

HOT ZONE

Pilot

"053"

Written by

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Based on the book by

Richard Preston

Lynda Obst / Scott Free / Fox 21 / National Geographic

TEASER

EXT. FIELDS - ZAIRE - DAY (1976)

FROM ABOVE: VERDANT, GREEN sugar-cane crops...

A small house with a wrap-around porch is the only white speck in the lush fields.

As we SOAR toward it, we find we are ON THE WINGS of a BLACK CROW. It touches down on the front steps and waddles across the porch into --

INT. FARM HOUSE - ZAIRE - DAY (1976)

Inside, the crow hops up on a dining table where a full breakfast is waiting.

Except the toast has been tipped off the plate. A jar of jam oozes onto the placemat, having been knocked over.

Something isn't right...

Now we hear stifled YELLS of pain from another room. A HOUSEKEEPER hangs up a rotary phone in its cradle and rushes around the corner just as --

SIMON JANSEN (50s)

LURCHES from the bathroom, unsteady on his feet. He's a good-looking Belgian ex-patriot. Or was.

We can barely make out his dark eyes because his head is pitched forward -- as if his neck muscles have given out.

HOUSEKEEPER

The taxi be here now, Sir.

As she ushers the lumbering man toward the door, we finally get a clear look at his face -- it's covered in a red rash --

INT. COMMUTER AIRPLANE - ZAIRE - DAY (1976)

CAMERA MOVES down the aisle of a 35-seater commuter plane.

MISSIONARIES, TOURISTS, LOCALS -- they're packed in tight.

Out the oval windows are tree tops as far as you can see.

Propellers WHIR. This is a BUMPY ride, and so LOUD.

We reach the middle of the aircraft and find Simon in his aisle seat. He's hunched over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cabin sways --

Suddenly Simon scrambles desperately for an AIRSICKNESS BAG and lifts it to his face and mouth.

Nothing for a moment. False alarm?

He releases a deep cough and REGURGITATES into the paper bag. The bag SWELLS UP so fast and --

Simon glances around. Now we see that his lips are smeared with something slippery and RED, mixed with BLACK SPECKS --

But this is hardly the man we met before -- just in a few hours, he's altered...

He's grown somehow less human --

his features drooping, as if the face of Simon Jansen is DETACHING itself from his skull.

He opens his mouth and GASPS into the bag, again --

The passengers react, concerned.

A WOMAN sitting across the aisle tries to pull away... but there's no place to go.

A FAMILY two rows behind him winces at the wet ugly sounds, and the smell. Soon everyone on the plane is turning --

Simon's SEAT PARTNER is pressed up against the window of the aircraft, horrified.

A nervous FLIGHT ATTENDANT makes her way toward Simon.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Can I help you, sir?

Simon looks down into the bag.

SIMON'S POV: The airsickness bag is filled with a BLACK AND RED liquid, like an arterial hemorrhage, and --

The bag is bulging. *Softening* --

Simon closes it with trembling hands. He shoves it toward her and --

SIMON JANSEN
(in pain)
Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The Flight Attendant holds the bag out in front of her. She turns around and starts to walk --

CAMERA MOVES with the airsickness bag, growing visibly weaker with every step.

The black vomit SLOSHES inside --

A JOLT of turbulence. The Flight Attendant stumbles, but stays upright.

The Flight Attendant reaches the LAVATORY. Maneuvers inside. She shoves it into the chute.

Emerging from the lavatory, the Flight Attendant stares back down the length of the cabin and --

CAMERA SPEEDS down the aisle, back to Simon, who sits very straight now. Oddly rigid.

Simon does not move. Except for his EYES.

He is visibly *changing*.

CUT TO:

INSIDE SIMON JANSEN, his blood stream is filled with a STORM OF BLOOD CLOTS being thrown everywhere, lodging in his LIVER, his KIDNEYS, his LUNGS. More clots are taking over his BRAIN

-- and small areas begin to LIQUEFY --

CUT TO:

Simon's eyes are so RED now. BULGING.

His seat partner is keeping as much distance as he can:

YOUNG AFRICAN
What's wrong with you, Mister?
What's wrong?

Simon's muscles tense with their last burst of energy as his head snaps toward the young African --

The boy GASPS. *Bloody tears* drip from Simon's eyes --

SMASH TO:

DOUBLE DOORS BURST OPEN INSIDE --

INT. EMERGENCY - KINSHASA HOSPITAL - ZAIRE - DAY (1976)

An emergency team races Simon down the hall on a gurney.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His BREATHING is labored.

SIMON'S POV: The lights on the hospital ceiling speed by until the world jerks to a stop, and the YOUNG FACE OF A DOCTOR looks down in earnest.

DR. MUBAKE (30s) loves emergency room care, and is a real natural. He's immediately concerned --

DR. MUBAKE
Massive hemorrhaging. What the hell is this?

A NURSE pulls her hands back, horrified --

NURSE
His skin's coming off.

DR. MUBAKE
No signs of KS...

Now Simon Jansen STOPS BREATHING.

DR. MUBAKE
He's choking on his own blood. I need a tube!

The frazzled nurse races off and --

Dr. Mubake feels for a pulse. Finds none. Maybe it's weak. He does not like it. The doctor bends over, looking directly into his patient's eyes, upside-down.

Dr. Mubake tilts back Simon's head to clear the passage --

He sticks his bare fingers into Simon's mouth to remove the debris, sweeping out MUCUS AND BLOOD. His hands are covered in black. Dr. Mubake moves closer to the wide gaping mouth.

He tries to see down the throat.

The nurse returns with a LONG TUBE. The doctor takes it and inserts the tube between Simon's black-stained lips --

Mubake fights to shove the tube down Simon's throat but --

DR. MUBAKE
(struggling)
Something's in the way --

BLACK VOMIT SPEWS up and out of Simon Jansen SPLATTERING ON THE FACE of Dr. Mubake, getting in his eyes, nose, and mouth.

The vomit covers his white coat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLOSE ON: THE NAME TAG "DR. MUBAKE" sprayed in blood. We --

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. "HOT ZONE" BIOCONTAINMENT - LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - DAY

CLOSE ON: "DR. MUBAKE" typed on a label on a VIAL OF BLOOD.
PULL BACK to see typed under his name: "EBOLA ZAIRE."

A RUBBER GLOVE gingerly places the vial in a case.

The case is inside a REFRIGERATOR containing a large number
of OTHER VIALS. As we PULL BACK from the glove, we find it's
the extremity of a figure in a full, blue

BIOLOGICAL HAZMAT SUIT.

As the figure closes the heavy, secured refrigerator door and
retreats from the room...

We PULL BACK out the door that CLANGS shut with a placard
reading:

"BIOHAZARD LEVEL 4"

END TEASER

ACT ONE

CLOSE ON: SHIMMERING BAKED SKIN of a golden turkey in the oven. Behind it, the light from the oven window is suddenly blocked by a figure -- a second later, the door opens with a SQUEAKY CLANG.

We're in --

INT. JAAX HOME - MARYLAND - DAY

*

The turkey's hoisted onto a counter by the mitted hands of --

NANCY JAAX (36) -- All-American supermom, easy-going with a mop of Sigourney Weaver hair circa *Aliens*. Amid dogs scuffling about, a parrot squawking from a cage, she bastes the bird, rocks out to Springsteen's "Merry Christmas Baby."

*

*

MEGAN (O.S.)
Mom, it's way too early for
Christmas music.

Nancy turns to her daughter, MEGAN (13), a gymnast whose popularity at school is worn on her sleeve -- a Coca Cola rugby shirt over acid washed jeans. Megan glops a can of jellied cranberries into a dish.

NANCY
Cook calls dibs on music. Official
Thanksgiving rule.

Nancy grips a sharp KNIFE and begins carving.

MEGAN
That's bogus.

NANCY
That's life, Sweetheart. Now help
your grandpa to the table and go
find your brother, dinner's on.

Megan exits with the cranberries as Nancy feels the gaze of her MOTHER (65) across the kitchen mashing potatoes.

NANCY
Don't say it. I was nothing like --

NANCY'S MOM
Identical. Only, in bell-bottoms.

JERRY (O.S.)
And a macrame bikini top.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They both turn, Nancy's mom raising a curious eyebrow. Nancy shares a chuckle with her husband

JERRY JAAX (38).

He's a military man of few words, sporting a hometown-hero smile. He's broken off a piece of the pumpkin pie crust and is eating it when Nancy winces.

NANCY

Goddamnit.

ECU ON: the FLESH OF HER PALM as a blossom of RED BLOOD oozes around the blade which she retracts from the cut.

NANCY'S MOM

Oh honey --

JERRY

Let me see. *

He eyes the cut -- not too deep -- and wraps a paper towel around her finger. Playfully: *

JERRY

At least we know the kids didn't get their coordination from you.

NANCY

(eyes pie crust)

Or their patience from you.

A deep COUGH comes from the next room. Nancy looks up, through a doorway to see her FATHER -- ailing but still formidable. He's helped to the dining room by Megan who pulls his OXYGEN TANK behind him. A hard sight. *

NANCY *

Mom, we could have come to you. *

NANCY'S MOM *

Tradition is important. He wouldn't have it. *

Nancy watches his body heave as he COUGHS. She turns and heads for a side door. So no one will follow her she adds: *

NANCY *

Just getting Pepsi. *

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As she heads out, she passes a small TV on the counter -- a NEWS REPORTER stands on the DC mall -- the AIDS QUILT stretching out behind her...

