

KING KONG

Screenplay by

*Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens
& Peter Jackson*

Based on a Story by

MERIAN C. COOPER and EDGAR WALLACE

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

CLOSE ON: A scrawny MONKEY scratches.

ANGLES ON: Defeated, listless ANIMALS, in the bleak environs of a dilapidated ZOO.

WIDER: It is CENTRAL PARK ZOO in depression era NEW YORK. The PARK itself is like a GARBAGE DUMP, dotted with squalid SHANTY TOWNS.

Against these BLEAK IMAGES, the SOUND of a BRIGHT, BRASSY SONG fades up: Al Jolson, singing "I'm Sitting on Top of the World".

The sky line of MANHATTAN rises in the background, a grim steaming jungle on this cold FALL day.

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

SONG continues over:

IMAGES: The CROWDED STREETS of NEW YORK ... beneath the bustle is a sense of despair.

LONG SOUP LINES snake along the STREETS.

The HUNGRY search through RUBBISH BINS for FOOD. SKYSCRAPERS rise steadily upwards as more people are evicted from their homes.

HOMELESS sleep amid steaming VENTS and GARBAGE STREWN GUTTERS.

Intercut:

INT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - NIGHT

SONG continues over:

MANNY, an old-time VAUDEVILLIAN, hurriedly fixes a large DROOPY MOUSTACHE on to a YOUNG WOMAN'S TOP LIP ... this is ANN DARROW.

IMAGES: Weird and wonderful snatches of VAUDEVILLE ACTS follow ... singers, jugglers, boxing ladies.

Intercut with:

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

The COLOR and MUSIC contrast with the SOUP LINES and SLUMPED SHOULDERS of the REAL WORLD.

INT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN on STAGE ... dressed as an ELEGANT GENT, she launches into 'I'm Just Wild About Harry' with HARRY, a larger-than-life PERFORMER dressed in a FRILLY DRESS, BRASSY RED WIG and FALSIES.

MANNY's CHARACTER joins in ... SNEEZING LOUDLY and causing ANN to take a SUDDEN PRAT FALL.

And so the ROUTINE BUILDS ... ANN and HARRY singing and dancing ... MANNY SNEEZING ... ANN falling.

The AUDIENCE look on with bored expressions on their faces. All except ONE MAN at the BACK, who is LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY.

CLOSE ON: ANN throwing everything into her ACT ... SWEAT rolls down her face ... she tries not to get distracted by the LAUGHING, WHEEZING MAN.

WIDER: A SMATTERING of APPLAUSE from the TINY AUDIENCE. 40 PEOPLE in a THEATRE designed for 500.

Crash cut:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: MANNY in the NOISY, CROWDED DRESSING ROOM, which is full of VAUDEVILLE PERFORMERS in various stages of undress.

MANNY fires off a loud comical SNEEZE. He looks around at the others.

MANNY

That's a funny one! Isn't that funnier?

HARRY

It's hysterical, Manny. As long as we're laughing we won't be crying over the box office. Talk about depressing.

ANGLE ON: ANN sitting down at a MIRROR, starting to take off her VEST ... a book entitled "*ISOLATION*" by Jack Driscoll lies half open on the counter top nearby...

ANN

Twenty girls in feather boas prancing around like circus ponies! That's depressing!

ANGLE ON: MAUDE, a BLOWSY SINGER, lighting up a cigarette.

MAUDE

(fondly)

I love a good chorus line!

CLOSE ON: ANN brushing her HAIR. TAPS, a young tap dancer, leans across and picks up the book.

TAPS

What's this?

ANN

It's a play.

MANNY
Who wrote it, Annie?

TAPS
Some guy - Driscoll.
(reading the jacket of book)
From the Federal Theatre.

MAUDE
Don't knock it, honey - at least they
get an audience.

ANN
It'll pick up Ain't that right,
Manny?

The DRESSING ROOM goes suddenly quiet ... MANNY looks away,
refusing to meet ANN's eye.

ANN (cont'd)
(trailing off)
It always does.

EXT. DRESSING ROOM ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

MANNY and ANN emerge from the STAGE DOOR, into an ALLEYWAY. Night
and winter are setting in ...

MANNY splutters out another LOUD SNEEZE.

MANNY
The trick is to start the build right
at the back of your throat...
(sneezing comically)
Works well out through the nose too.

ANN
Have you eaten today?

MANNY
(sheepish)
Oh, I'm not hungry. Don't worry about
me.

ANN
Hey - you're all I've got.

ANN slips her arm through MANNY'S ...

ANN (cont'd)
Come on - take me to dinner.

MANNY
You think the kitchen'll still be open
on Third?

ANN
Soup and biscuits - perfect.

Cut to:

EXT. VAUDEVILLE THEATRE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VAUDEVILLE THEATRE. The DOOR is chained closed. WORKMEN are up ladders, taking the HOARDINGS down SIGN and putting a large sign up: *THEATRE CLOSED TILL FURTHER NOTICE ...*

ANN
(calling out to Harry)
Hey! Harry, what's going on?

ANGLE ON: ANN ... rattling the HEAVY STEEL CHAINS that are LOCKED around the DOORS to the VAUDEVILLE THEATRE ...

ANN(cont'd)
Hey, open up! We work here.

A WORKMAN up a LADDER smirks down at her.

LADDER MAN
Not anymore.

A MOTLEY collection of VAUDEVILLE PERFORMERS cluster on the SIDEWALK ... near them an incongruous assortment of PROPS and COSTUMES litter the STREET ...

MAUDE
(calling at some WORKMEN)
It's all right for you! We haven't had a pay check in two weeks - how we going to eat?

ANN
They're not going to get away with this.

CLOSE ON: MAUDE looks bleakly at ANN ...

MAUDE
They just did.

ANN tries to gather up PROPS - MANNY's BROOM, her TOP-HAT, HARRY'S parasol ...

MANNY (O.S.)
Ann ... Annie! It's no use.

ANN turns ... Manny is standing quietly to one side.

MANNY (cont'd)
The show it's over - it's done.
I'm done. I'm leaving, Annie ... I'm going back to Chicago. I'm sorry ...

ANGLE ON: ANN stares at MANNY in shock ..

MANNY (cont'd)

I'm sorry, Ann. Ever since you were small people have been letting you down. But you gotta think of yourself now. You should try out for that part.

ANN looks at him warily ...

MANNY (cont'd)

It's what you've always wanted. Oh, I know what you're thinking - every time you reach out for something you care about ... fate comes along and snatches it away.

MANNY, grabs ANN'S hand ...

MANNY (cont'd)

But not this time, Annie ... not this time.

CLOSE ON: ANN as she digests MANNY'S words ... the LOUD rumble of an EL TRAIN thunders overhead ...

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: WESTON, a NEW YORK THEATRE PRODUCER, strides out of his office, a copy of VARIETY tucked under his arm ...

ANN

(faux nonchalance)

Oh, hello Mr. Weston?!

WESTON turns and sees ANN ... he quickens his step.

WESTON

Oh, Jeez ...

ANGLE ON: ANN falls into step beside WESTON as he hurries along the BUSY SIDEWALK.

WESTON (cont'd)

Look, Miss ... I told you already; call my office - leave your resume with my secretary.

ANN doggedly follows WESTON ...

ANN

Why would I want to do that when we can talk about it in person?

WESTON

Because that's what a smart girl would do.

ANN

But I already sent you my resume - you returned it unopened.

WESTON

What can I say? Jack Driscoll's very particular about who he works with.

ANN

Please, just an audition - that's all I'm asking.

WESTON

Jesus - you don't give up, do you?

ANN

Mr. Weston, I know this role backwards.

WESTON

Well, that's too bad - because we just gave the part to someone else. Sorry, kid - the play is cast.

They are standing outside an ITALIAN RESTAURANT ... WESTON goes to enter ...

ANN catches a glimpse of PLATES of FOOD and GLASSES of WINE. She quickly looks away. WESTON catches the glance and stops.

WESTON (cont'd)

Look - I know times are tough. You want my advice? Use what you got. You're not bad looking - a girl like you doesn't have to starve.

HOPE flickers in ANN'S EYES as WESTON fishes into his POCKET for a PEN and BUSINESS CARD. He scribbles down an address.

WESTON (cont'd)

There's a new place, just opened.
(handing to her)
Listen, princess - this gig ain't the Palace, you understand? Ask for Kenny K. Tell him I sent you.

WESTON hands her the BUSINESS CARD ... ANN looks down at the address, not recognizing it. She looks at him questioningly.

WESTON (cont'd)

(evasive)

Just play the date, take the money and forget you was ever there.

CLOSE ON: ANN staring down at the piece of paper in her hand.

INT. NY SCREENING ROOM - DAY

FLICKERING B&W IMAGES: TIGERS ROARING ... BRUCE BAXTER, in a PITH HELMET, stalking through undergrowth ... He raises his rifle and fires! CLICK! The gun is JAMMED. BRUCE turning to CAMERA, speaking soundlessly.

CLOSE ON: A SLEEPY looking LION. A PIECE of MEAT is lowered into frame ... DENHAM appears briefly holding the MEAT. He is attempting to STIR the yawning ANIMAL into life. CAMERA TILTS UP briefly revealing the bars of a CAGE. PRESTON'S FACE appears above a CLAPPER BOARD ... "TAKE 5"

CLOSE ON: CARL DENHAM sitting in the smoky SCREENING ROOM. He is nervous ... his eyes flick from one INVESTOR to the other ... trying to read the room.

ZELMAN

How much more is there?

ASSISTANT

Another five reels.

ZELMAN

Lights up.

Light floods the room as the washed out image on screen is extinguished.

DENHAM notices a sleazy looking INVESTOR wake up with a start.

THUGGISH INVESTOR

This is it? This is what we get for our forty grand, Denham? Another one of your Safari pictures?

SLEAZY INVESTOR

You promised us romantic scenes with Bruce Baxter and Maureen McKenzie.

DENHAM

Come on, fellas - you know the deal - we agreed to push Maureen's start date so she could get her teeth fixed.

THUGGISH INVESTOR

It's not the principle of the thing - it's the money.

ZELMAN

Carl - you've been in production for over two months -

DENHAM

Trust me, Bruce and Maureen are gonna steam up the screen - once we get them on the ship.

ZELMAN

What ship?

DENHAM

The one we've hired to get to the location.

DENHAM hurriedly pulls himself up - as ZELMAN turns on him.

ZELMAN

What location? Carl - you're supposed to be shooting on the back-lot.

DENHAM

Yes, I understand that - but fellas, we're not making that film anymore - and I'll tell you why.

DENHAM gets out of his SEAT and moves to the FRONT of the ROOM.

DENHAM (cont'd)

The story has changed, the script has been rewritten.

DENHAM turns to face the room, whipping a TATTERED MAP out of his pocket.

