of movement.

In the murkiness, HAWAIIAN MEN emerge, armed with GUNS, their pace swift and coordinated. They stream past Iwalani and vanish inside the hut.

Her face tightens, she glances about, senses focused.

IWALANI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The repression grew even worse.

With a furtive glance over her shoulder, Iwalani retreats inside, shutting the door with a soft click.

FIELD - DAY

The sun beats down on a SUGAR CANE FIELD. Armed militia confront HAWAIIAN SUGAR CANE WORKERS who clutch picket sign.

The oppressive atmosphere crackles with resistance. GUNSHOTS erupt, followed by shouts and the clattering of signs hitting the ground.

A RIFLE stock SLAMS down on a worker's nose, a sickening CRUNCH as blood sprays.

The man collapses, groaning. Chaos erupts, the workers fighting back, but brutal hits retaliate.

IWALANI (V.O.)

They arrested many. It was just a matter of time. But your kapuna kane protected me... he removed the guns.

The sounds of straining bodies, shouts of defiance, cries of pain mix violently amid the rustling of sugarcane.

BAMBOO HUT - DAY - WILLIAM

William exits the doorway, rifles in hand, glancing back at the bamboo structure.

The sun filters through the tall reeds, casting striped shadows on a dirt path.

He lingers for a moment, surveying the foliage around him before disappearing into the greenery.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. QUEENS HOSPITAL - DAY

Paul leans forward, a sharp pain striking him. He winces, holding his throbbing head, eyes darting with concern.

PAUL

So he was jailed... because of you?

IWALANI

Those in power were furious. They demanded death. And of all things, I was with child.

Her voice quivers, the disclosure shocking him. Empathy swells in his eyes.

PAUL

He didn't die... a child?

IWALANI

When I finally secured bail, they refused to let me see him. He was taken to a ship... and sent away.

Paul leans back, the truth crashing over him. He pauses, weighing the enormity of it.

PAUL
Those records-

IWALANI
Were filed under an assumed name.

PAUL
What about this child?

Iwalani's eyes glisten with tears, her voice trembles.

IWALANI
It's Keoni. He's our son... ko'u
keiki hanau. My beloved son.

Paul looks skyward. He exhales, as if releasing a burden unknowingly held.

PAUL
You were right... let the ways of
Aloha guide you.

A beat of silence. He shifts focus back to them, vulnerability in his eyes.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I thought I'd lost everything. The
sorrow we now carry... can we break
the cycle?

HEALANI
We must. Through love there is
strength.

They share an affectionate glance. Iwalani reaches across to cradle Paul's hand.

IWALANI
I'm your step Tutu... it's time we
weave our stories together. Welcome
to our 'Ohana, Paul!

Their eyes meet, a deep understanding passing between them. Fates once intertwined... now share a future.

EXT. KAILUA SCHOOL YARD - DAY

The vibrant noise of a basketball court echos through the school campus. Paul stands near mid-court, handing a line-up card to a referee.

KAILUA PANIOLOS and their HONOLULU rivals practice lay-ups, their laughter mingling with cheers from the bleachers.

The families of military personnel, locals, Hawaiians, and Japanese fill the stands, not a seat to be had.

A POLICE CAR pulls up, engine humming until falling silent. JACK steps out, scanning the scene before locking onto Paul.

JACK
Paul Sands-

Paul pivots, curiosity mixed with tension in his eyes.

PAUL
Detective Burns... can't this wait?

Jack steps forward, glancing at the bustling court, then back at Paul.

JACK
You'll want to read this.

He hands him an envelope. Paul opens it, unfolding a formal letterhead.

PAUL
An autopsy report?

He scans the contents.

INSERT:

In official lettering-

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

AUTOPSY REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF CORONER

ANATOMIC FINDINGS - DEATH DUE TO NATURAL CAUSES

WHITE SUBSTANCE ATTRIBUTED TO CRUSHED FLOWERS

FRANK KELLY, CORONER

BACK TO SCENE

Jack notices PANIOLOS on a passing jersey... a thin smile.

JACK (CONT'D)
Your letter, the university
concurs. Those flowers were-

Paul's expression darkens.

PAUL
Datura wrightii. Sacred Datura...
Poison.

Jack meets Paul's gaze, a mix of concern and respect.

JACK
I've seen a lot in this line of
work. When I arrest someone, I'm
usually right.

PAUL
But you were wrong about me.

Jack nods in understanding.

JACK (CONT'D)
And you took down Otto Kuehn. No
easy feat.

Paul smiles, a spark of recognition flickering in his eyes.

PAUL
Maybe you're the reason why.

Jack studies Paul, admiration breaking through his guarded exterior.

JACK
National security prevents us-

PAUL
(interrupting)
Thanks for setting the record
straight... for both of us.

Jack's expression softens.

JACK
These are your islands now. Just
don't get any ideas. Still not sure
I like you.

Paul chuckles, tension evaporating.

JACK (CONT'D)
Don't you have a basketball game,
Coach?

PAUL
That I do.

JACK
Then kick some Honolulu butt.

Jack tips his hat, turning to leave. Paul watches him go, a moment of reflection. He looks toward the stands.

HEALANI blows a kiss, MR. G and NAN wave. KENJI stands up and bows. Paul gestures for his Kailua team.

PAUL
It's time!

As the players encircle him, he momentarily closes his eyes, soaking it in.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Time to believe, in each other and
ourselves.
(raising his voice)
All hands in!
(then)
One- Two- Three-

The team echos back with enthusiasm.

TEAM
KAILUA!

As the players erupt with energy, Paul beams, soaking in the spirit of community and family... his family!!

WHITE TEXT OVER BLACK:

-OTTO KUEHN - Mugshot Photo

The "Spy of Kailua," Bernard Julius "Otto" Kuehn sent coded information to the Japanese until his arrest on December 8th, 1941.

-DETECTIVE JACK BURNS - Photo

John "Jack" Anthony Burns was with the Honolulu Police Department from 1934-45, becoming Captain in 1941. He was later to be elected Governor of Hawai'i three times.

FADE OUT

THE END