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - JAAX HOME - DAY

It's dark in here -- only one small window. Nancy leans against a dirty work table, eyes on the floor. Suddenly a wash of fresh light sweeps the room as Jerry opens the door from the house and joins her.

JERRY

You okay?

NANCY

He's so much worse than the summer.
Why didn't Mom tell me?

He puts his arm around her shoulders:

JERRY

What do you need?

NANCY

... A few more minutes.

He kisses her forehead.

JERRY

I'll tell everyone the Pepsi's
putting up a fight.

They smile at each other. He walks inside, leaving her in the shadows.

The CLANKING of dishes takes us to --

INT. DINING ROOM - MODEST HOME - WICHITA, KANSAS - DAY

Dinner is being passed -- STEAMING PLATTER OF TURKEY, BOWL OF STUFFING, CRANBERRY JELLY, CORN.

Nancy sits at the table with Jerry, her mother and her father who is at the head. Tubes run from his tank to his nostrils.

Megan sits next to her brother -- LUKE (16) string tie, new wave flop of hair over one eye. He pulls his foam earphones off at the silent suggestion from his mother.

Nancy's bandaged hand takes Luke's as they bow to pray. Luke clocks the bandage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY'S FATHER

Dear Lord, we thank you for the blessing of this food and this family. Give those Czechs strength as they stand up to that son of a -- to Gorbechov, help the Eagles wallop the Cowboys today... and God help me not light up my Marlboros next time I fly, now that my damn freedoms have been restricted --

Nancy's Mom shoots her husband a brief, scolding look.

NANCY

Dad --

NANCY'S FATHER

-- watch over our family -- Nancy, Jerry, and the kids. In thy name we pray, Amen.

*

Jerry clocks Nancy. She stares at her father. The tubes in his nose. He's failing. She pushes past it:

NANCY

OK, dig in. Don't let it get cold.

We hear Don Henley's "End of the Innocence" taking us to --

*

INT. FORD TAURUS - INTERSTATE - DAY

*

Nancy inches along in a line of cars on her way to drop the kids off at school. She listens to the radio, lost in thought. Luke's in front, his Walkman headphones dangling around his neck. He flips through a Columbia House pamphlet. From the back seat:

*

*

MEGAN

Did you sign the paper for coach?

*

*

NANCY

I put it in your backpack. Which one is this?

*

*

*

MEGAN

State Invitational. You're up for carpool.

*

*

*

NANCY

(proud)
Like I would miss seeing you up on that podium.

*

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUKE

Could you get AIDS from a cut like that?

*

Nancy and Megan are as startled by Luke's participation in the conversation as they are the question itself. His eyes have been glancing at her bandaged hand the whole time.

MEGAN

Mom doesn't see human patients, Dufus, besides all the homos are in New York.

NANCY

Hey, you know better than that.

MEGAN

Sorry. But Tammy's mom said --

NANCY

Tammy's mom believes Falcon Crest is a real place. How about we stick to facts. Science. OK?

(to Luke)

The truth is... HIV is actually hard to contract. It's fairly low on the contagion scale.

LUKE

(nervous)

You've seen something worse?

She sees how concerned he is and wants to assure him:

NANCY

Sweetheart, don't worry. I work in the safest room in the world. I could survive Armageddon.

Luke smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT DETRICK ENTRANCE - DAY

Nancy drives past a guard gate and hands over her ID BADGE -- this place is LOCKED DOWN. Important. Kind of scary.

Nancy continues under the towering flagpole as we RISE UP over an AMERICAN FLAG.

EXT. PARKING LOT - USAMRIID - FORT DETRICK - DAY

Nancy climbs out of her Taurus and pulls on an ARMY UNIFORM JACKET complete with Lieutenant Colonel stripes.

She heads down the sidewalk toward an ND concrete wartime barracks labeled UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES (U.S.A.M.R.I.I.D.).

INT. HALLWAY - USAMRIID - DAY

Entering the facility, Nancy finds her boss COLONEL JACKSON POWELL a.k.a. JP (50s) falling in step with her. A no-bullshit MD. He's crunching on a snack from a paper bag --

NANCY

Sir.

(off his nod)

Termites or Chapulines?

COLONEL POWELL

Sunflower seeds. I got something I need you to handle.

NANCY

Yeah... I heard we have a green A-hole coming in.

COLONEL POWELL

Orientation today. He's cleared for Level 4 training tomorrow. But this is something else -- package came in for pathology -- need you to take a look at it.

CLOSE ON: a STYROFOAM COOLER with a duct-taped lid -- DRIPS of BLOOD dried on its side. We're in --

INT. NANCY'S PATHOLOGY LAB - USAMRIID - DAY

Standing over the cooler, Nancy eyes it, annoyed, in a lab coat. Beside her is an intern, BEN RIGGS (20s) -- loves fishing, hunting, blue jeans and cowboy boots. If tall and rugged wasn't appealing enough, his southern drawl will get you. *

NANCY

Guess they skimped out on the gift wrapping. *

BEN

Who'd drop a sample off here lookin' like that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Someone who doesn't know any better. I'm sure JP'll give them an earful about delivery procedures.

Nancy reads a crooked label slapped on the box: "TO USMARIID PATHOLOGY DEPT."

NANCY

It's from Hazelton.

BEN

The research monkey guys?

NANCY

(nods, reads further)
Nice to meet you "monkey 053"...

Nancy pulls on latex gloves and opens the cooler lid to reveal a TINFOIL BALL nestled in DRY ICE.

NANCY

Jesus, it just gets better.

She unfolds the foil to find a FROZEN, BLOODY MASS.

BEN

What the heck is that?

NANCY

(examining it)
Solidified blood clot.

BEN

Must've been a pretty sick little monkey.

NANCY

They don't end up here chopped up in pieces because they're healthy.
(grabs a scalpel)
Now let's see what brings you here today...

Nancy makes her first slice -- then suddenly stops. Ben eyes her, curious.

BEN

What's wrong?

NANCY

Something's... It's not a clot...
(examines it closer)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NANCY (CONT'D)

It's -- I think it's a spleen.
Engorged... Looks like subcutaneous
hemorrhaging.

BEN

That doesn't sound good.

NANCY

I've never seen anything like it.

BEN

What would do that?

NANCY

A virus. A powerful one. If it's
primates, it's probably SHF.

BEN

(Greek to him)

Peter's the virus dork. I'm just
the underpaid intern who takes
pretty pictures.

NANCY

Simian Hemorrhagic Fever. Highly
contagious. And something our
"virus dork" will want to look at.
(concern rising)
Whatever Hazelton facility this
monkey came from, a virus like SHF
could wipe out the entire colony.

Ben pulls back, alarmed. Nancy grins at his naïveté:

NANCY

You're safe. It rips the hell out
of the insides of monkeys, but
doesn't spill-over to humans.

BEN

You promise?

Nancy grabs some sterilized FLASKS off a rack.

NANCY

I'll make a few cultures -- just
need you to throw them under the
scope and take some photos so we
can get an accurate diagnosis.

FLASH TO A SERIES OF IMAGES

-- Nancy grinds PART of the frozen, engorged spleen with
mortar and pestle

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

-- Nancy adds the now BLOODY MUSH of spleen to a series of flasks containing water

-- TIME LAPSE ECU of the CELLS MULTIPLYING in the flasks by the billions creating a "carpet" of living cells on the bottom of the plastic tube

-- ECU as one cell DARKENS and lifts off the plastic floating up into the water

-- ECU of GLOVED FINGERS as they push the tissue sample under the light of a microscope outfitted with a camera.

WE COME OUT OF THE SERIES OF IMAGES TO FIND the gloved finger belongs to --

Ben who leans into the microscope's eyepiece. It's routine and he's humming a country song as he meticulously goes through the motions. The light outside the windows has softened to dusk.

At a nearby desk, Nancy enters data on a clunky IBM computer.

NANCY

If this primate has SHF, you're looking for single strands of spaghetti tying itself in knots.

PETER (O.S.)

Dead monkeys make me sad.

Nancy turns to find

PETER JAHRLING (30s) a sarcastic civilian virologist with horn-rimmed glasses and a swaggering charm that almost makes up for his ego. Of equal status, he's the scientific yin to Nancy's yang.

NANCY

I can never decipher your level of sarcasm.

PETER

Consider this Level 3.

NANCY

You're not really the pun type, Jahrling --

While they're talking, Ben ZOOMS in on the sample closer, and still CLOSER... Perplexed.

BEN

... Uh, guys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

But they don't notice him.

NANCY
-- Stick with acerbic.

PETER
Sardonic?

NANCY
Acidic.

BEN
(more forcefully)
Guys.

Nancy and Peter turn to see Ben hunched over the eyepiece.

BEN
It's no good. It's all milky.

He pulls back and looks up at Nancy with a furrowed brow.

NANCY
That doesn't make sense, let me
see.

Nancy grabs the controls and peers through the scope. We see what she sees: a MILKY SOUP of FLOATING CELLS.

NANCY
I can barely tell what I'm looking
at.

Nancy ZOOMS in. The microscope lens RACKS to the very bottom of the flask --

What we once saw as a vibrant carpet of multiplied cell growth now has "holes" in it.

The cell we earlier saw peel off was just the beginning...
Millions of cells have died and created the soupy water.

NANCY (CONT'D)
They're off the plastic.

BEN
That's what I'm sayin'.

NANCY
(thinking it through)
Cells detaching from the flask
surface... floating free...
(unnerved, to Peter)
SHF doesn't kill cells like this.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

NANCY (CONT'D)

Only a few things in the world that
could do that to a cell --

PETER

User error.