DENHAM (cont'd)

Life intervened! I've come into possession of a map.

(growing excitement)

The soul surviving record of an unchartered island, a place that was thought to exist only in myth ... until now!

ZELMAN

Whoa! Carl - slow down!

SLEAZY INVESTOR

Is he askin' for more money?

THUGISH INVESTOR

He's asking us to fund a wild goose-chase.

DENHAM

I'm talking about a primitive world ... never before seen by man! The ruins of an entire civilisation - the most spectacular thing you've ever seen!

(dramatic pause)

That's where I'll shoot my picture!

SILENCE for a beat ... And then -

SLEAZY INVESTOR

Will there be boobies?

DENHAM is momentarily SPEECHLESS.

DENHAM

Excuse me, boobies?

SLEAZY INVESTOR

Jigglies, jablongers, bazoomers! ...
In my experience people only go to
these films to observe the ...
undraped form of the native girls.

DENHAM

What are you - an idiot? You think
they asked De Mille to waste his time
on nudie shots? No - they respected
the film maker, they showed some
class! Not that you'd know what that
means - you cheap low-life!

ZELMAN shifts uncomfortably in his seat as THUGGISH shoots him an
ANGRY LOOK.

ZELMAN

Would you step outside for a moment,
Carl?

DENHAM looks at them ... the INVESTORS avoid EYE CONTACT.

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

AS DENHAM STEPS INTO THE LOBBY, PRESTON, HIS LONG SUFFERING
ASSISTANT WAITS ON A SOFA.

DENHAM points suddenly to the GLASS OF WATER on the TABLE next to
PRESTON.

DENHAM

Gimme that - quick!

PRESTON hands him the WATER.

PRESTON

You won't like it, it's non-alcoholic!

DENHAM empties the GLASS into a POT PLANT.

DENHAM

Preston, you have a lot to learn about
the motion picture business.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM quietly places the GLASS against the SCREENING
ROOM DOOR, and presses his ear against it.

INT. NY SCREENING ROOM - DAY

ZELMAN looks to the INVESTORS.

ZELMAN

Don't write him off fellas. He's hot-
headed sure, but Carl Denham's made
some interesting pictures, he's had a
lot of ... near success.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
 (interrupts)
 He's a preening self promoter ...

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

CLOSE ON: DENHAM listening ...

THUGGISH INVESTOR (O.S.)
 (through the door)
 ... an ambitious no-talent! The guy
 has "loser" written all over him.

ZELMAN (O.S.)
 Look, I understand your
 disappointment.

THUGGISH INVESTOR (O.S.)
 He's washed up - It's all over town!

SLEAZY INVESTOR (O.S.)
 He can't direct. He doesn't have the
 smarts.

INT. SCREENING ROOM LOBBY - DAY

THUGGISH INVESTOR
 This jumped up little turd's gonna
 bankrupt us.

ZELMAN
 The animal footage has value?

SLEAZY INVESTOR
 Sure ... Universal are desperate for
 stock footage.

THUGGISH INVESTOR
 Then sell it! Scrap the picture! We
 gotta retrieve something from this
 debacle.

ZELMAN nods ... gestures to the YOUNG ASSISTANT.

ZELMAN
 Get him back in.

ANGLE ON: The YOUNG ASSISTANT opens the DOOR, steps into the LOBBY
 which is ...

YOUNG ASSISTANT
 Mr. Denham?

... EMPTY.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and PRESTON hurrying down the CROWDED SIDEWALK - struggling under the weight of 8 FILM CANS! DENHAM is glancing back over his shoulder.

DENHAM

I want the cast and crew on the ship
within the hour.

PRESTON

No Carl, you can't do this!

DENHAM

Tell 'em the studio's pressured us
into an early departure.

PRESTON

It's not ethical!

DENHAM

What are they gonna do - sue me? They
can get in line! I'm not going to let
them kill my film.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON follows DENHAM, who steps off the curb ... and flags a CAB down. He cuts across the BUSY ROAD, PRESTON hurrying behind.

PRESTON

You realize none of the camera
equipment is on board. We have no
permits ... no visas ...

DENHAM

That's why I have you, Preston.

PRESTON

We have no insurance, no foreign
currency - in fact, we have no
currency of any kind -

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looks back across the STREET and notices an angry INVESTOR heading towards him.

DENHAM

Get in there!

PRESTON suddenly finds himself BUNDLED into the back of a CAB.

PRESTON

Who's gonna pay for the ship?

QUICK MOMENT: The SLEAZY INVESTOR grabs at the PARTIALLY OPEN BACK WINDOW of the CAB.

SLEAZY INVESTOR

Get out of there!

DENHAM hurriedly WINDS the WINDOW SHUT ... the SLEAZY INVESTOR yelps with PAIN, as he yanks his JAMMED FINGERS away from the CAB!

DENHAM
Step on it!

SLEAZY INVESTOR
(furious)
You're finished, Denham!

ANGLE ON: PRESTON sprawled on the SEAT, amid a PILE of FILM CANS, as the CAB speeds away!

DENHAM
Don't worry Preston - I've had a lot of practice at this: I'm real good at crapping the crappers.

CUT TO:

LATER ...

AERIAL WIDE: DENHAM'S CAB cruises along the CROWDED STREETS of NEW YORK.

DENHAM
And two dozen of Mr. Walker's finest
...

PRESTON (O.S.)
Red label, 80% proof - packed in a crate marked "lemonade".

INT. NY CAB - DAY

ANGLE ON: PRESTON and DENHAM sit on the BACK SEAT. PRESTON is feverishly scribbling on his NOTEPAD.

DENHAM
You got it ... and tell Maureen - she doesn't have six hours to put on her face. If she wants to be in this picture, she's gotta be on that boat!

PRESTON
She doesn't want to be in this picture.

DENHAM looks at him blankly.

PRESTON (cont'd)
Maureen pulled out.

DENHAM
She pulled out?!

PRESTON
Yesterday. I told you.

DENHAM
 (suspicious thought)
 You said we were shooting in
 Singapore, right? That's what you told
 her?

PRESTON
 But we're not shooting in Singapore.

DENHAM
 (exasperation)
 Goddammit, Preston! All you had to do
 is look her in the eye and lie.

DENHAM turns away, his brain whirring ... thinking hard ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
 I gotta get to a phone ... talk to
 Harlow's people.

PRESTON
 She's unavailable.

HIGH WIDE: DENHAM'S CAB wends it's way through BUSY NEW YORK
 streets ...

DENHAM (O.S.)
 Myrna Loy? Clara Bow? Mae West?

PRESTON
 Mae West?! No! She has to be a size
 four!

INT. NY CAB - DAY

ANGLE ON: PRESTON and DENHAM sit on the BACK SEAT.

PRESTON
 You gotta get a girl who'll fit
 Maureen's costumes.

DENHAM
 (sudden inspiration)
 Fay's a size four!

PRESTON
 Yes she is, but she is doing a picture
 with RKO.

DENHAM looks away, muttering to himself ...

DENHAM
 Cooper huh?
 (darkly)
 I might have known.

EXT. NY STREETS - DAY

ANGLE ON: The CAB screeches to a SUDDEN HALT in MID-TRAFFIC ...
DENHAM jumps out, leaving PRESTON in protest ...

PRESTON
We gotta delay the shoot - shut
production down ... We can't sail
tonight!

DENHAM
Not an option.

PRESTON
Carl!

DENHAM
I said I'd find a girl.

DENHAM turns and looks at PRESTON briefly.

DENHAM (cont'd)
For God's sake, Preston - think like a
winner. Call Jack ... I need that
Goddamn screenplay!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM leans in the window, PRESTON looks on PERPLEXED.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Defeat is always momentary.

DENHAM bangs the CAB ROOF with his hand, and then strides off
confidently along the street.

EXT. BURLESQUE THEATRE - EVENING

CLOSE ON: A series of PHOTOS of SEMI NAKED WOMEN, with feather
boas and peacock fans ... gaudy banners proclaiming Miss Lily Rose
... Delaware Du Boise ... Velvet Cushions ...

WIDER: DENHAM is standing outside a tacky BURLESQUE THEATRE. He
straightens his tie and heads towards the DOOR.

ANGLE ON: A couple of LARGE GIRLS, followed by a SMALLER GIRL,
arrive for work and enter the BURLESQUE THEATRE ... DENHAM eyes
the BIGGER GIRLS, then chooses to follow the SMALLER ONE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is reaching for the DOOR HANDLE to go inside,
when he suddenly pauses, his eye caught by the REFLECTION in the
GLASS DOOR ...

CLOSE ON: ANN ... standing in the MIDDLE of the SIDEWALK. She is
unaware of DENHAM watching her. ANN stares grimly at the BURLESQUE
HOARDINGS, the FLYER clutched in her hands, a small knot of anger
forming in her stomach.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM'S HAND lets go of the DOOR. His eyes lock on ANN
through the sea of PEDESTRIANS.

ANN angrily CRUMPLES the FLYER, drops it in the GUTTER and walks away from the THEATRE.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... watching her leave.

EXT. FRUIT STALL - EVENING

A BUSY FRUIT STALL on the SIDEWALK. The VENDOR is hurriedly handing out APPLES and pocketing NICKELS.

ANGLE ON: ANN walks slowly by ... her eyes on the FRUIT. She glances at the VENDOR, SWIPES an APPLE from the TRAY, and quickly moves on, slipping the APPLE into her POCKET.

ANN'S arm is suddenly GRABBED! The ANGRY VENDOR pulls her hand out of her pocket, which is still clutching the stolen apple.

VENDOR
(angry)
You gonna pay for this?

ANN tries to pull away. The VENDOR's grip on her arm tightens.

DENHAM (O.S.)
Excuse me ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steps up behind them up HOLDING a NICKEL ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ma'am, I think you dropped this.

ANGLE ON: THE VENDOR snatches the NICKEL from DENHAM'S fingers.

INT. NY DINER - EVENING

ANGLE ON: ANN is eating from a FULL PLATE, trying to disguise her HUNGER. DENHAM walks over carrying a CUP of COFFEE.

DENHAM
Vaudeville huh? I worked Vaudeville once... that is a tough audience. If you don't kill them fast, they kill you.

ANN
Mr. Denham - I want you to know that I'm not in the habit of accepting charity from strangers, or for that matter ... taking things that don't belong to me.

DENHAM
It was obviously a terrible misunderstanding.

ANN
It's just that, I haven't been paid in a while ...

DENHAM
 (mock sincerity)
 That's awful. Anyway, Ann - may I call
 you Ann?

DENHAM leans forward ... lowering his voice.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 ... You wouldn't happen to be a size
 four by any chance?

ANN pauses mid way through a mouthful of food, her appetite
 suddenly draining away. She abruptly stands.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 No! Oh God, no! You've got me all
 wrong. Miss Darrow, please! I'm not
 that type of person at all!