(off her look)

What? You're the one who called
me.

NANCY

Because I like second opinions when
it's something we're not used to
seeing.

PETER

My guess is your first hunch was
right. SHF... except some wild
bacteria invaded the culture when
you prepped the flasks. It
happens.

NANCY

Not in my lab. I guarantee you, no
foreign substance found its way
into my cultures.

PETER

You just contaminated the samples --
it's not a personal jab.

Ben glances at Peter, surprised by his irreverence. But
Peter's a civilian -- he lies outside the rank and file.

Nancy's annoyed. Defiant:

NANCY

I'm telling you, something else is
in there.

Peter GLANCES in the eyepiece. But he's unimpressed.

PETER

Look, if I wrapped myself up in
latex and went down in that dungeon
every day, waiting for the next
pandemic killer, I'm sure I'd get
all hot and bothered over finding a
deadly pathogen, too.

Nancy's about to retort but he keeps going --

PETER

But the army hired a civvy like me
for a reason.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

PETER (CONT'D)

Nobody here knows their way around the molecular structure of a virus like I do.

NANCY

Did you see the carpet? It's been eaten away by something catastrophic.

PETER

There's no way a virus like that landed on American soil.

NANCY

There's a first for everything. Even Peter Jahrling admitting he's wrong.

(undeterred)

We should take it into Level 4.

PETER

It's well-documented -- I don't experiment in Level 4 and I don't let Level 4 experiment on me.

NANCY

Then I'll do it. It's protocol.

She preps to move the samples.

PETER

Seriously, don't you think you're being a little hysterical?

(eyes bloody cooler)

What are the odds someone dropped off a Level 4 agent in a styrofoam cooler? You're more likely to be hit by a meteor today.

NANCY

I leave "odds" to Vegas.

PETER

Well, in case your million-to-one odds don't pay off, I'll run some tests and see what kind of crud you got in there so we don't repeat it.

(coy smile)

Sir.

Nancy's not impressed. Neither is Ben though he doesn't say it. He's not as quick to dismiss her concern.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

NANCY

It's not contaminated and it's not
SHF. I'll run my own test.

With a gloved hand, Nancy grabs one of her cultures and the remaining spleen in the foil wrapping -- carefully placing both in a secure box -- and leaves.

MALE NARRATOR (PRE-LAP)

Every pathogen contained in Level 4
is deadly and highly contagious --

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - USAMRIID - DUSK

The blinds are drawn. It's dark except for the flickering light of a crude training VHS playing at one end of the room.

THREE UNIFORMED TRAINEES

are trying to stay awake through the droning narrator's V.O.:

MALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

-- the worst of which are
filoviruses, spread through bodily
fluids such as blood, feces and
vomit. Therefore, caregivers often
contract these lethal viruses at a
high rate, passing them on to
patients. In 1976, a doctor in
Zaire contracted a filovirus via
his patient's vomit. Specimens of
Dr. Mubake's blood are kept in
USAMRIID's Level 4 laboratory.

Footage of the Level 4 REFRIGERATOR (familiar from the opening) with vials of blood. The trainees jolt when the door opens and light spills in the room. Nancy appears, backlit, the sample box in her hand. Her rank is hidden under her lab coat.

*
*

NANCY

Which one of you is Sergeant
Turner?

SGT. MIKE TURNER (27) stands. As eager as he is confident.

MALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

These deadly hot agents are nearly
impossible to contain once
introduced to a population --

NANCY

M.D.?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
(brags)
Green Beret.

*
*

NANCY
I'm talking science background.

MIKE
Bachelors, emphasis on pathology.

*

She sizes him up. He notices and mistakes the reason.

*

NANCY
So, you're the one cleared for
Level 4 training tomorrow?

*

*

Under their conversation, the chilling facts drone on:

MALE NARRATOR (V.O.)
-- reaching a kill rate as high as
90 percent, almost double that of
the bubonic plague.

MIKE
That's me.

*

NANCY
Well, you're going in tonight.

The other two trainees share inquisitive looks with Mike. As Mike grabs his things, he steps toward the doorway and Nancy with a dashing grin:

*

*

MIKE
Didn't expect such a charming
escort to take me to Lieutenant
Jaax.

*

*

*

*

She stops, turns:

*

NANCY
I'm Lieutenant Colonel Jaax.

*

*

The trainees crack shit-eating grins behind Mike who is mortified and suddenly stiffens.

*

*

NANCY
This isn't last call, Turner, and
the viruses you're about to face
are a lot scarier than STDs.

*

*

*

*

As she marches out, on a mission --

*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Over the video with a grainy scene of dozens of bodies draped in sheets in an African village:

NANCY (PRE-LAP)

All the Level 4 videos in the world
won't prepare you for your first
time.

INT. HALLWAY - USAMRIID - DUSK

Marching down the corridor, Nancy is a step ahead of Mike.
His nerves are starting to show:

MIKE

So, what's in there that can't wait
til tomorrow?

NANCY

A hunch.

She turns, face etched with concern. As she marches toward a door at the end of the hall, her voice is unsteady:

NANCY

Let's hope I'm wrong.

When Nancy swipes her SECURITY BADGE through a sensor, a door labelled "AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY" BUZZES open.

OFF Nancy, determined to unearth the truth as she heads into the infamous bowels of USAMRIID...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HALLWAY/STAGING AREA - LEVEL 0 - USAMRIID - DUSK

ECU ON: NANCY'S EYEBALL.

A sharp-edged TWEEZER inches close.

Turner watches, curious as LAB TECHS walk by a corridor window, leaving for the day...

ECU ON: an EYELASH as it is PLUCKED from its FOLLICLE.

MIKE

How do you have any eyelashes left?

NANCY

This isn't routine.

Mike's spidey senses go off.

MIKE

Nothing like jumping in the deep end.

NANCY

They were supposed to teach you to swim in training. Did I grab the wrong guy?

MIKE

No. I'm ready.

NANCY

Good. As I learned from my mentor -- first thing you need to know: never go into Level 4 alone.

MIKE

Who was he? Your mentor?

Nancy pulls glue from a cabinet and squeezes a drop to attach the EYELASH to the end of a wooden coffee stirrer.

NANCY

Bronson Carter. He was a legend.

MIKE

A legend in Pathology -- that's an accomplishment.

He grins. Nancy wraps the mysterious tool she's concocted in a tissue, her anxiety showing through:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Yeah, well, a legend who got replaced by a hot shot from the private sector who'd rather believe I contaminated a culture than saw something he didn't.

MIKE

That's a pretty big gamble.

NANCY

Pretty big ego.

CUT TO:

Peter, feet on his desk. Phone under his chin. He's in -- *

INT. PETER'S LAB - USAMRIID - DUSK

As Peter talks, he flips through a magazine.

PETER (INTO PHONE)

The cultures for 053 got botched, but with a hemorrhagic spleen, my money's on Simian Fever. Thought you'd want to give the facility a heads up sooner than later.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. OFFICE - HAZELTON CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS - D.C. - DUSK

It's after hours. We're in the office of

WALTER HUMBOLT (40s), a company man. Suit and tie.

He walks around his desk, nervously, stretching the coiling cord of the phone --

HUMBOLT (INTO PHONE)

SHF. Jesus... are you sure?... Aren't survival rates extremely low?

INTERCUT BACK TO:

PETER'S OFFICE -- Peter scans his magazine. It's a MEN'S FORMAL-WEAR CATALOGUE. A tux with a TEAL CUMMERBUND has been circled in pen with the note: "*This matches my flowers.*" *

PETER (INTO PHONE)

Two-in-three chance the animal dies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUMBOLT (INTO PHONE)
When will you know for sure?

PETER (INTO PHONE)
We'll run new tests tomorrow. But
you might want to quarantine the
monkeys from 053's cell as a
precaution.

ON HUMBOLT, concern rising:

HUMBOLT (INTO PHONE)
This isn't going to get out of hand
is it?

CLOSE ON: A GRIMY INDUSTRIAL PHONE RINGING on a wall. We're
in --

INT. HAZELTON MONKEY FACILITY - NIGHT

A hand lifts the receiver and we meet BILL VOLT (50s), colony
manager, only gets up in the morning to get one day closer to
retirement. He holds his lunch pail in his other hand, about
to head out for the night.

BILL (INTO PHONE)
Volt here... Hey Walt, what's the
story with... SHF? No shit.

Bill turns around -- the corridor is lined with numerous cell
doors but his focus lands on CELL H. He spots one of his
animal care workers, MILTON FRANTIG (40s) -- family man --
heading toward the door and waves him down to hold up.

As Bill looks through the window of the door...

BILL (INTO PHONE)
What sort of precaution you wanna
take?

CAMERA PUSHES from his POV, to the ominous door. The grimy *
glass window masks any glimpse of the monster lurking inside. *

A CURTAIN WHIPS across a room. We're in -- *

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LEVEL 0 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

The curtain splits the room in half -- boy/girl.

Nancy begins to remove every stitch of clothing:

NANCY
No clothing. No jewelry of any
kind. Nothing but you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Very quickly Nancy's completely nude. Totally comfortable. She removes her WEDDING BAND. *

Mike follows suit, both stripped naked with a only sheet between them.

NANCY *

Going into the hot zone is like being born. You're stripped down to your bare essence and emerge in a strange and hostile environment.

CLOSE ON: MIKE'S TREMBLING HANDS as he unlatches his watch, trying to temper his nerves.

Nancy takes a folded STERILE SCRUB SUIT off the shelf. As she dresses -- Mike pulls a green SCRUB SUIT on as well. Everything in here is so logical -- so put in order.