ANN
 What type of person are you?

DENHAM
 I'm someone you can trust, Ann. I'm a
 movie producer.
 (sincere)
 Believe me, I am on the level, no
 funny business. Please, sit down -
 Please ... Please.

ANN hesitates a moment before sitting down once again.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 (pitching the film)
 Ann, I want you to imagine a handsome
 explorer bound for the Far East.

ANN
 You're filming in the Far East?

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looking her in the eye and lying.

DENHAM
 Singapore. On board ship he meets a
 mysterious girl. She's beautiful ...
 she's fragile ... haunted ...

ANN looks up ... caught by the tale DENHAM is weaving.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 She can't escape the feeling that
 forces beyond her control are
 compelling her down a road from which
 she cannot draw back. It's as if her
 whole life has been a prelude to this
 moment - this fateful meeting that
 changes everything. And sure enough,
 against her better judgement -

ANN
She falls in love.

DENHAM
Yes!

ANN
But she doesn't trust it. She's not even sure if she believes in love.

DENHAM
Oh really?

ANN
If she loves someone - it's doomed.

DENHAM
Why is that?

ANN
Good things never last, Mr. Denham.

An awkward pause ... ANN looks away, having revealed too much. DENHAM considers her a beat, realising something ...

DENHAM
So you're interested?

ANGLE ON: DENHAM hurriedly gathering up his hat and coat.

DENHAM (cont'd)
That's settled then. I don't want to rush you - but we are under some time pressure here.

ANN
Well I really -

DENHAM
Ann? I'm telling you, You're perfect - look at you! You're the saddest girl I ever met ... you're gonna make 'em weep, Ann - you're gonna break their hearts!

ANN
See, that's where you're wrong, Mr. Denham, I make people laugh, that's what I do.

ANN suddenly STANDS.

ANN (cont'd)
Good luck with your picture.

DENHAM follows ANN to the DOOR ...

DENHAM
(growing desperation)
Ann! Miss Darrow! Please!

DENHAM (cont'd)
 I'm offering you money, adventure,
 fame ... the thrill of a lifetime and
 a long sea voyage. You wanna read a
 script? Jack Driscoll's turning in a
 draft as we speak.

ANN stops and turns.

ANN
 Jack Driscoll?

DENHAM
 Sure. Why - wait! You know him?

ANN
 Well, no - not personally. I've seen
 his plays.

DENHAM, sensing her interest, starts to get excited.

DENHAM
 What a writer, huh? And let me tell
 you Ann, Jack Driscoll doesn't want
 just anyone starring in this picture.
 He said to me, "Carl, somewhere out
 there is a woman born to play this
 role ..."

(quiet realization)
 And as soon as I saw you, I knew -

ANN
 (uneasy)
 Knew what?

DENHAM
 It was always going to be you.

SLOW PUSH IN on ANN as she realises she is standing on the brink
 of a life changing moment.

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The CROWDED DOCKS ... a clutter of SHIPS and SHANTY
 TOWNS. A CAB drives onto the DOCKS. DENHAM hops out and holds the
 door open for ANN, who emerges carrying a BATTERED SUITCASE.

ANN stares at a LARGE OCEAN GOING LINER that rises above her.

ANN
 (awestruck)
 Is this the moving picture ship?

DENHAM
 Not exactly ... it's actually this one
 over here.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is striding towards a RUSTY BATTERED TRAMP
 STEAMER on the OTHER SIDE of the WHARF! This is "The Venture".

DENHAM (cont'd)

Don't let appearances deceive you.
It's much more spacious on board.

HAYES

Haul away ...

ROUGH looking SAILORS are working hard to get the boat under way. Hurried activity everywhere, crates being loaded; smoke begins pouring from the stacks ...

DENHAM crosses and talks to MIKE and HERB who stand next to some film gear.

DENHAM

Is this all of the equipment? This is all of it? We're taking the Bell and Howell? Good. You got all the lenses - you got the two and the six?

PRESTON (O.S.)

Carl!

DENHAM

Yes -

(to MIKE and HERB)

Get it on board, fellas. Come on.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON hurrying down the GANGWAY. He rushes up to DENHAM ... his eyes flick to ANN, but he pulls DENHAM to one side.

PRESTON

(urgent whisper)

They're on their way. I've just had word.

DENHAM

Who?

PRESTON

(whisper)

Men in uniform. The studio called the cops!

A FLASH of FEAR crosses DENHAM'S FACE ... DENHAM calls across to a TALL FIGURE who is supervising the loading of the ship.

DENHAM

Englehorn! Cast off! Hoist up the mainsail - raise the anchor, whatever the hell it is you do - we gotta leave.

ENGLEHORN

I cannot do that ... we're waiting on the manifest.

DENHAM

What? Who? English - please!

ENGLEHORN
(dryly)
Paperwork, Mr. Denham.

DENHAM leans in conspiratorially ...

DENHAM
(low voice)
I'll give you another thousand to
leave right now.

ENGLEHORN
You haven't given me the first
thousand yet.

DENHAM glances at ANN, flustered and embarrassed.

DENHAM
Can we talk about this later. Can't
you see we're in the company of a VIP
guest?

ENGLEHORN's gaze falls upon ANN ...

ENGLEHORN
Ma'am...

ANN
Ann Darrow.

ENGLEHORN
So you are ready for this voyage, Miss
Darrow?

ANN
Sure...

ENGLEHORN
Nervous?

ANN
Nervous - no. Why? Should I be?

ANN looks taken aback ...

ENGLEHORN
It isn't every woman who would take
such a risk.

DENHAM throws PRESTON a look!

PRESTON
(hurriedly)
Why don't I show Miss Darrow to her
cabin?

DENHAM
Wonderful idea, thank you, Preston.

PRESTON

Miss Darrow, if you'd just - Hi, my name is Preston, Carl's assistant.

DENHAM pulls his CHEQUE BOOK from his JACKET POCKET.

DENHAM

Two thousand - it's a deal ... Will you take a cheque?

ENGLEHORN

Do I have a choice?

EXT. VENTURE/NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: PRESTON goes to lead ANN up the GANG WAY past some rough-looking sailors, onto the SHIP - "THE VENTURE".

PRESTON

Please, follow me. If there's anything that you need ... 'excuse me fellas, if there's anything that you need please don't hesitate to ... ask ...

PRESTON turns back to see ANN hesitating at the bottom of the GANG WAY ... an unnerved expression on her face ...

ANN steps forward ... Deep breath, she follows PRESTON.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

BEEFY SAILORS shovel COAL into the SHIP'S FURNACE ... another cranks a valve on the pistons.

INT. DENHAM'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM enters his CABIN looking FLUSTERED. He is STARTLED to find JACK DRISCOLL waiting for him. DRISCOLL is a WRITER, well dressed in a SHABBY sort of way.

DENHAM

Jesus, Jack - you scared me!

DENHAM crosses to a cabinet and breaks into a CRATE OF JOHNNY WALKER.

DENHAM (cont'd)

Listen, if anyone comes to the door, don't open it. You haven't seen me ... say I got depressed and committed suicide. Say I stuck my head down a toilet!

(holding up a bottle)

You want one?

JACK

No! I can't stay, Carl. I have a rehearsal for which I am now ...
(checks WATCH)
... three hours late.

JACK throws a FEW SCRIPT PAGES across the TABLE.

DENHAM

What's this?

JACK

It's the script.

DENHAM

This is a script? Jack ... this is fifteen pages.

JACK

I know - but they're good! You've got fifteen good pages there, Carl!

DENHAM

I'm supposed to be making a feature length picture.

JACK

You told me I had more time. I'm sorry. Look I gotta go.

DENHAM

Jack - No - you can't do this to me! I have a beginning but I need a middle and an end! I gotta have something to shoot.

The SHIP'S ENGINES roar into life ... JACK stands to leave.

JACK

You got my notes - I gotta go. See you.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looking DISMAYED. He stares blankly at the RUSH of ACTIVITY through the PORTHOLE WINDOW behind JACK.

POV: The VENTURE'S CREW hurriedly RELEASE ROPES in preparation for the ship's imminent departure.

DENHAM'S expression slowly CHANGES ...

DENHAM

Alright, fine. We might as well settle up.

JACK looks ASTONISHED as DENHAM pulls out his CHEQUE BOOK.

JACK

You're going to pay me?

DENHAM

I'm not going to stiff a friend.

JACK

I've never known you to volunteer cash before ...

DENHAM

How does two grand sound?

JACK

Sounds great!

DENHAM

Thought it might.

DENHAM'S eyes flick to the WINDOW ... sees SAILORS are hauling up the GANGPLANK.

ANGLE ON: A SAILOR CRANKS a series of VALVES as the SHIP'S PISTONS crank in to life.

DENHAM signs the CHEQUE, and hands it over with a FLOURISH ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
(signing with a flourish)

Voila!

JACK snatches the CHEQUE and turns to leave.

JACK

Thanks...

JACK glances at it.

JACK (cont'd)
Carl ... you've written "Two Grand".

DENHAM takes the CHEQUE back ...

DENHAM

So I did ... Sorry about that
(screwing it up)
Let's start from the beginning.

DENHAM (cont'd)
(writing)
"Two Thousand Dollars" ...

ANGLE ON: The ship's PISTONS PUMP faster.

DENHAM looks up at JACK, a confused look on his face.

DENHAM (cont'd)
It is the 29th, isn't it?

JACK

(anxious)
Come on - it's the 25th, Carl, the
25th!

ANGLE ON: JACK suddenly realises the SHIP is about to leave.

DENHAM

I'm sorry. Let me just ... It'll just take a second.

DENHAM screws up the CHEQUE again! The VIBRATION of the ENGINES picks up. JACK heads for the DOOR!

JACK

Never mind, pay me when you get back!

DENHAM

(knowing)

Alright ... okay ...

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THE SHIPS GAUGES SPRING INTO ACTION.

EXT. VENTURE STERN

CRANE DOWN the stern of the ship as the PROPELLER kicks into action.

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: BRUCE BAXTER walking along the CORRIDOR, with PRESTON following behind laden with LUGGAGE. BRUCE is in his early thirties ... He is QUICK WITTED, SOPHISTICATED and CHARMING... but his career as a SCREEN ACTOR has badly stalled.

PRESTON

Your cabin's just down here,
Mr. Baxter. May I say how excited we
are to have you back with us, Sir.

ANGLE ON: JACK is hurrying down the corridor towards the DOOR. He feels the SHIP MOVING! He suddenly collides with BRUCE, who thrusts a SUITCASE at him.

BRUCE

Be a sport and lend us a hand.

JACK

Oh, Christ!

JACK looks desperately out of the PORTHOLE, doubles back and BOLTS AWAY.

BRUCE

(dryly)

Appreciate the help, fella.

PRESTON

Let me get the door for you - welcome
to your state room sir.