They tug on their SURGICAL CAPS, tucking their hair inside.

NANCY

We're leaving Level 0 for Level 2. There is no Level 1. Don't ask me why.

Nancy picks up her make-shift tool wrapped in the tissue. She leads Mike to a door:

NANCY

Go ahead and open the door. It will pull against you. Negative air pressure keeps what's inside the hot zone from drifting out.

Mike's nerves start to bubble. As he opens the door --

INT. ULTRAVIOLET CHAMBER - LEVEL 2 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy and Mike step inside. This entire level is bathed in deep blue ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT --

NANCY

Viruses fall apart under the ultraviolet. It smashes their genetic material and makes it impossible for them to replicate. We like that.

They walk through what looks like a SHOWER STALL, and reach the BATHROOM. A shelf is lined with SOCKS sealed in baggies. *

Mike mimics Nancy -- rips open the plastic, slips on socks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Leaving Level 2 for Level 3.

She opens the door into --

INT. STAGING AREA - LEVEL 3 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

We see a desk with a TELEPHONE. Another SINK. A biological HAZARD BOX covered with WARNING SYMBOLS is used as a chair.

NANCY

Do exactly as I do.

Nancy leads Mike to a box of SURGICAL GLOVES. Beside the box rests BABY POWDER. Nancy shakes the powder on her hands --

Nancy pulls a surgical glove over her right hand. We can see the bandage right through the thin rubber.

Mike finishes with the powder but struggles to pull on his gloves. As Nancy holds up a thick ROLL OF STICKY TAPE --

NANCY

If you didn't have a best friend
before -- and I'm going to go out
on a limb here and say you didn't --
you do now.

He's too anxious for a come back. Nancy grins -- she knew he would be. She hands him the roll of DUCT TAPE.

Mike follows her lead ripping off four strips, hanging them on the edge of the desk.

A master at this, Nancy wraps a strand of tape around her wrist, sealing her glove to her sleeve. Does the same to her other wrist. Nancy then seals her socks to her trousers.

NANCY

You don't want anything getting
inside your gloves or your suit.
(once he's finished)
First layer of protection is
complete.

They turn to a small ANTECHAMBER:

NANCY

That's the second layer --

BRIGHT BLUE BIOLOGICAL "SPACESUITS" hang from a rack. On the chest of one suit, we see "JAAX." The other is nameless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eager, Mike copies Nancy's every move -- she lays her suit on the floor, steps into it, pulls it to her armpits.

NANCY

Level 4's designed without sharp corners. Even so, we're handling scalpels, tools. Every few seconds, our job is to scan each other -- head to toe -- you constantly have to look for tears in my suit. Holes. Anything that can compromise the air pressure and let in contaminated particles.

Nancy slides her arms into the sleeves all the way to the RUBBER GLOVES that are attached to the suit by MECHANICAL GASKETS at the cuffs.

Nancy watches Mike, something looming. She warns him:

NANCY

This is the moment. It will seem very claustrophobic --

MIKE

I've heard about it.

NANCY

But you haven't seen it. I have. People start to panic, claw at the suit, scream... Try not to do that, okay?

Nancy positions the plastic flexible HELMET over Mike's head.

She zips up the front of his suit with a POP POP POP POP, and as soon as the spacesuit's sealed, the faceplate FOGS UP.

MIKE

Jesus --

INSIDE THE SUIT. Mike's pupils constrict. The sound of blowing air is DEAFENING. The restricted view through the visor is *claustrophobic*.

Everything outside of his encasing is muffled and distant.

His breath is quick. Scared. Eyes wide with fear.

He's about to lose it.

Nancy grabs for a YELLOW HOSE hanging on the wall and plugs it into Mike's suit. Immediately it FILLS WITH AIR, bloating up in an instant, fat and hard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NANCY

Breathe through it. When you get nervous, just breathe. Like childbirth. But I guess you don't know what that's like.

MIKE

(BREATHING thru it)

Is it like being buried alive in a coffin?

NANCY

Take your time.

Nancy adjusts her helmet, zips her suit, plugs in. Her suit bloats up. She's a pro.

Now inside their suits, communication is easier over the RADIOS. Calming a little, Mike tries to play off his nerves:

MIKE

How do I look?

NANCY

Like the Pillsbury Doughboy.

MIKE

But the sexy one, right?

Mike musters a nervous LAUGH.

NANCY

In a moment, the door will open, and you'll be on the other side.

Nancy can hear Mike's shallow BREATHING. He can feel his HEART POUNDING.

INSIDE THE SUIT, Nancy takes an excited breath -- we can see Nancy *loves* this. She pulls her hose free:

NANCY

Disconnect.

Mike freezes. He stares at the hose plugged into his suit -- it's air, a life force. His hand hesitates and then YANK! Nancy pulls it out for him, forcing him toward --

A steel door, emblazoned with BIOHAZARD SYMBOLS AND WARNINGS:

CAUTION: BIOHAZARD
DO NOT ENTER
WITHOUT WEARING VENTILATED SUIT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nancy moves slower in the suit, but with complete assurance. She unlatches the door, swings it open to reveal a gleaming
STAINLESS STEEL AIRLOCK.

INT. AIRLOCK - LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy and Mike enter. It is lined with NOZZLES for spraying water and chemicals, a decontamination shower, leading to another stainless steel door at the FAR END.

NANCY

The Level 4 airlock is where the hot zone meets the normal world. These nozzles will decontaminate us on our way back out --

But Mike is overwhelmed when facing the final door. The air inside his suit is slowly being used up with every breath. He looks scared. She studies him.

NANCY

You need to be straight with me -- can you do this? You have thirty seconds before you have to plug in again.

(off him, considering)

Trust me, no one WANTS to walk in there with a fledgling.

Their suits are slowly DEFLATING. She's cool as a cucumber but he's more and more anxious.

NANCY

Listen to me, if you move wrong, snag your suit on something -- I'll catch it within seconds and have you out, safe and sound. I need to know you can do the same for me.

We hear Mike's STUTTERED BREATHING. Sweat rolls down his temples. He nods.

She opens the far door and they finally enter...

INT. "HOT ZONE" BIOCONTAINMENT - LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

The walls are covered with thick ugly epoxy paint. We see rooms branching off from the narrow passage. A maze.

Nancy and Mike step inside the narrow cinder-block corridor.

Nancy reaches up and passes Mike an AIR HOSE. He promptly plugs in to a welcome ROAR of air. Nancy does the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Welcome to the Hot Zone.

HEAVY METAL MUSIC BLARES taking us into --

INT. PETER'S LAB - USAMRIID - DAY

DROPS OF LIQUID land on a sample of tissue in a flask.

Peter holds the dropper. Ben rushes in, as if in a panic --

BEN

My ears are bleeding.

Ben hits "eject" on the tape deck of Peter's boom box.

PETER

Don't even think of starting up
with that Oakridge Boys crap.

(beat)

Hey, your wife make you wear one of
those cummerbund things at your
wedding?

BEN

(laughs)

Last chance man... you're giving up
the single life for puking kids.
Going once? Twice?

Peter smiles. Truth is, he can't wait.

BEN

(peers over his shoulder)

You figure out what blew-up the
Lieutenant Colonel's batch?

PETER

I'm prepping the cultures now. But
I'm sure it's *pseudomonas*. Common
soil bacterium. Lives in dirt. In
everybody's backyard. Under our
fingernails. One of the most
common life-forms on the planet.
And it causes cells to come off the
plastic.

Peter SNAPS the cassette back in the boom box and hits PLAY.
MUSIC BLARES. He smirks at Ben, and GRABS Nancy's
"contaminated" samples. Then opens a cabinet, pulling
something out that puts Ben a little on edge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEN

You sure you don't wanna wait for
Nancy to finish up her tests?

REVEAL Peter has pulled out a KITCHEN BLENDER.

PETER

I wouldn't put too much stock in
Nancy's paranoia. Her mentor was a
pathogen-chasing wack-job.

CUT TO:

INT. "HOT ZONE" - LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - DUSK

Nancy opens a metal cabinet. BLUE LIGHT streams out of it.
She removes two pairs of YELLOW BOOTS.

NANCY

Can't risk stepping on a scalpel --

They slip the feet of their spacesuits inside the boots.

This room looks familiar. We've been here before --

Nancy lifts a small METAL DOOR in one wall to reveal a high-
tech dumbwaiter.

Inside the chamber is the FLASK CULTURE Nancy took from the
lab earlier and the remaining spleen in the foil.

The spleen has since MELTED and a small POOL OF BLOOD is
collecting in the foil.

She picks up the flask. Fascinated.

Scanning Mike for rips as she's trained to do, she then puts
the sample in a CENTRIFUGE.

NANCY

We need to separate out the dead
cells.

FLASH TO A SERIES OF IMAGES

-- the MILKY LIQUID clings to the tube's sides as it spins

-- a PINHEAD OF CELLS coalesces on the bottom of the tube

-- Nancy lifts the dot of cells out with a mesh instrument

-- Nancy soaks the tiny button of cells in RESIN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- Nancy fits a small KNIFE into a machine and turns it on --
it HUMS to life

-- Nancy looks through a high-powered magnifying glass as the
machine methodically slices the cell button

MIKE

That's one hell of a blade.

NANCY

Should be. Costs more than my car.

(Mike's eyes widen)

A hundred-million viruses could
cover the head of a pin. This
blade is so sharp, it can cut just
one of them in half.

The cell/resin is sliced like a loaf of bread.

Now we discover what Nancy's eyelash tool is used for...