INT. BRUCE'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: BRUCE is clearly unimpressed with the TINY CABIN. He reacts to the SMELL.

PRESTON

I know, that's not a nice smell is it?
I'm sure it'll disperse in a day or
two. Did I ever mention how much I
love your work, Mr. Baxter? I've seen
every one of your pictures ... even
the silent ones.

BRUCE

I haven't made any silent ones.

BRUCE gently closes the DOOR in PRESTON'S FACE - leaving him
silently CURSING to himself in the CORRIDOR.

EXT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The PROPELLER CHURNS through the WATER ...

ENGLEHORN watches the VENTURE pull away from the dock ...
Satisfied, he enters the WHEELHOUSE ...

ENGLEHORN

Dead slow ahead both, Mr Hayes.

HAYES

Dead slow ahead both, Captain.

EXT. VENTURE/NY DOCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK emerges from the labyrinthine SHIP INTERIOR and
rushes to the RAIL of the SHIP ... he freezes in HORROR!

JACK

Oh Christ!

ANGLE ON: The SHIP is PULLING AWAY from the DOCK ... 6 feet ...
7 feet ... JACK contemplates JUMPING for a MOMENT:

JACK (cont'd)

Goddammit!

EXT. NY DOCKS

POLICE CARS race along the docks towards the VENTURE, SIRENS
wailing.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

JACK SLUMPS on the DECK in DESPAIR. He's missed his chance to
get off the ship.

DENHAM steps up behind JACK, just as a POLICE CAR, followed by ZELMAN and the INVESTORS, pull up on the DOCKS in the DISTANCE.

DENHAM
I keep telling you, Jack, there's no
money in theatre.

CUT TO:

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

The INVESTORS leap out of the car.

SLEAZY INVESTOR
No, no, no!

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

The VENTURE steams past the LIGHTS of MANHATTAN.

DENHAM
You're much better off sticking with
film.

JACK
I don't do it for the money, Carl. I
happen to love the theatre.

DENHAM
No, you don't.

JACK looks at him exasperated as DENHAM casually taps his PIPE on the RAIL of the BOAT.

DENHAM (cont'd)
If you really loved it, you would have
jumped.

EXT. NY DOCKS - NIGHT

WIDE ON: ZELMAN throws his hat to the ground in anger as THE VENTURE pulls away from the docks.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOUR - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE steams away from the DOCKS, passing under the MANHATTAN BRIDGE.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN tests her mattress with her hands. ANN straightens & turns, perching on the edge of the BUNK.

PRESTON
 (apologetic)
 I hope you find it to your liking...
 it's quite comfortable. Your towels
 and linens are underneath the bed.
 That is the wash basin. I know, that's
 not a pleasant smell - is it? I'm sure
 it'll disperse in a day or two.

PRESTON dances over to the WARDROBE.

PRESTON (cont'd)
 The closet ... your costumes - I hope
 you'll find everything is in order. If
 there is anything that you need,
 please do not hesitate to ask...fresh
 water, perhaps? I can bring it to you
 personally.

PRESTON is interrupted by a knock on the CABIN DOOR...

ANGLE ON: The DOOR opens and DENHAM enters. He thrusts a bottle of
 JOHNNY WALKER SCOTCH into ANN'S HANDS ...

DENHAM
 Knock knock! We can't have our leading
 lady deprived of the necessities of
 life.

(to PRESTON)
 Do me a favour - run a bottle down to
 Jack. It'll fend off his migraine.

PRESTON
 They're still trying to find a place
 for him to sleep.

DENHAM
 (to PRESTON)
 You told him my typewriter is
 available for hire?

PRESTON
 Yes - he didn't take it well.

PRESTON departs down the corridor.

ANN
 (confused)
 Mr. Driscoll ...?

DENHAM turns and looks at ANN.

ANN (cont'd)
 He's on board?

DENHAM
 Jack has his heart set on coming. Call
 me a softie - I couldn't say no.

INT. SHIPS HOLD - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: CHOY is showing JACK to his sleeping QUARTERS, carrying BLANKETS.

JACK stares in DISBELIEF at the DINGY HOLD strewn with STRAW BALES and EMPTY ANIMAL CAGES. He reacts to the SMELL.

CHOY

This room very comfortable, plenty dim light ... fresh straw.

JACK

What'd you keep down here?

CHOY

Lion, tiger, hippo - you name it.

Jack

What, do you sell them to Zoos?

CHOY

Zoos ... circus ...

(lowers voice)

Skipper get big money for rare animal.

(alarmed)

Careful! Camel have bad accident on floor. Stain unremovable ...

JACK looks down. He's standing in a dark, viscous PUDDLE OF GUNGE.

CHOY (cont'd)

(lowers voice)

Skipper catch any animal you want. He do you real good price on rhite wino.

ENGLEHORN

(sternly)

Choy!

ANGLE ON: CHOY clams up as ENGLEHORN strolls into the hold.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)

My apologies for not being able to offer you a cabin. Have you found an enclosure to your taste?

JACK

(dryly)

Spoilt for choice.

ENGLEHORN surveys a COUPLE OF LARGE CAGES.

ENGLEHORN

What are you, Mr. Driscoll, a lion or a chimpanzee?

JACK opens a CAGE large enough to sleep in.

JACK
 Maybe, I'll take this one.

He steps back with SURPRISE as a WOODEN CRATE TOPPLES, spilling out a LARGE MEDICAL BOTTLE. CHOY looks up in SHOCK as the BOTTLE ROLLS towards ENGLEHORN who coolly TRAPS it with his FOOT.

ENGLEHORN
 I told you to lock it up.

CHOY
 (scared)
 Sorry, Skipper! Lumpy said -

ENGLEHORN
 (interrupts)
 Lumpy doesn't give the orders. What are you trying to do? Put the whole ship to sleep? Get them out of here!

ENGLEHORN hands the BOTTLE to a nervous CHOY. JACK stares at the CRATES stacked in the CAGE.

CLOSE ON: Piles of BOTTLES, all marked "Chloroform".

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VENTURE ploughs through a HEAVY SWELL.

INT. BRUCE'S CABIN - DAY

ANGLE ON: BRUCE pins movie posters from some of his previous films on his cabin wall ... He steps back, admiring them.

INT. SHIPS HOLD - DAY

ANGLE ON: JACK, sitting in the hold, TAPPING on an OLD TYPEWRITER propped up on BOXES. He is clearly very QUEASY, as he tries to stay focussed on the TYPEWRITER KEYS.

He sees JIMMY carrying a TRAY come into view, he COUGHS and CLAMS UP.

JIMMY
 Compliments of the chef -

ANGLE ON: JIMMY unloading the BOWLS of GREY looking STEW from the TRAY.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY puts the BOWL next to JACK ... who takes one look at it, and SQUEEZES his eyes closed.

JACK (O.S.)
 Oh Christ - oh God!

JIMMY
 Lambs brains in walnut sauce.

The CAGES and ROPES SWAY with each roll of the WAVES ... JIMMY walks away.

ANGLE ON: JACK looking very nauseated ...

HAYES (O.S.)

Jimmy!

JIMMY spins round, a guilty look on his face.

HAYES (cont'd)

You run those ropes up on deck like I told you?

JIMMY

Doing it now, Mr. Hayes.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY tries to slip past, but HAYES grabs his WRIST.

HAYES

How about you return Mr. Driscoll's pen first?

CLOSE ON: An expensive FOUNTAIN PEN drops from JIMMY'S HAND and clatters to the floor. QUICK as an eel, JIMMY scampers AWAY.

HAYES shakes his head, and picks up the PEN ... hands it back.

HAYES (cont'd)

He doesn't mean any harm. I'll keep him out of your way.

JACK

No, it's okay.

HAYES

It's just he likes it down here, it's where I found him ... four years ago ... stowed away in one of them cages. His arm was broken in two places, he was wilder than half the animals in here. Still won't tell me where he came from - all I know, it wasn't any place good.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DAY

ANGLE ON: JIMMY is sorting NETS up on DECK. Nearby HAYES rests against the railing.

HAYES

You gotta straighten up. You don't want to be on this ship for the rest of your life.

JIMMY

I do.

HAYES

No, you don't, Jimmy. You wanna get yourself educated. Give yourself some options. Take this serious.

JIMMY

I do, Mr. Hayes, I do! Look, I've been readin'.

JIMMY pulls a battered book out of his coat pocket. HAYES takes the book. It has a painting of a TRAMP STEAMER on the cover and the title: HEART OF DARKNESS by Joseph Conrad.

HAYES

Where did you get this?

JIMMY

(prevaricating)

I borrowed it ...

HAYES flicks the book open and sees "Property of New York Public Library" stamped on the interior of the dust jacket.

JIMMY (cont'd)

... on long term loan. Look at this.

JIMMY points to the printed byline on the back of the book.

JIMMY (cont'd)

"Adventures on a Tramp Steamer". See - just like us.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN

WIDE ON: The VENTURE as it cuts through open OCEAN.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - DAY

ANN is holding a copy of JACK'S PLAY "ISOLATION" ... she is standing in front of a mirror rehearsing her introduction.

ANN

It's nice to meet you Mr. Driscoll - I'm actually quite familiar with your work.

(trying again)

Oh yes! ... Hello, Mr Driscoll - it's so nice to meet you! Actually, I'm quite familiar with your work. I'm a huge fan!

(one more time)

I've read everything you've ever written.

ANN'S face falls in DESPAIR - she can't get rid of her nerves about meeting the famous JACK DRISCOLL.

INT. MESS ROOM - DAY

A few sailors are finishing BREAKFAST.

PRESTON, HERB and MIKE are seated at a TABLE.

ANGLE ON: MIKE packing away his HEADPHONES and SOUND RECORDING EQUIPMENT.

MIKE

I'm gonna have the ships' engines all over the dialogue - sea gulls, camera noise, wind and Christ knows what else!

DENHAM

I don't care, Mike! You're the sound recordist - make it work.

ANGLE ON: ANN in the CHIFFON DRESS, hesitating in the doorway of the MESS.

DENHAM looks up and signals her over.

DENHAM (cont'd)

Ann! Come on in! Let me introduce you to the crew! This is Herb - our cameraman ...

ANN reaches out to shake HERB'S hand.

HERB

Delighted to meet you, ma'am. And may I say what a lovely dress.

ANN

Oh! This old thing! I just - threw it on!

PRESTON

(confused to DENHAM)
Isn't that one of Maureen's costumes?

ANN

(hurriedly)
What does a girl have to do round here to get some breakfast!

DENHAM

Lumpy! You heard the lady!

ANGLE ON: LUMPY looking up. He is simultaneously shaving a SAILOR and stirring PORRIDGE.

LUMPY

Fancy some of me ... ah ... Porridge aux walnuts?

DENHAM turns back to ANN, who is staring at MIKE, who has his head down, scribbling in a NOTEBOOK.

DENHAM

Ann, I don't believe you've met -

ANN

That's alright Mr. Denham, I know who this is ...

ANGLE ON: ANN, who is staring at MIKE in quiet awe. He glances up at her, nervously.

ANN (cont'd)

Thrilled to meet you. It's an honour - to be part of this.

MIKE

(bewildered)

Gee, thanks!

ANN

Actually - I am quite familiar with your work.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM raises a quizzical EYEBROW.

MIKE

Really?

ANN

Yes, and what I most admire - is the way you have captured the voice of the common people.

MIKE

Well - that's my job.

ANN

I'm sure you've heard this before, Mr Driscoll, if you don't mind me saying - you don't look at all like your photograph ...

ANGLE ON: JACK at the bar, holding a cup of COFFEE. He turns and glances at ANN.

MIKE

Excuse me?

DENHAM

Wait a minute! Ann -

ANN

(to DENHAM)

Well, he's so much younger - in person.

(turning back to MIKE)

And much better looking.

JACK starts to walk over to the table.

DENHAM

Ann! Stop! Stop - right there -

ANGLE ON: MIKE staring past ANN'S shoulder.

ANN

I was afraid you might be one of those self obsessed literary types. You know - the tweedy twerp with his nose in a book and his head up his -

JACK snaps his BOOK closed. ANN turns around ... her face drops. JACK looks at ANN, who stares at him MORTIFIED.

JACK

It's nice to meet you too, Miss Darrow..

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR/BRUCE'S CABIN - DAY

BRUCE bumps into JIMMY who hurries away looking shifty.

BRUCE enters his CABIN ... A moustache has been drawn on all his POSTERS. BRUCE looks annoyed ... then takes another look.

CLOSE ON: BRUCE glancing in the mirror - imaging himself with a moustache. Not bad.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

WIDE ON: The VENTURE ploughs through a HEAVY SWELL.

DENHAM (V.O.)

She's standing at the railing ... she doesn't know it yet, but they're sailing towards disaster. You got that?

JACK (V.O.)

She turns ... The First Mate is staggering towards her - there's a knife sticking out of his back!

INT. SHIPS HOLD

ANGLE ON: JACK, sitting in the hold, TAPPING on an OLD TYPEWRITER propped up on BOXES. He is clearly very QUEASY, as he tries to stay focussed on the TYPEWRITER KEYS.

DENHAM is pacing the HOLD, sucking on a PIPE.

DENHAM

Wait a second, we're killing off the First Mate?

JACK
That's assuming she knows who the
First Mate is.

DENHAM
Come on, Jack! It was an honest
mistake. Ann is near-sighted - it
could happen to anyone.

JACK
I was joking, Carl.

DENHAM
The point is: she's horrified. She has
to look away. And that's when she sees
it.

JACK
See's what? What?

ANGLE ON: Unseen by either DENHAM or JACK, JIMMY has snuck down in
to the HOLD ...

DENHAM
(dramatic)
The island.

JACK
(taken aback)
We're filming on an island now? When
did this happen?

DENHAM
Jack, keep your voice down! I don't
want the crew getting spooked.

JACK
Why would they get spooked? What's it
called?

DENHAM looks SHIFTY.

DENHAM
All right ... It has a local name, but
I'm warning you, Jack, it doesn't
sound good.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY, his attention caught as he eavesdrops on the
conversation.

JACK looks at DENHAM in GROWING FRUSTRATION.

DENHAM (cont'd)
(quietly)
They call it ...
(muffled)

JIMMY POV: DENHAM leaning in and murmuring to JACK.

JACK
What's wrong with this place?

DENHAM
There's nothing officially wrong with it. Because technically it hasn't been discovered yet.

JACK gives up, feeling too seasick to argue ...

JACK
(resuming typing)
Okay ... alright ... so we arrive at this place ...
(typing)
S ... k ... u ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up in time to see JIMMY listening ... Their eyes meet ... DENHAM tries to hush JACK - too late.

JACK (cont'd)
l ... l ... Island.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - DAY

ANGLE ON: The SHIP moves through GREY SEAS ... Dolphins swim alongside.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DAY

WIDE ON: DENHAM is FILMING ANN and BRUCE. Clustered around are his crew, HERB and MIKE and PRESTON.

DENHAM
All right everyone, from the top. And ... action!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE saunters up to ANN, who is leaning on the rail, staring out to sea, in full hair and make-up.

ANN
I think this is awfully exciting! I've never been on a ship before.

BRUCE
I've never been on one with a woman before.

ANN
I guess you don't think much of women on ships, do you?

BRUCE
No, they're a nuisance.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looking intently at JIMMY and HAYES who are further down the DECK ... talking quietly.

ANGLE ON: HAYES shoots DENHAM an ALARMED LOOK.

ANN (O.S.)
Well, I'll try not to be.

BRUCE (O.S.)
Just being around is trouble.

ANN (O.S.)
Well! Is that a nice thing to say!

BRUCE (O.S.)
It's a dangerous thing, having girls
on ships. They're messy and they're
unreliable!

DENHAM
(distracted)
Cut! Great!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM'S gaze returns to JIMMY and HAYES who are huddled
in a group with three more SAILORS ... word is travelling fast.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Bruce, wonderful performance. You can
relax for ten minutes.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE looking pretty pleased with himself.

DENHAM (cont'd)
That was very natural... I felt moved.

JACK looks on in disbelief.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE walking past JACK ...

BRUCE
What do you think, Driscoll? The
dialogue's got some flow now - huh?

JACK
It was pure effluence.

BRUCE
I beefed up the banter ...

JACK
Try to resist that impulse.

BRUCE
It's just a little humor, Bud - what
are you, a Bolshevik or something?

JACK watches as BRUCE saunters off ... he turns back to DENHAM.

JACK
Actors. They travel the world but all
they ever see is a mirror!

JACK looks up to see ANN looking dismayed, a MIRROR COMPACT, in her hand ...

She quickly snaps the COMPACT shut and turns away.

CLOSE ON: JACK - taken aback.

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR - DAY

ANN is making her way to the BATHROOM. She looks up as JACK rounds a corner coming the other way. They walk toward each other.

SUDDENLY the ship sways, JACK is thrown forward, but ANN manages to hold her BALANCE.

JACK
Good legs.

ANN looks at him SHARPLY.

JACK (cont'd)
Sea legs - I meant - you know ... sea legs. Not that you don't have good legs, I was just ...

JACK trails off as ANN edges past him, averting her eyes.

JACK (cont'd)
... making conversation. Jesus!
(calling)
Miss Darrow!

ANN stops and turns ...

JACK (cont'd)
About the scene - today, with you and Bruce -

ANN
I know, it wasn't what you wrote. But Mr Baxter felt very strongly that when a man likes a woman - then he must ignore her. And if things turn really hostile ... no?

JACK
Interesting theory.

ANN
I know ... I should have -

JACK
It wasn't what I had intended ... but it -

ANN
I'm sorry - I was ...

JACK
You made it your own ...

ANN
I was nervous.

JACK
It was funny, actually ... you were
funny.

ANN
Please - don't say another word. Good
night.

ANN goes to close her CABIN DOOR.

JACK
Miss Darrow ...

ANN looks at him.

JACK (cont'd)
You don't have to be nervous.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - SUNSET

CLOSE ON: DENHAM standing behind the CAMERA with HERB and MIKE.
DENHAM is caught up in the scene and is EMOTING FURIOUSLY.

ANGLE ON: ANN RUNNING out on to the DECK of the VENTURE in a
GLITTERING GOWN. She is SIGHING and CRYING in a MELODRAMATIC kind
of way ...

ANGLE ON: JACK approaching, he is reading pages in his HAND, he
looks up just as ...

ANN turns, TEARS on her cheeks.. lit by the GOLDEN RAYS of the
SETTING SUN.

ANN stares at JACK, momentarily forgetting where she is. He stares
back at her.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM catching the EXCHANGE of LOOKS. He takes the
script pages off JACK and shoos him away ...

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - DUSK

ANGLE ON: DENHAM & ENGLEHORN talk out the front of the WHEELHOUSE.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN'S POV of SHIPPING CHARTS.

DENHAM
We're close. Head south-west.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN leaning over SHIPPING CHARTS. DENHAM hovers nearby in the doorway.

ENGLEHORN

There's no land south-west for thousands of miles. It takes us way outside the shipping lanes.

ENGLEHORN turns and confronts DENHAM.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)

I won't sail blind in these waters.

DENHAM

I'll make it worth your while.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN ... tempted by the offer of more money, but his instincts are telling him to not to agree.

ENGLEHORN

There's nothing out there.

DENHAM

Then you've nothing to lose.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN: conflicted.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - DUSK

WIDE ON: THE VENTURE steams on as the SUN falls slowly behind the horizon ...

INT. MESS ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM & PRESTON are seated at a table, talking quietly.

ANGLE ON: HAYES enters the MESS ... HAYES saunters over to PRESTON & DENHAM.

HAYES

If someone were to tell you this ship is headed for Singapore, what would you say?

ANGLE ON: LUMPY is standing quietly honing a knife with a whetstone ... it makes a sharp sound ...

LUMPY

I would say they was full of it, Mr. Hayes. We turned south-west last night.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up sharply ... HAYES is standing over him.

DENHAM

Gentlemen please, we're not looking for trouble -

ANGLE ON: JIMMY enters the MESS from behind him...

JIMMY

No. You're looking for something else ...

PRESTON glances warily at DENHAM. DENHAM takes in the situation and decides to front up.

DENHAM

(quietly)

Yes we are. We're gonna find Skull Island! We're gonna find it, film it and show it to the world. For twenty five cents you get to see the last blank space on the map!

LUMPY

I wouldn't be so sure of that.

PRESTON

What do you mean?

LUMPY

Seven years ago, me and Mr Hayes - we were working our passage on a Norwegian barque.

HAYES

We picked up a castaway - found him in the water - he'd been drifting for days.

LUMPY

His ship had run aground on an island, way West of Sumatra. An island hidden in fog. He spoke of a huge wall, built so long ago - no one knew who had made it ... A wall a hundred foot high ... as strong today as it was, ages ago.

PRESTON

Why did they build the wall?

SILENCE ...

LUMPY

The castaway - he spoke of a creature,
neither beast nor man, but something
monstrous, living behind that wall...

DENHAM

A lion or a tiger. A man-eater. That's
how all these stories start.

PRESTON

(to LUMPY)

What else did he say?

LUMPY

Nothing. We found him the next morning
... he'd stuck a knife through his
heart.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON looking ASHEN ... DENHAM breaks the GRIM MOOD.

DENHAM

Sorry fellas, you'll have to do better
than that. Monsters belong in B
movies!

ANGLE ON: PRESTON & DENHAM making a rapid exit.