The lash pushes the miniscule slices into the petri dish one
by one. Under magnification, the lash looks enormous,
showing us just how tiny the cell cross-sections are.

SWEAT runs down her face as she separates the last slice.

Nancy looks up, a little victorious -- working on such a
minute scale in all these cumbersome layers is not easy. But
it's clear Nancy is in her element.

NANCY

Now we throw it under the beam.

Nancy approaches the ELECTRON MICROSCOPE -- it's taller than
she is. She clicks the light on. The beam is bright.

Her gloved fingers fumble with the slide. She gets a good
look at the MAGNIFIED IMAGES.

NANCY

I knew it... It wasn't
contaminated.

Then, a CHILL runs up Nancy's spine.

NANCY

My God... These cells aren't just
dead...

(unnerved)

... they've exploded.

MIKE

What do you see?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NANCY

Worms. Bad worms. You can tell because these have an eyehook on the end.

A CHILL runs up Mike's spine. Nancy's eyes lock with his.

MIKE

F-me... Is that --

NANCY

A filovirus.

MIKE

(panic rising)

Where the hell did the sample come from? Had to have been somewhere in Africa -- that's the only place they're found, right? Zaire? Sudan?

NANCY

(breath catching)

Somewhere closer. A lot closer. Close enough not to need postage.

Her heart pounds. She heads across the room.

NANCY

Every known filovirus on Earth is in this cooler.

CAMERA MOVES toward the REFRIGERATOR --

It's the one from the opening and the training video. Mike's *
hairs stand up on the back of his neck. Nancy walks toward *
it as if approaching an altar. As she reaches for the door -- *

NANCY

Know how many people could die on *
this planet if the "leftovers" in *
that fridge were ever released?

MIKE

... All of them? *
(off her nod) *
Are you trying to terrify me? *

NANCY

Absolutely. *

He heeds the warning, takes a step back. Trying not to freak *
out, Nancy opens the fridge. *

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CAMERA PANS a row of VIALS inside, all labelled with well-known hot agents, ANTHRAX, YELLOW FEVER, SMALL POX... and then she gets to the last row --

*

Vials are labeled: MUBAKE, CARDINAL, MAYINGA --

Her words become rote. As if she's gone on autopilot and is checking off the protocol list:

NANCY

What these do to the body...
Deterioration of skin texture,
vomiting, rash, loss of affect,
internal bleeding...

MIKE

(terrified)
Hell on earth.

NANCY

And there's no cure on the horizon.

CLOSE ON: HER RUBBER GLOVE pulling out a BLOOD VIAL labelled CARDINAL. Sweat rolls down her cheek. She tries to keep it together as she mumbles almost more to herself than Mike:

NANCY

I'll start testing the tissue
against these samples one by one.
My gut says Marburg will be a match
-- it's the filovirus found most
often in monkeys...

MIKE

But there's never been a single
case in America, has there?
(desperate)
Isn't there some other explanation
for the worms?

NANCY

That's what they'll all jump to.
Which is why I brought down the
source tissue. To be absolutely
sure.

Her gaze snaps to the foil with the spleen melting inside.

She dips her hands in STERILIZATION FLUID.

She picks up the spleen -- *BLOOD DRIPS* down her glove.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She gingerly carries the spleen to a new table set with new, sterilized tools -- talking to keep her mind off the nightmare that's unravelling.

NANCY

If we hit the virus jackpot, the sample will glow green...

Nancy shaves a piece into a dish -- blood smears on her suit.

She introduces a drop of Mubake's blood to the tissue --

She looks in the microscope.

Beat.

She pulls back from the eyepiece, surprised.

NANCY

No glow. It's negative.
(bracing herself)
If it's not the Marburg strain
there's only two other options:
Ebola Sudan or Ebola Zaire.

She turns back toward the refrigerator.

Her focus ZEROES IN on the MUBAKE BLOOD VIAL (from the teaser). As she approaches it:

NANCY

Ebola Zaire, deadliest virus on earth... only one-out-of-ten people survive it.

In a quick glance, surveying Mike like she's trained to do every few seconds she sees --

Mike standing SPEECHLESS.

He's staring at her. In shock. He SUCKS IN HIS BREATH --

His gaze is glued to Nancy's hand to be exact. Nancy raises her hazmat suit's glove, which is now covered in monkey BLOOD, but doesn't see anything.

And then Nancy sees it.

Her throat tightens.

She blinks.

Nancy looks into Mike's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MIKE

Hole.

CLOSE ON: A JAGGED CRACK inside the wrist of Nancy's suit.

NANCY

Oh God...

She snaps into protocol. Nancy RIPS a piece of tape from a dispenser and seals the hole, hoping no air got inside.

She takes an unsteady step toward the airlock. Is she going to pass out? Her mind reeling, she sounds weak:

NANCY

I have to decontaminate. Clean up
and meet me in Level 3. Stay in
your suit!

(panic rising)

I have to -- Jesus...

NANCY'S POV: through her faceplate, that airlock door looks too far away. Nancy's breathing is so LOUD and seems to slow down though her heart is beating faster...

She snaps-to for a moment -- protocol kicking back in --

NANCY

Call Jahrling and warn him not to
touch those cultures.

As Nancy charges through the door, Mike picks up the wall phone. The DIAL TONE takes us to --

INT. PETER'S LAB - USAMRIID - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A PHONE RINGS. A red light on it BLINKS. But as we PUSH across the room, HEAVY METAL MUSIC and the BLENDER'S ROAR drown out the RINGING more and more until we find --

Peter and Ben, unable to hear the faint ring of Mike's call.

Peter flips off the blender and pulls off the lid.

PETER

Smell it.

BEN

What?

PETER

Pseudomonas is easy to detect.
Smells like Welch's grapefruit
juice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Peter urges Ben on. Ben hesitantly takes a WHIFF.

He looks to Peter, unsure. Peter lifts the vial to his nose and inhales, deep --

Peter makes a face. Surprised.

PETER

Huh.

(can't believe it)

No smell.

BEN

So... it wasn't contaminated?

(suddenly on edge)

Then what's eating those cells?

As Peter squints his eyes, unsure... WTF?

CUT TO:

INT. LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy runs down the hall --

She punches a large BUTTON --

An ear-piercing ALARM blares --

She holds her right hand tight to her chest, not wanting to move it -- she can feel something squishy in her glove -- like blood.

Nancy falls against the wall. Kicks off her yellow boots. They fly down the corridor.

She rips a door open and --

INT. AIRLOCK - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy rushes into the airlock --

She pulls a CHAIN from the center of the ceiling --

A BLAST OF WATER shoots out from the wall jets, striking her suit with force. Nancy YELLS in anger and terror. The jets wash the infected blood off the outside of her suit and --

Suddenly the water STOPS.

Nancy stands in her hazmat suit, the rubber dripping wet. She's BREATHING too fast --

It's dark. Only a faint red light from a button on the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then a SOAPY CHEMICAL sprays down. Like a violent car wash.

INSIDE THE SPACESUIT Nancy watches the SOAP ROLL DOWN her faceplate, blocking out the world, as she fights to be calm, to stand here and be patient.

Finally, a RINSE sprays down. It's dripping down her face mask. But she's staring at the wall, her mind racing.

She mumbles almost inaudibly to herself:

NANCY

Jerry's not home yet... there's no
food for the kids...

We're inside the minute details FLASHING THROUGH HER MIND:

- Luke's forgotten cassette box on the car floor
- a grocery list
- Megan smiling
- the dogs rushing up to greet Nancy
- her husband's arm wrapped around her

NANCY

Shit shit shit.

The chemical shower STOPS --

Nancy lunges for the hatch and --

INT. STAGING AREA - LEVEL 3 - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy scrambles out of the airlock and UNZIPS her soaking suit, shucking it, and looking at her right hand.

The sleeve of her inner scrub suit is wet with MONKEY BLOOD.

Dear God...

Her inner-most glove is streaked with MONKEY BLOOD.

Beneath the vibrant red liquid, through the thin, translucent glove she can see her Bandaid --

Nancy convulses, as if she's going to throw up, and lunges for the sink, fighting to stop her gag reflex. It seems to work. She turns on the WATER, and washes the MONKEY'S BLOOD off her thin, latex glove -- it swirls down the decon drain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly -- the door BURSTS OPEN. SOLDIERS covered in full PROTECTION GEAR stream in. Their suits are one step down from a hazmat suit, but more military-looking. Imposing.

Nancy's surrounded.

Within seconds, she's stripped, including her inner gloves.

NANCY
Check the glove!

Her hot zone suit is bagged and sterilized.

BRIGHT LIGHTS flick on -- every inch of her skin is examined.

The soldier on her right side scans down her right arm and turns over her hand revealing the BAND-AID.

SOLDIER
(YELLS through hood)
We have a laceration.

Every man in the room reacts like Nancy's carrying a plague.

Nancy raises her hand, pulls off that BAND-AID, and shows the CUT ON HER PALM.

SOLDIER
(YELLS through hood)
We have blood in the powder.

Everyone's muscles stiffen -- shit just got *real*. Nancy's worst nightmares are realized.

ECU ON: NANCY'S EYEBALL as a DROP of liquid is released onto the surface. Goggles are snapped over her eyes.

As the decon team sprays her body with harsh chemicals --

We are with Nancy, eyes wide beneath the goggle plexiglass as her focus darts around the room, horrified.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HALLWAY/SLAMMER - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Flanked by two LIEUTENANTS, Colonel Powell marches into an ante-chamber separated from Nancy's cell by a thick window. He's in his civvies, having been called back to the fort at this late hour.