HAYES

If you find this place -

DENHAM and PRESTON stop and turn back ...

HAYES (cont'd)

If you go ashore with your friends and
your cameras ... you won't come back
... Just so long as you understand
that.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

The ENGINEERS shovel more COAL into the FURNACE ... The relentless
rhythm of the SHIPS PISTON'S PUMPING UP and DOWN continues ...

INT. PRESTON'S CABIN - NIGHT

PRESTON LYING AWAKE FREAKING OUT intercut with close ups of THE
MAP WITH THE WORDS 'FOG'.

WIDE ON: THE STERN of the VENTURE cuts through the swell then
AERIAL up over the top of the boat.

INT. VENTURE HOLD - NIGHT

It is late at night. JACK sits on his make shift bed, his
typewriter balanced on his lap ... intent on what he is writing.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - DUSK

ANGLE ON: ANN DANCING with JIMMY, much to the AMUSEMENT of GATHERED CREW ... CHOY is singing *Marie's Wedding* accompanied by some SAILORS playing various MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

CLOSE ON: JACK watching her ...

INT. VENTURE HOLD - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK continues typing.

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM scanning the HORIZON with BINOCULARS, ENGLEHORN comes out of the WHEELHOUSE ... some charts in his HAND ...

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

HAYES is manning the WHEEL. ENGLEHORN is staring at the CHARTS, a CIGARETTE in his hand. There is a PALPABLE sense of tension in the AIR.

HAYES
(tense)
How long do you expect us to stay out here?

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN puts his cigarette out, ignoring HAYES.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN is pacing the cabin. She is wearing a SHAWL over pyjamas. She smiles as she turns pages of a loose leaf manuscript. ANN looks up at JACK.

ANN
(surprised)
You're writing a stage comedy?

JACK
I'm writing it for you.

ANN looks at him, taken aback.

ANN
Why would you do that?

JACK
Why would I write a play for you?

ANN
Yes.

JACK
Isn't it obvious?

ANN
Not to me.

JACK
Well, it's in the sub-text.

ANN
I guess I must've missed it.

JACK
It's not about words ...

ANN looks at him uncertainly ... as JACK moves towards her ...
He takes her in his arms and kisses her.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THE RADIO OPERATOR receiving MESSAGE.

CUT TO:

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK and ANN still KISSING.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The RADIO OPERATOR hands a piece of paper to ENGLEHORN.

RADIO OPERATOR
Message for you, Captain.

EXT. VENTURE/OCEAN - NIGHT

AERIAL: The VENTURE cuts a wide arc through the sea as the SHIP
slowly turns ...

EXT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM, RUNNING up the STAIRS to the WHEELHOUSE.

DENHAM
(calling)
What's going on?

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

HAYES manning the WHEEL, looks at DENHAM briefly ...

DENHAM

Hayes! Why are we turning around?

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN enters the CABIN ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
(blustering)

Englehorn, you can't just ...

ENGLEHORN
(curt)

Outside!

EXT. WHEELHOUSE, VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ENGLEHORN

There's a warrant out for your arrest.
Did you know that? I've been ordered
to divert to Rangoon.

DENHAM

Another week - I haven't got a film
yet. Please - I have risked everything
I have on this!

ENGLEHORN

No, Denham - you risked everything I
have.

DENHAM

What do you want? Tell me what you
want? I'll give you anything.

ENGLEHORN regards DENHAM with cool detachment ...

ENGLEHORN

I want you off my ship.

ENGLEHORN heads back to the DOOR of the WHEELHOUSE.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)

Set a course for Rangoon, Mr Hayes.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE as it ploughs through the SWELL.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

DENHAM is leaning over the railing.

DENHAM

I'm finished. It's over for me, Jack.

JACK

How did you think this would end,
Carl?

INT. WHEELHOUSE, VENTURE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: HAYES at the WHEEL, looking down at the SHIP'S
COMPASS ... it is swinging wildly to and fro.

HAYES
(calling)

Captain ...

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN looks at the compass with CONCERN. He takes
the wheel from HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Check our position. Use the stars.

ANGLE ON: HAYES steps outside the WHEELHOUSE, carrying a
SEXTANT. ... he looks up at the SKY and his face hardens with
concern.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN looks across as HAYES appears at the
WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

HAYES
(ominous)
There are no stars, Captain.

CUT TO:

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The MAP as it SLOWLY rotates in JACK'S HANDS.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM leaning on the RAILING staring absently out to
SEA. Behind him JACK is looking at the MAP in his HANDS.

JACK
What is that?

DENHAM
(distracted)
What?

CLOSE ON: JACK'S EYE is caught by something on the PAPER. He
shifts the MAP around, turning it upside down.

JACK
That.

JACK walks over to the railing and hands the MAP to DENHAM.

DENHAM

I don't know ... what is it, a coffee stain?

DENHAM looks hard at the map, suddenly a look of intrigue dawning on his face.

SLOW PUSH IN on a STRANGE SMUDGE-LIKE MARKING ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM is CAPTIVATED ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM slowly looks up from the MAP, a look of HOPE kindles in his EYES.

CLOSE ON: the STRANGE SMUDGE-LIKE MARKING. An IMAGE begins to become clear - a GORILLA-LIKE FACE.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: the sudden blast of the SHIP'S FOG HORN.

DENHAM's eyes shift upwards ...

AT THAT MOMENT a GUST of WIND plucks the MAP from DENHAM'S HAND and blows it overboard ... whirling it out to SEA ...

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The MAP FLOATING on the INKY WATER as the VENTURE steams away ...

... into a HUGE BANK of FOG that seems to melt out of the DARKNESS!

Another BLAST from the FOG HORN echoes across the silent ocean.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

PRESTON moves along the DECK ... Staring uneasily at the FOG.

VARIOUS ANGLES: Even the seasoned crew look unnerved.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY up in the CROW'S NEST ... he is reading *HEART OF DARKNESS* by torchlight.

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE sails into THICKENING FOG.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN at the WHEEL ... he barks at the HELMSMAN.

ENGLEHORN

Station the for'head lookout, and get me the depth by lead-line!

HELMSMAN
Aye, Captain.

The HELMSMAN hurries away.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE steams through the FOG BANK ...

ANGLE ON: A CREWMAN throws a LEAD-LINE over the side. CONCERNED CREWMEN hurry to their stations.

CREWMAN
(calling)
Thirty fathoms ... no bottom!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

HAYES is tense. ENGLEHORN remains focussed, his eyes fixed ahead.

ENGLEHORN
Reduce speed, steerage way only.

HAYES swings the TELEGRAPH LEVERS.

HAYES
Dead slow ahead, both.
(beat)
You should stop the ship.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN spins the WHEEL.

ENGLEHORN
15 degrees Port.
(beat)
We're getting out of here, Mr. Hayes
... we'll find clear conditions.

CREWMAN (O.S.)
(calling)
We have seabed!

CLOSE ON: HAYES rushes out of the WHEELHOUSE.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: the CREWMAN with the LEAD LINE shouts up at HAYES.

CREWMAN
(alarmed)
Twenty-five fathoms!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: HAYES rushes to the WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

HAYES
We're shallowing!

ENGLEHORN looks with despair at the THICKENING FOG ahead. He starts spinning the WHEEL.

ENGLEHORN
20 degrees starboard!

HAYES
(urgent)
Captain, you don't know where the hell
you're going!

ENGLEHORN glares at HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Get me another reading!

HAYES leaves ...

HAYES
(yelling)
Another reading!

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK looks alarmed as CREWMEN hurry past.

DENHAM walks away from him, towards the front of the SHIP.

CREWMAN
Twenty-two fathoms!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN peers uneasily out at the FOG ...

ENGLEHORN
Douse the lights!

HELMSMAN
Aye, aye Captain ...

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

AERIAL: THE VENTURE sails through FOG.

CREWMAN
(calling)
Ten fathoms!

ANGLE ON: JIMMY looking around ... confused.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY'S eyes SUDDENLY WIDEN in DISBELIEF ... he leaps to his feet, unable to summon the power of speech!

ANGLE ON: A HUGE ROCK FACE looms out of the FOG straight AHEAD!

JIMMY
(yelling)
Wall! There's a wall ahead!!!

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN ... a look of DISBELIEF on his FACE.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE sails directly towards a HUGE WALL which rises up 200 feet into the sky! The SHIP is DWARFED by the monstrous structure.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN stares at the LOOMING WALL, unable to believe his eyes ... he starts SPINNING the WHEEL hard to STARBOARD!

ENGLEHORN
Stop engines!

ANGLE ON: HAYES slams the TELEGRAPH to "STOP"

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is drawn to the FORWARD RAILING of the SHIP, looking up at the VAST WALL of ROCK towering over them in AWE.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE SLOWS, but its weight is carrying it forward ...

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: A TERRIFIED JIMMY braces himself for impact.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ENGLEHORN searches desperately through the thick FOG.

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JIMMY, a look of TERROR on his FACE.

EXT. VENTURE- FOGGY NIGHT

CRUNCH! The BOW of the SHIP crumples in to the WALL!

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN rushes out of a door, on to the DECK, alarmed at the PANIC on the SHIP.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM looks in utter AWE at the WALL.

INT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN yells at HAYES.

ENGLEHORN
Give me some power! Half astern, both!

HAYES
Half astern, both, Captain!

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK looks with horror as a JAGGED ROCK looms out of the FOG off the starboard bow.

JACK
Rocks!

EXT. CROWSNEST - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JIMMY spinning around as he sees ROCKS surrounding the SHIP.

JIMMY
(yelling)
Rocks to starboard ... to port ...
rocks everywhere!

INT. VENTURE WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN lets go of the WHEEL rushing towards the WHEELHOUSE DOOR.

ENGLEHORN
Take the wheel, Hayes!

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN rushes on to the DECK and looks with HORROR as he realises his SHIP is trapped amid a LABYRINTH of ROCKS.

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

The VENTURE lolls WITHOUT POWER in the heavy swell.

The HEAVY THROB of the ENGINES regain strength ... the reverse propellers pull the ship away, but still without adequate control.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN hurries up the STAIRS ... she clutches the RAILING for support and reels off balance, literally FALLING into JACK'S ARMS as the side of the VENTURE CRUNCHES against rock.

EXT. VENTURE - FOGGY NIGHT

The IMPACT sends the VENTURE into a SLOW SPIN. As the SHIP sinks in the trough of a WAVE, MORE ROCKS emerge from the WATER around it.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

JACK looks down at ANN - he still has hold of her.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN staggers into the WHEELHOUSE, slamming the TELEGRAPH LEVER forward.

ENGLEHORN
Full ahead!

ENGLEHORN takes the WHEEL from HAYES.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

HAYES runs OUTSIDE

HAYES
Rocks to port, Captain!

EXT. OCEAN - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The VENTURE rides the SWELL towards CAMERA.

SUDDENLY!

A SICKENING GROAN OF METAL ... as the VENTURE RUNS AGROUND on HIDDEN ROCKS! HAYES looks in HORROR as he comes within inches of the rock outcrop.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - FOGGY NIGHT

ANGLE ON: DENHAM watches as a HUGE STONE FACE - part of the ROCK OUTCROP they have grounded on - slides to a halt just off the VENTURE'S BOW. Weathered ... eroded away ... carved by the hand of some ANCIENT PEOPLE.

ANGLE ON: A breathless JIMMY scuttles backwards as the CROWSNEST settles against the ROCK.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN shuts the engines down as his ship GRINDS sickeningly against the rock ...

... STUCK FAST.

PANDEMONIUM ON DECK!

ANGLE ON: HAYES, unable to believe his eyes as he STARES up at the LOOMING ROCK.

DENHAM stares at the EERIE SILHOUETTE of an ISLAND, visible through the thinning FOG. JAGGED PEAKS rise from a ROCKY SHORELINE. CRUMBLING RUINS cling to BARREN CLIFFS.

ANN steps closer, a LOOK of total DISBELIEF on her FACE.

INT. VENTURE ENGINE ROOM - FOGGY DAWN

CLOSE ON: JETS of WATER are squirting into the ENGINE ROOM, through cracks between RIVETED PLATES.

HAYES supervises STOKERS frantically opening valves on the PUMPS. OLD MATTRESSES are being shoved up against the LEAKS.

ENGLEHORN arrives, looking GRIM.

ENGLEHORN

Hayes!

HAYES

She's taken a pounding ...

ENGLEHORN

What about the prop?

HAYES

Shaft's not bent, far as we can tell,
but she's stuck hard against the rock -

A LOUD GROAN as the SHIP shifts against the ROCKS.

At that moment JIMMY comes bursting into the ENGINE ROOM.

JIMMY

Captain! You'd better come up quick!

EXT. VENTURE DECK / OFFSHORE SKULL ISLAND - FOGGY DAWN

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN, HAYES and JIMMY emerge onto the DECK as the MILKY LIGHT of DAWN washes over the SHIP.

CLOSE ON: HERB holds the CAMERA as DENHAM cranks the HANDLE.

POV: A WHALER - a small lifeboat - is being ROWED away from the VENTURE towards the SHORE of the ISLAND. DENHAM, JACK and ANN, HERB, MIKE, BRUCE and FOUR SAILORS are packed into the tiny boat.

HAYES

You want me to bring them back?

ENGLEHORN

I don't give a damn about Carl Denham
... I want this ship fixed and ready
to float on the next high tide. We're
leaving Mr. Hayes.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND COAST - DAY

WIDE ON: The WHALER rows towards the ISLAND passing great STONE
RUINS jutting out of the WATER. The HUGE WALL rises out of the
WAVES and disappears INLAND.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is balanced at the front of the BOAT, filming as
the SAILORS row ashore ...

DENHAM

(quietly)

Can you believe this, Jack? ... Skull
Island! We got our picture!

ANGLE ON: JACK as he STARES up at the RUINS ...

CLOSE ON: ANN, as if COMPELLED, turns and looks over the side of
the BOAT, into the SEA ... her breathe catches!

ANN'S POV: Beneath the WATER the HIDEOUSLY, DISTORTED FACE of a
FALLEN STATUE gapes up at her ...

ANGLE ON: ANN sitting huddled to one side of the BOAT ... drawing
her RAIN-SLICKER closer around her ... ANN'S FINGERS edge across
the seat and curl over JACK'S HAND ...

WIND WHISTLES through the GAPING HOLES in the EDIFICE ... a CREEPY
MOANING SOUND that mixes with the DEEP BOOM of the CRASHING WAVES

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - DAY

ANGLE ON: The WHALER runs onto a tiny, stony BEACH. SHEER CLIFFS
rise straight up from the SHORE.

DENHAM, JACK, ANN, BRUCE, HERB, MIKE, PRESTON and TWO SAILORS
clamber out.

INT. ANCIENT STAIRCASE - DAY

WIDE ON: DENHAM leads HERB, PRESTON, JACK, ANN, BRUCE, MIKE and
the TWO SAILORS up a DARK, VAULTED TUNNEL. They look in silence at
the primitive signs of civilisation.

ANGLE ON: ANN looks up the STAIRCASE nervously ... taking in the
sight of the HUMAN SKULLS lining the walls.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

JIMMY looks up, hollow-eyed ... in his hand is the copy of "HEART OF DARKNESS". HAYES stands nearby.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY closing the BOOK, an ashen expression on his FACE.

JIMMY

Why does Marlow keep going up the river, why doesn't he turn back?

HAYES

(shrugs)

There's a part of him that wants to, Jimmy. A part, deep inside himself that sounds a warning, but there's another part, that needs to know ... that needs to defeat the thing which makes him afraid.

CLOSE ON: HAYES pauses, filled with a sudden sense of DREAD. He reluctantly turns, his eyes drawn to the creepy CARVED HEAD towering above the SHIP.

HAYES v/o

"We could not understand, because we were too far ... and could not remember, because we were travelling in the night of First Ages ..."

CLOSE ON: DENHAM obsessed ... cranking the handle of his CAMERA.

HAYES V/O (cont'd)

... of those Ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign and no memories ...

INT. BURIAL CHAMBER - DAY

DENHAM leads the GROUP across a RICKETY BAMBOO BRIDGE, spanning a section of BROKEN PATH. They pass BROKEN TOMBS, burial niches containing glimpses of MUMMIES.

AHEAD ... DAYLIGHT streams in as they near the end of the STAIRCASE. They make their way over large stone blocks, caved in from above ... QUIET, TENSE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAY

THUNDER RUMBLES overhead as DENHAM, JACK, ANN, HERB, BRUCE, PRESTON, MIKE and 2 SAILORS clamber out of the RUINED TUNNEL MOUTH.

DENHAM stays low, and hurries to a VANTAGE POINT. The OTHERS FOLLOW ...

HAYES V/O

We are accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there, there you could look at a thing monstrous and free."

CRANE UP: to reveal a PLATEAU below them, covered with the RUINS of an ANCIENT BURIAL GROUND ... stone MAUSOLEUMS and TOMBS, smashed open and destroyed.

EXT. VENTURE - DAY

ANGLE ON: JIMMY closes the BOOK.

JIMMY

(quiet)

It's not an adventure story - is it, Mr. Hayes.

HAYES

(quiet)

No, Jimmy, it's not.

HAYES' EYES drift back to the STATUE. JIMMY follows his GAZE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAY

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he leads the group into the village.

SPREAD among the RUINS is a VILLAGE - a crude shanty town, created by a more recent and far less sophisticated culture ... ramshackle GRASS and BAMBOO HUTS.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON looking around, UNNERVED ...

PRESTON

It's deserted ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM cranking the CAMERA as he rolls film on the VILLAGE.

DENHAM

Of course it's deserted. Use your eyes, Preston. The place is a ruin! Nobody's lived here for hundreds of years.

At the moment they hear the sound of the SOBBING of a HUMAN CHILD ...

ANGLES ON: ANN, PRESTON, JACK, DENHAM, HERB ... not knowing if they heard what they just heard ...

ROW UPON ROW of sharpened BAMBOO SPIKES line the top of the WALL.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... His eyes suddenly widen in disbelief.

ANGLE ON: A SMALL CHILD standing on the DUSTY PATH ahead of them. She stares up at them, with weird FERAL EYES.

THE CHILD slowly raises an arm towards the watching GROUP ... in a pointing gesture. A suspended moment ... DENHAM steps forward.

ANN
(whispering)
Mr Denham ... I think we should go back.

DENHAM
I will handle this.

DENHAM pulls a NESTLE BAR from his pocket and walks up to the CHILD. DENHAM waves the chocolate around.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Look chocolate ... you like chocolate?

The CHILD'S EYES drill into DENHAM. RAIN STARTS FALLING.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Good to eat! Take it ... take it!

The CHILD steps back. DENHAM grabs the CHILD by the wrist and attempts to press the chocolate bar into her HAND. The CHILD struggles and CRIES OUT!

BRUCE.
For Godsake, Denham, leave the native alone.

JACK
She doesn't want the chocolate!

ANGLE ON: VILLAGERS begin to melt out of the shadows, OLD PEOPLE, YOUNG PEOPLE, WOMEN stare HOLLOW-EYED at DENHAM as he wrestles with the CHILD.

The CHILD sinks her TEETH into DENHAM'S WRIST. He yells, releasing his grip. The CHILD runs off ... in to the arms of an OLD WOMAN
...

The GROUP starts to nervously walk forward, DENHAM gestures impatiently.

DENHAM

It's alright - it's just a bunch of women and old folks ... they're harmless.

ANGLE ON: ANN looks STARTLED as MIKE suddenly LURCHES past her.

ANN

Mike?

MIKE turns, gasping, staring at her helplessly! And then FALLS face forward, a JAGGED SPEAR stuck in his BACK!

ANN steps back in HORROR and SCREAMS!

A RUMBLING, BESTIAL ROAR fills the VILLAGE as if in answer to ANN'S CRY ... LOUD and CLOSE ... for a brief moment everyone freezes ...

FAST ACTION: NATIVE MEN emerge as if from NOWHERE ... before anyone can react, they are roughly SHOVED and PULLED into the MIDST of the FURIOUS NATIVE MOB.

In the SHADOWS the agitated WOMEN of the VILLAGE start rocking and wailing in unison.

IMAGES: STRANGE FACES, smeared with MUD ... SCREECHING MOUTHS. BRUCE is HELD BACK by SEVERAL NATIVES as he struggles. JACK pulls ANN close to him, trying to protect her. ANN is wrenched from him ...

She struggles against her captors ...

ANGLE ON: A OLD-WOMAN moves through the midst of the VILLAGERS ... her gaze fixed on ANN, muttering curses, eyes burning with a dark fury ...

DENHAM is YELLING at the NATIVES ... he is SHOVED to the GROUND.

The NATIVES SHRIEK. One of the SAILORS is DRAGGED forward, his HEAD pushed against a FLAT STONE SLAB, and CLUBBED TO DEATH.

ANGLE ON: In the midst of the CONFUSION, JACK sees the OLD SHA-WOMAN screaming at ANN. She starts chanting with rising HYSTERICS ...

SHA-WOMAN

(chanting)

*Larri yu sano korê ... Kweh yonê
kah'weh ad-larr ... torê Kông.*

CLOSE ON: JACK struggles, fists flying - he is clubbed and DROPS like a stone.

ANN SCREAMS ... the BEAST ROARS in the DISTANCE!

DENHAM punches a NATIVE ... they haul him forward and thrust his HEAD onto the BLOOD SPLATTERED STONE ... NATIVE CLUBS rise into the air ...