Powell stares through a glass wall at Nancy, alone in her 8x8 Slammer cell -- only a cot, a metal toilet and sink. She wears a hospital gown, nothing more. Anxious, she stares back. He hits the INTERCOM:

COLONEL POWELL

What on earth were you thinking?

Peter arrives, taking his place behind the Colonel as the conversation continues through an INTERCOM:

NANCY

Colonel we have a duty to warn
Hazelton that one of their monkeys
is infected --

COLONEL POWELL

How could you go in with a cut?
Jaax, you know the rules. I'm not
even sure where to start.

One LIEUTENANT quickly raises his CLIPBOARD --

LIEUTENANT

"This investigation will determine
whether foreign particles capable
of causing harm have entered the
blood of Lieutenant Colonel Nancy
Jaax during an incident --"

COLONEL POWELL

I wanna hear it from her --

NANCY

We've got a problem. Get as angry
as you want with me later but --

COLONEL POWELL

How did you rip your suit?

NANCY

I didn't. But --

COLONEL POWELL

It ripped itself?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Normal wear and tear around
the coupling. Sir, we have a
filovirus on our hands. And I
think it could be Ebola Zaire --

The room stops cold. The Colonel recalibrates.

Peter blanches -- knowing that he whiffed the sample moments
earlier. He pushes through the shock and is adamant:

PETER

It can't be Ebola.

Peter's half saying it because he believes it and half
because he's desperate to. Nancy bites back:

NANCY

I just threw it under the beam.

PETER

Did you actually test for
contaminates?

NANCY

No, because I used a new sample --

PETER

Then you can't be a hundred percent
sure. Colonel, I have the lab
running a thorough test of all
known bacteria as we speak.

The Colonel listens to him, intently. Nancy fumes:

NANCY

The cells blew up because they were
infected with the most destructive
life force we know of. I saw worms
with eyehooks.

COLONEL POWELL

We've thought we've seen worms lots
of times before and we've always
been fooled.

NANCY

Not this time. We need to get
through to Hazelton. They have
facilities up and down the coast.
We have to find out which one the
sample came from --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETER

I've already informed Hazelton's head office that it's SHF.

(to Colonel)

What's more likely to cause a hemorrhagic fever: SHF, which we see in here every other month? Or Ebola, which has never been on U.S. soil before?

NANCY

You're being reckless --

COLONEL POWELL

Like I need this crap, you two. I got bickering teenagers at home.

The Colonel looks right at Nancy, studying her:

COLONEL POWELL

Ebola? Do you have any idea what sort of panic shit-storm this would cause? I'd need unequivocal proof. What have you got?

NANCY

... Nothing yet, Sir. I ruled out Marburg and was about to introduce Ebola Zaire to the source tissue. I just need to go back in and --

LIEUTENANT

All your samples were compromised during sterilization, ma'am. Protocol after any incident.

COLONEL POWELL

Forget what's under the scope for a second. You and I both know that if this was Ebola, we'd already have a trail of dead bodies. Can you explain that?

Caught, Nancy struggles for an answer.

NANCY

No, but if there's one thing Bronson taught me, it's that Ebola evolves. It tricks you.

Suddenly, there's a commotion on the other side of the glass.

Nancy shifts her gaze to find --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jerry, in uniform, has entered the room. The Colonel immediately CLICKS off the INTERCOM.

Nancy keeps her eyes locked on Jerry as he heatedly debates with the Colonel through the glass.

She CAN'T HEAR what they're saying.

It's killing her.

Finally, having come to some agreement, the Colonel clicks on the INTERCOM:

COLONEL POWELL
Lieutenant Colonel, until the
accident investigation is
concluded, I've got to suspend you
from Level 4. Jahrling'll take it
from here.

That hits hard.

The Colonel, Peter, and the other Lieutenants all leave.

Once Jerry is alone, he turns back to Nancy and clicks the INTERCOM ON again. A loaded pause.

JERRY
You okay?

She only manages a nod. This is hard.

JERRY
Good. Then I'll check with the lab
and see how your test is coming.

NANCY
Okay... Thanks...

When he leaves, she's suddenly alone --

Trapped in this 8x8 cell --

Several stories below the surface -- pure isolation.

Hard to keep the fragile mind from spinning. It's clear why people are driven to insanity in this place.

CLOSE ON: PETER'S FACE. Concern growing as he walks down --

INT. HALLWAY - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Peter barely notices a WORKER passing --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WORKER
'Night, Jahrling.

All the cocky swagger we've seen in Peter before is nowhere to be found. He's in his head as he turns into --

INT. TESTING LAB - USAMRIID - NIGHT

A night-shift LAB TECH works at a station when Peter enters.

PETER
Where's Ben?

LAB TECH
Top of a mountain by now.

PETER
Shit... I need to talk to him.

LAB TECH
He'll be back Monday.

Peter looks more and more unsteady. He nods to the cultures and the splayed vials of test bacteria around the lab tech.

PETER
How's it going with the tests? You identify any contaminant yet?

LAB TECH
Not yet. Ruling out bacterium one by one. Won't be done for a few hours.

Unwanted news to Peter. As we go OFF him --

WOMAN'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)
We have your results.

INT. SLAMMER - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy looks at the hazmat-suited young NURSE, anxious.

NANCY
You're going to make me ask?

NURSE
It was your blood in the glove.
Nothing from 053.

Nancy breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. PARKING LOT - USAMRIID - NIGHT

The lot is almost empty. Except for Jerry who leans against his vintage Cadillac, upset, waiting for Nancy. She walks from the building to find him.

JERRY

You know better, Nance.

Nancy knows the edge in his voice comes from a place of love and fear of losing her.

NANCY

You have to trust me, I took precautions.

Jerry softens:

JERRY

I'm sorry, it's just... if anything happened to you...

NANCY

I know, but it didn't. *

JERRY

Then let's go home.

He takes her hand. She holds it, but when he starts to move toward the car, she hesitates.

NANCY

I can't, not right now.
(steps closer)
This is bigger than both of us. I know what I saw in there today.

JERRY

It's not that I don't believe you... but why does it have to be you down in that lab? Someone else can do it.

NANCY

Really, who? Peter would rather discredit me than admit I'm right. The Colonel refuses to see the reality because it's so improbable. No one's got the guts to raise a red flag. *

(off his silence)

Jerry, look at me. These two hands have held anthrax, yellow fever, Marburg --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERRY

-- You know I don't like talking
about that --

NANCY

-- and I do it because I'm the best
person for the job. This is my
responsibility. My duty.

JERRY

I get it -- every soldier takes the
same oath.

NANCY

Then you can't be angry just
because my war zone happens to be a
lab -- because my enemy can only be
seen under a microscope.

Jerry knows she's right. But still...

JERRY

Most days I can lie to myself --
tell myself you're not in any real
danger. I hate that I can't do
that today.

A quiet moment. They're both scared.

NANCY

I'm not just protecting our kids.
I'm protecting everyone's kids. If
I'm right -- if I had Ebola in my
lab today -- I can't drop this, not
now.

Off Nancy determined --

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE PETER'S LAB - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy heads for the door handle -- it's locked. The window from the hall into the lab is dark.

Peter's not here --

CORPORATE MESSAGE (OVER PHONE)

You've reached the corporate offices of Hazelton. We are currently closed. Please call back during normal hours of operation --

INT. NANCY'S OFFICE - USAMRIID - NIGHT

BEEP as Nancy punches ZERO --

CORPORATE MESSAGE (OVER PHONE)

If you know your party's extension, you may leave a message --

Frustrated Nancy hangs up, thinks a minute.

CUT TO:

EXT. GUARD GATE - USAMRIID - NIGHT

Nancy approaches a GUARD sitting in the small gatehouse.

NANCY

Hi Frank. I need to see the entry log from last night. Delivery came in from one of Hazelton's facilities -- need to find out which one.

The Guard turns in his chair and hands her a grimy book.

GUARD

Here you go, Ma'am.

Nancy's finger runs down the list of license plates, landing on one from VIRGINIA --

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - RESTON, VIRGINIA - NIGHT

Nancy's Taurus skulks along the street, past a Taco Bell and a mall in the upper-middle-class neighborhood. Through the windshield, we see her illuminated face inside --

INT. NANCY'S TAURUS - RESTON, VIRGINIA - NIGHT

Under the light of her visor lamp, Nancy navigates with a map, searching until she sees a plain concrete building just off the road. She pulls into --

EXT. PARKING LOT - HAZELTON MONKEY FACILITY - NIGHT

Nancy climbs out -- only a Buick Skylark is parked in the large lot. Across the street she spots an

EMPTY PLAYGROUND

outside a brightly-colored day-care center.

A shiver runs up her spine. She turns back to the n.d. building. There's only a small, understated sign with the corporate logo:

HAZELTON RESEARCH

The infected monkey house. As we CRANE UP, we find the WASHINGTON D.C. SKYLINE just miles away...

CLOSE ON: NANCY'S HAND POUNDING on the security door of --

EXT. HAZELTON MONKEY FACILITY -- NIGHT

She waits a second. Then POUNDS again.

Finally, an INTERCOM CRACKLES to life:

BILL VOLT (THROUGH INTERCOM)
This facility is not open to the public.

NANCY
I'm not the public. I'm a Lieutenant Colonel from USAMRIID. My name is Nancy Jaax --

The INTERCOM shuts off. There's a rumbling behind the door and suddenly it opens to REVEAL Bill Volt who looks exhausted. He holds out his hand:

BILL
Sorry, Bill Volt. Colony Manager here. Thanks for the heads-up on the SHF situation.

NANCY
What'd you do with the other monkeys in that cell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL
Quarantined them. Why?

NANCY
Because I need to see them.

That seems to make Bill a little alarmed.

BILL
Hazelton'll have my balls if I let you in without sign-off.

NANCY
Your whole colony's in danger.

BILL
I've been doing this for thirty years and this isn't my first outbreak. Luckily, we caught it early.

NANCY
How many dead?

BILL
... After 053? Four more.

NANCY
Did you nick yourself when you processed them? Any cuts? Scrapes?

Those words make him suddenly anxious. He can see she's holding something back. Something ugly.

BILL
You don't think this is Simian Fever, do you?

Nancy just stares her answer back. She's nervous to say more. He's on edge:

BILL
Look, some Lieutenant Colonel shows up in the middle of the night unannounced -- what the hell am I dealing with here?

NANCY
I can only tell you if I get my hands on a live tissue sample.

BILL
That's days of paperwork.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NANCY
We don't have days.

BILL
(sweating it)
... I'm three years from
retirement.

It's a standoff. Doesn't matter if he wants to do the right thing. She realizes she has to push it:

NANCY
Bill, there is no one in the world tonight who wants to see you live to get that brass plaque, more than I do. Understand?

His breath catches. She's serious.

BILL
Let me see what I can do. But I gotta meet you off-site.

NANCY
Where?

CUT TO:

EXT. ARCO GAS STATION - OUTSIDE OF RESTON - NIGHT

Nancy sits behind the wheel of her car in the parking lot next to a PAYPHONE.

The place is closed. The lights off except for a neon sign and a lit price board -- \$1.02 per gallon.

Nancy tries to stay calm. The wait is driving her nuts. This place is very dark and very deserted.

She sips a Diet Coke from a can.

She looks up when the Buick pulls into the lot.

Nancy watches the car drive past the pumps. We can see now that Bill Volt is behind the wheel, turning around wide, and pulling up right beside Nancy.

Bill gets out of his car. He walks around to Nancy's door:

BILL
I've got 'em right back here.

And he continues toward his trunk. Nancy quickly gets out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She steps to the rear. Watches Bill fumble with his KEYS for a second. The trunk opens and --

CLOSE ON: GARBAGE BAGS stuffed with DEAD MONKEYS. Through the stretched plastic, we see contorted faces, mouths frozen wide open, their clawed hands pressed tight against the bags.

Nancy visibly recoils. Takes a step back. She's horrified --

NANCY
What the hell?

BILL
They're double-bagged --

Nancy cannot take her eyes from these grotesque garbage bags.

NANCY
What am I supposed to do with these?

BILL
Y-you wanted monkeys --

NANCY
I wanted *live* samples.

BILL
This is the best I could do. Another one died tonight -- that's damn close to "live." You gonna help me figure out what's killing them or not?

NANCY
(flustered)
I can't drive dead animals with a potentially infectious disease across state lines.

BILL
You want me to take 'em back?

Nancy stares at the bags. Bill goes to close the trunk and --

NANCY
No. But, you gotta bring them to my lab.

BILL
No way am I driving through that gate, Lady. I have to stay off the radar. My job's on the line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NANCY

This can't wait. I need a concrete diagnosis...

BILL

Of what? You still haven't told me what the hell's going on with my colony.

NANCY

Just help me load them in my trunk. I'll disinfect it later.

Nancy moves to her car. Fights her keys. Opens the trunk.

We see a typical family trunk -- soccer ball, bag of dog food. Nancy reaches in and removes a tire iron, small snow shovel. She hates that this is her only option. Bill steps up to help her --

NANCY

Take out anything that can puncture a garbage bag.

Nancy and Bill quickly remove tools. Everything that might cause problems. Then Nancy looks at the soccer ball and pulls it out too. They stare at the now-empty trunk.

She yanks two pairs of surgical gloves from her purse -- she came prepared. She pulls one pair on and hands a trepidatious Bill the other pair.

NANCY

Have the exterior of the bags been disinfected?

BILL

I washed them with bleach.

NANCY

Thoroughly?

BILL

Sure.

Nancy is not convinced. Looks at him. Even Bill does not look certain anymore.

Nancy holds her breath. Keeping her head as far away as possible, Nancy grabs the first bag. Quickly she transfers it to her trunk.

CLOSE ON: THE BAG as the body inside SHIFTS AROUND and --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

In a matter of seconds, they move the four monkeys. Nancy SLAMS the trunk down.

Nancy is breathing fast, her hands on the trunk. *Oh my god.*

BILL

They're frozen. You'll be okay.

As Nancy moves toward the driver's side door of her car --

NANCY

You're gonna need to follow me back to the base. Stay close.

BILL

Why?

NANCY

Because by the time I get back to base, I'll have bags of soup. If that contaminated blood drips onto the highway, it gets spread on the tires of a million people heading to work -- that's not an option.

*
*
*
*
*

She opens the door. Calls back:

NANCY

Watch the trunk for drips.

*

Nancy climbs in the front seat, pulls off her gloves and searches for somewhere to stuff them -- her eyes land on --

The CASSETTE LONGBOX and the SOCCER BALL in the front seat. This moment is everything Jerry is terrified of -- but she's in too deep to turn back now. She shoves the gloves in an empty Big Gulp cup.

CLOSE ON: PETER'S EYES. Wide open as he lies in bed in --

INT. IRENE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Peter listens to the clock tick on the nightstand. His fiance, IRENE (late 20s) lies asleep next to him -- the sheets pulled up around her bare, athletic body.

Something is plaguing him. He throws the covers off and stands to get dressed. Irene stirs behind him:

IRENE

Where are you going?

PETER

Work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRENE

It's three in the morning.

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAWN

Nancy drives through the increasing RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC. Stop and go. Stop. Go. Bill follows in his car, staying close, his eyes fixed on Nancy's trunk.

INSIDE THE TRUNK, the GARBAGE BAGS OF DEAD MONKEYS are being tossed with every stop and go. The carcasses are THAWING and we can see -- *and hear* -- their BLOOD SLOSHING AROUND inside.

Nancy drives. Bill drives behind her. Passing them, impatient DRIVERS are heading into D.C. for work.

Bill sees something and reacts:

CLOSE ON: a small STREAM OF BLOOD beginning to escape from the trunk, reaching the bumper, and --

Bill leans over his steering wheel. He doesn't know what exactly he's supposed to do then --

CLOSE ON: THE MONKEY BLOOD as it finally DRIPS ONTO THE PAVEMENT --

Bill SLAMS his hand down on the wheel and HONKS. He hits the brakes and almost gets rear-ended. MORE HONKING from behind.

Nancy looks in her rearview mirror. She mumbles:

NANCY

Shit.

She stops the car. Rushes out.

Nancy meets Bill out on the road in the narrow space between their two vehicles. Cars pass on either side. Horns HONK --

Nancy sees the blood on the rear of her car. On the roadway.

Shit.

She moves to Bill's car and opens the hood, as if he's having engine trouble. The raised hood helps block people's view of them. Nancy leans over his engine. YANKS OUT HOSES.

BILL

What are you doing?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

You've got "engine trouble" --

Bill is always one step behind, but understands. Nancy looks around. Sees a small SUPERMARKET up the road. Not too far.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON: LIQUID GUSHING onto pavement, washing over a few BLOOD DROPS like a wave --

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAWN

Nancy pours a bottle of BLEACH onto the road.

A TRAFFIC JAM now stretches behind them because of their stopped cars.

Nancy shoves another bottle of the bleach in Bill's hands:

NANCY

Soak everything. Everything.

They move to the back of Nancy's car. The bumper.

NANCY

I have to re-bag the monkeys.

MEN AND WOMEN IN CARS drive slowly past, irritated looks on their faces, glancing over to see what's happening. They grow perplexed, but their cars roll on, and the next driver comes, equally puzzled.

Nancy sees a family drive past, CHILDREN in the backseat, and for a moment she just stops.

Makes her pause, question herself. A loud HONK --

Nancy snaps out of it. Then, she spots --

A MOTORCYCLE COP splitting the stopped lanes, moving slowly but steadily *closer*.

She pulls open the mouth of a new fresh garbage bag. Swallows up a leaky monkey bag --

DOWN THE ROAD

We are with the MOTORCYCLE COP slowly weaving his way through the slow-moving traffic, approaching Bill's SKYLARK just a short distance ahead, the RAISED HOOD blocking our view --

BACK WITH NANCY

Nancy and Bill struggle to re-bag the other monkeys and --

We see the MONKEYS in the bags. The faces of Nancy and Bill. FACES WE DON'T KNOW driving past.

Nancy scoops up the EMPTY BOTTLES of bleach, frantic, and --

DOWN THE ROAD

THE MOTORCYCLE COP closes in, parks his bike behind Bill's Skylark, dismounts, and slowly walks around the vehicle --

He finds Bill bent over the engine, just scratching his head.

We see NANCY'S TAURUS a short distance up the road, blending in with the traffic...

CLOSE ON: EXPLODING CELLS on a VIDEO SCREEN. We're in --

INT. PETER'S LAB - USAMRIID - EARLY MORNING

In the microscopic world, this image is as apocalyptic as it gets. Peter reaches up to an AV cart and rewinds the VHS tape, re-watching the EXPLODING CELLS as a NARRATOR explains:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

When the Ebola virus enters the body, it targets the liver, immune system and endothelia cells. It infiltrates a living cell by hitching a ride on an innocuous nutrient. Like the Trojan horse --

His eyes drift to an image on the screen... *milky soup* -- dead cells floating in the water of a culture. It looks just like the cultures we saw in the lab before Peter sniffed it.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Once it's entered the protective barrier undetected, the virus hijacks the cell's machinery to fulfill its own selfish needs -- to replicate. It then destroys the cell itself.

The video shows a DARK CELL "breaking free" of the plastic petri dish. All haunting images that are familiar to us now.

Peter looks at a dot-matrix print out with perforated sides --

He shuffles through the long list of bacteria they tested. Next to each bacteria is the typed outcome "negative."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

At the bottom of the scroll sheet are the words

"contaminant unknown."

Peter puts the list down.

He looks like a man trapped --

Out the window behind the monitor, he spots Nancy's car coming down the long drive toward the USAMRIID guard gate --

EXT. FORT DETRICK ENTRANCE - EARLY MORNING

Nancy's car rolls up to the security gate --

A new, eager, UNIFORMED GUARD takes one step out of his control booth to meet her, one hand on his sidearm.

Nancy steels herself, holds out her security badge.

The guard recognizes her, but is not as familiar as the guard from last night. His eyes scan her face and the interior:

GUARD

It's awfully early, ma'am.

NANCY

(sharply)

A hot virus doesn't sleep,
Sergeant.

The guard looks at her. Beat. He takes her badge and swipes it through his computer.

Impatient, she watches his facial muscles. He grimaces --

GUARD

There's a restriction on your
access.

At first she's surprised, then she remembers the Colonel's decision -- she holds up her bandaged hand.

NANCY

Only in Level 4. Little injury the
other day -- you know, standard
practice.

*
*

He stares. She has to get through. Now. So, she SCOFFS:

*

NANCY

You know, those stuffed shirts just
want to be sure I haven't spread
some deadly virus around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She locks her eyes on her ID in his hands --

He eyes her ID in his hands --

Suddenly uncomfortable, he hands it back and lifts the gate arm as she drives through, relieved.

EXT. USAMRIID - EARLY MORNING

Nancy pulls up outside a SIDE ENTRANCE to USAMRIID. She gets out of the car. Looks around.

The parking lot is nearly empty. Quiet.

She snaps on LATEX GLOVES and moves fast to the back of the car. Nancy opens her trunk and immediately reaches in. She struggles to pull out two BULKY GARBAGE BAGS --

Nancy holds them as far from her body as she can. They are heavier than they look --

CLOSE ON THE BAGS, stretched so tight around the dead monkeys inside, blood SLOSHING around. They look ready to pop open.

Nancy reaches the door, and sets them down. Pulls out KEYS.

She struggles to get the key in. Can't. Shit. Finally finds the right one, and opens the door.

She places one bag inside. Uses the second to prop the door. Nancy hears an oncoming SOUND.

She turns to find a delivery truck rounding the corner.

Nancy considers hiding inside. Then remembers her car. She looks -- the trunk's wide open.

Nancy races to her car. Yanks out the last two bags -- no time to waste. Staff will be arriving any minute. SLAMS the trunk --

She moves back toward the open door with both bags, so heavy, the insides SLOSHING, crazily.

She eyes the delivery guy as he climbs out of his truck and --

DELIVERY GUY

You need a hand?

Nancy's close to the door. Not close enough. As he jogs toward her --

NANCY

No, no. I'm fine. Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But he's closing in with a helping hand. Suddenly, she manages to slip inside --

INT. HALLWAY - USAMRIID - EARLY MORNING

CLOSE ON: SLOSHING GARBAGE BAGS piling onto a heavy CART. Nancy rolls it down an otherwise deserted corridor, no sound but SQUEAKING WHEELS and her lonely FOOTSTEPS.

Nancy stops at a door labelled: "BIOHAZARD ZONE. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY." She stares at the security control panel.

Fuck.

She swipes her ID. The light blinks RED. Access denied.

PETER (O.S.)
What the hell are you doing?

Nancy turns, shocked to find Peter.

PETER
Colonel'd have your hide if he caught you --

Peter's attention is suddenly stolen by the garbage bags.

PETER
Are those --

He walks closer, sees the monkey's faces pressed against the thin plastic and stares back at Nancy, floored.

PETER
So much for protocol. Are these from Hazelton?

NANCY
(accusatory)
Did you *know* it was the facility just ten miles from D.C.?

PETER
(surprised)
Reston?
(off the monkey bags)
They gave you clearance?

Her look clearly says "no." She pushes on:

NANCY
I need to get in there.

Peter considers -- what to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

I thought you had a rule you never
go in alone.

NANCY

There's a first for everything.
Open the door for me, Peter.

This is his one chance to *know*. But he hesitates.

NANCY

I'll take the hit. I'll tell them
I swiped your ID. You don't have
to step foot in there, just give it
to me --

She holds out her hand, he pulls out his ID.

He considers handing it over. But --

He swipes his card. The security door CLICKS open. He steps
inside and turns back, grabbing the cart handle and pulling
it into the doorway.

PETER

I can't let you do something
stupid... without me.

Peter eyes her with an awkward grin. A peace-treaty of
sorts. She's stunned.

NANCY

Peter?

PETER

... There weren't any contaminants.

An unusual detente. He downplays:

PETER

I just want to put this whole thing
to bed.

He holds open the door for her. She eyes him -- decides not
to push it -- and helps wheel the monkey bags inside...

TIME CUT TO:

INT. LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - EARLY MORNING

Nancy and Peter, now in BIOLOGICAL HAZMAT SUITS. No sound
but the ROAR OF AIR and --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We see a DEAD MONKEY on the table, sliced open, GUTS EXPOSED. Nancy takes the familiar VIAL labeled "DR. MUBAKE -- EBOLA ZAIRE."

She draws the blood up inside a dropper and, positioning a glass slide beneath it, squeezes her fingers and we follow --

THE DROP OF BLOOD begins to free-fall --

SMASH CUT TO:

A DROP of BLOOD splatters onto a CLIPBOARD. We PULL BACK to REVEAL we are now inside --

INT. EXAM ROOM - KINSHASA HOSPITAL - DAY (1976)

The blood is dripping from Dr. Mubake's nose as he reviews a patient's chart. He's only surprised for a moment before --

Mubake suddenly doubles over in pain, falling against a medical cabinet and knocking ITEMS to the floor, grasping at his stomach, alarmed --

SMASH TO:

INT. RESTROOM - KINSHASA HOSPITAL - DAY (1976)

Dr. Mubake moves closer, still closer to a MIRROR. He stares in shock at his RED EYES.

His skin is ashen and is beginning to loosen from the bone.

Blood drips from his nose.

He fumbles, scared, for his pulse --

SMASH TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - KINSHASA HOSPITAL - NIGHT (1976)

A NURSE reaches out for Dr. Mubake, as if to help him, stop him, but he shrugs her off and pushes past her. All we can hear is the BEATING OF HIS HEART, faster, and faster.

This waiting room is packed with AFRICANS AND EUROPEANS who are sitting shoulder-to-shoulder. Everyone here needs help.

Dr. Mubake moves erratically down the aisle, examining one patient, then another, *touching them*, acting very strange --

Dr. Mubake stops walking. He stands unsteady in the aisle.

MUBAKE'S P.O.V. of the room as it begins to TWIST and BEND. Soon the hospital's SPINNING AROUND and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The doctor goes limp. He pitches forward to the floor and --

Mubake makes a CHOKING SOUND as blood and black matter SPILL OUT of his throat. MORE BLOOD is spreading out from his body in a widening circle -- Mubake is bleeding out. All around him people are running, falling, fighting to get away.

Dr. Mubake's beating heart fades and we hear only SCREAMING --

CUT TO:

INT. LEVEL 4 - USAMRIID - (1989)

The DROP OF MUBAKE'S BLOOD falls onto the GLASS SLIDE.

The GLASS SLIDE slips into place and --

Nancy and Peter share a long look through their plastic helmet visors...

They bend over the MICROSCOPE, stare down the eyepiece...

And we wait. A few seconds, then a few more -- and slowly an

OMINOUS GREEN GLOW

illuminates the microscope...

Peter listens to the ROAR inside of his suit, his worst fears realized. He looks up at Nancy.

She is already looking at him, no, *through* him to the future.

NANCY (V.O.)

The monster has returned.

INT. KITCHEN - COTTAGE - CAPE COD - DAY

Nancy's voice plays through an answering machine on the Formica kitchen counter of a modest Cape Cod cottage. In the dark it appears that the room is empty, but a light source draws us toward a wood table in the corner.

NANCY (OVER MACHINE)

Are you there? I know the last thing you want is to be bothered by any of us after... but I need you.

Now, we realize the room isn't empty. A rugged, prematurely greying man listens, but his attention is focussed on the craft before him on the table...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Peering through a magnifying glass, BRONSON CARTER (mid 40s) uses a pair of needle-nosed pliers to tighten the screw of a gear inside an OLD CLOCK. Twisting it tight --

NANCY (OVER MACHINE)
I've got Ebola ten minutes from the
capitol, Bron.

He pulls back and listens:

NANCY (OVER MACHINE)
Zaire from what I can tell. You're
the only one who knows how to
wrangle this thing. You know I
wouldn't call you if it wasn't an
emergency. Please, Bronson, I
cannot do this without you. We
need you.

He's contemplating her words, as he strides across the room to take the call. But he's taking his time -- no rush.

And by the time he gets to the machine, she's hung up. We think he might pick up the receiver and dial Nancy back, but instead he hits "delete."

END OF EPISODE