... a GUNSHOT!

The NATIVES hesitate, as if STUNNED ... then SCATTER.

ENGLEHORN, HAYES and an ARMED GROUP of SAILORS race into the VILLAGE!

ENGLEHORN roughly hauls DENHAM to his feet.

ENGLEHORN
Seen enough?

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: As EACH WAVE hits the VENTURE, it GROANS and SCRAPES against the ROCKS - SHIFTING SLIGHTLY.

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN, desperate ... yelling at his CREW, above the HOWLING WIND.

ENGLEHORN
(yelling)
Lighten the ship! Anything that's not bolted down goes overboard!

ANGLES ON: As WAVES crash against the STRANDED SHIP, LUMPY, JIMMY, CHOY and the other SAILORS throw TABLES, CHESTS ... KITCHEN EQUIPMENT into the SEA.

INT. DENHAM'S CABIN - NIGHT

DENHAM is swigging from a HIP FLASK. HERB and PRESTON are gathered gloomily around a TABLE, while DENHAM strides around the ROOM, swigging and talking in an animated fashion. The STORM BATTERS and CRASHES outside.

DENHAM
We got away. We gotta be grateful for that gentlemen.

PRESTON
What about Mike? He didn't get away - he's still there!

DENHAM
(sharply)
Mike died doing what he believed in! He didn't die for nothing. And I'll tell you something else - I'm going to finish this film - for Mike.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 I'm going to finish it and donate the
 proceeds to his wife and kids -
 because that man is a hero and he
 deserves nothing less!

HERB
 Hear! Hear!

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN alone in her CABIN, is overwhelmed by a terrible SENSE of
 FOREBODING ...

SUDDENLY! A WAVE crashes against her WINDOW! SHE SPINS AROUND
 IN FRIGHT.

As she turns slowly she catches sight of her terrified reflection
 in the MIRROR.

EXT. ROCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: NATIVES are moving towards the VENTURE ...

CUT TO:

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

A growing sense of UNEASE fills ANN with DREAD.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: using LONG BAMBOO POLES, A NATIVE silently VAULTS from
 ROCK to ROCK over the STORMY SEAS ... towards the GROUNDED SHIP

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: A SKULL ISLANDER LANDS on the BACK DECK of the
 VENTURE UNSEEN! He CROUCHES in the shadows ...

INT. MESS ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK sprawled on a BENCH SEAT in the MESS ... a LOUD
 METALLIC CREAK wakes him up. He rolls over, tries to focus ...
 he touches his hand to the back of his HEAD ... when he
 withdraws his hand ... his fingers are covered in BLOOD.

SUDDENLY LUMPY and a SAILOR pick the TABLE up from under him and
 carry it outside.

CUT TO:

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN, a sense of foreboding...

EXT. VENTURE DECK - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK staggers on to the BACK DECK, clutching a railing to steady himself. He suddenly discovers a NATIVE NECKLACE on the DECK ...

... JACK stares at the NECKLACE, decorated with a MONKEY SKULL, a look of HORRIFIED REALIZATION growing. JIMMY is racing past, JACK grabs him:

JACK
Where's Ann?

JIMMY
She went to her cabin.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

ANN alone in her CABIN. She looks down and notices her HANDS are TREMBLING.

SUDDENLY! Her CABIN door starts to rattle. She swings around in FRIGHT, to see cabin's DOOR HANDLE - which is turning ...

ANGLE ON: ANN'S FACE as her CABIN DOOR opens ...

INT. VENTURE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK desperately pushes past CREW in the CROWDED, panicked CORRIDOR, trying to get to ANN'S CABIN ...

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE at the MERCY of the RAGING SEAS as it moves even closer to the REEF.

INT. VENTURE CORRIDORS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK loses his footing as the SHIP lurches VIOLENTLY. He lands on the floor ...

CLOSE ON: JACK looks down the length of the CORRIDOR ... the DOOR of ANN'S CABIN is swinging open.

INT. ANN'S CABIN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The SHIP ROLLS as JACK staggers into ANN'S CABIN ... SHOCKED to find it EMPTY with clear signs of a STRUGGLE.

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: HAYES desperately trying to control the WHEEL.

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE floats free!

A LOUD CHEER goes up from the CREW!

INT. WHEELHOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN shouts the command ...

ENGLEHORN
Wheel amidship ... Full ahead, both
engines.

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VENTURE plows between the JAGGED ROCKS off toward
OPEN SEA ...

INT. ANN'S CABIN

JACK bursts into the CABIN. CLOTHES are SCATTERED EVERYWHERE.
clearly a sign of a struggle.

JACK
Ann!

INT. VENTURE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK races down the CORRIDOR finding a DEAD CREW
MEMBER lying below the STAIRS!

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN in the NATIVE'S GRIP ... they are being PULLED
through the STORMY SEAS onto the SHORE, by the other NATIVES
HAULING on a ROPE. ANN is HALF DROWNED.

The VENTURE is barely visible moving through the SEA SPRAY.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN comes out of the WHEELHOUSE - JACK is on the
LOWER DECK.

JACK (O.S.)
Stop! Stop! Turn back, we have to turn
back!

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN turns - he can hear the alarm in JACK's VOICE.

JACK (cont'd)
They've taken Ann!

CLOSE ON: ENGLEHORN, he glances back at the ISLAND as the VENTURE ploughs towards the open sea.

ANGLE ON: An ORANGE GLOW of FIRELIGHT is VISIBLE, emanating from the NATIVE VILLAGE.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN being DRAGGED through a FRENZY OF FEARFUL Skull Island NATIVES. GLIMPSES of WAILING ... COWERING ... CHANTING.

FLAMES BLAZE along the TOP OF THE WALL.

CLOSE ON: A withered old WOMAN, EYES RED in some DRUG induced TRANCE, speaks in TONGUES. ANN is forced to her knees.

The OLD WOMAN splashes some foul LIQUID into her face ... younger WOMEN tie BRACELETS on her wrists.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: COVERS are pulled off lifeboats as the SHIP'S CREW gather EQUIPMENT.

CLOSE ON: HAYES yelling commands:

HAYES
All hands going ashore ...

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. ENGLEHORN'S CABIN - NIGHT

HAYES V/O
... report to stations! Jump to it!

ENGLEHORN LIFTS UP THE WINDOW SEAT ... revealing a ROW of TOMMY GUNS hidden there.

ANGLES ON: GUNS are handed out.

EXT. VENTURE DECKS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: EQUIPMENT and RIFLES are THROWN IN. The ENTIRE SHIP'S CREW is MOBILIZING.

HAYES (V.O.)
What the hell are you doing? You want that boat to sink? Stow those rifles midships - come on, hurry it up!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM surreptitiously supervises HERB and PRESTON as they load CAMERA EQUIPMENT on board one of the BOATS ...

ANGLE ON: JACK loading a BOX of AMMUNITION on to the other BOAT ... he looks tensely at the FIRES burning on the ISLAND.

ANGLE ON: The TWO BOATS are swung out and LOWERED.

HAYES (cont'd)
Lower away!

EXT. VENTURE - NIGHT

The TWO BOATS ROW AWAY from the SHIP, packed with SHIP'S CREW ... in one BOAT are DENHAM, PRESTON and HERB - clutching CAMERA EQUIPMENT.

ANGLE ON: JACK in the OTHER BOAT, looking GRIM and DETERMINED.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND COAST - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: the TINY BOATS are tossed in the RAGING SEAS. SAILORS try to STEER them towards the SHORE, as they bounce off ROCKS and STATUES.

EXT. TOP OF WALL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: FLAMING TORCHES ignite POOLS of OIL along the length of the TOP of the WALL.

ANGLES ON: ANN'S WRIST'S are TIED outstretched to BAMBOO POSTS. She is on the SUMMIT of the WALL, lit by the flickering FLAMES ... looking out onto DARK TREE TOPS.

FLAMES DANCE ... DRUMS BEAT in a RITUALISTIC FRENZY.

ANGLE ON: SKULL ISLANDERS knock away WOODEN PLUGS, releasing the FLAMING OIL to pour down rough CHANNELS hewn into the STONE of the WALL ... it runs and falls down CHUTES into POOLS carved into the GROTTO WALLS.

WIDE ON: The CLIFF WALLS light up as FLAMES within LARGE CARVED CHAMBERS create huge backlit PAGAN FACES.

FIRELIGHT dances across the nightmarish JUNGLE ... DISTANT TREES start to TREMBLE, their canopies swaying as if PUSHED by an UNSEEN FORCE.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... looking on with HORROR at the MOVEMENT in the JUNGLE below her. She struggles against the ROPES, to no avail.

CLOSE ON: The OLD WOMAN, eyes rolled up in her head.

CLOSE ON: A NECKLACE is placed over ANN'S head.

ANGLE ON: A SHAMAN starts BEATING out a RHYTHM on a LOG DRUM ... SKULL ISLANDERS fall to their KNEES ... a MOANING WAIL rises ... the DRUMMING builds to a FRENZIED CLIMAX.

WIDE ON: On the OTHER SIDE, the WALL falls away vertically into a ROCKY GROTTA, leading into the DENSE TANGLED JUNGLE of SKULL ISLAND.

SUDDENLY ANN feels herself DRAGGED FORWARD ... the POSTS she is tied to are MOVING, pulling her TOWARDS the EDGE of the WALL! ANN digs her heels and tries to PULL AGAINST it, but is unable to stop herself being HAULED OFF THE WALL ...

... into thin air!

ANGLE ON: SKULL ISLANDERS lowering the BAMBOO ALTAR STRUCTURE DOWN, slowly releasing the flaxen ROPE.

ANN is dangling from the POSTS by her WRISTS, as the HINGED FRAMEWORK swings her out over the CHASM, LOWERING her towards a ROCK PROMONTORY on the EDGE of the FOREST.

ANGLE ON: ANN is LOWERED onto the ROCK PROMONTORY, which resembles an ALTAR ... ANN struggles to free herself, but she is tied fast to the posts, a TINY FIGURE illuminated by enormous GLOWING CARVINGS ... the WALL towering up behind her.

ANGLES ON: ANN squirms ... as the FOREST BELOW HER BROILS and SEETHES! TREES are violently SWAYING ... above the crescendo of the NATIVE FRENZY, ANGRY BESTIAL ROARS can be heard.

SKULL ISLANDERS line the TOP of the WALL, their WAILING and CHANTING interrupted by a LOUD SPLINTERING SOUND.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND SHORE - NIGHT

The SHIP'S BOATS pull up at the foot of the great STAIRCASE. JACK leaps out of the BOAT and races up the stairs.

EXT. WALL GROTTA - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN lifts her head ... something VERY BIG is moving towards HER.

ANN catches a BRIEF GLIMPSE of a HUGE DARK SHAPE propelling itself THROUGH the JUNGLE ... the OILY SMOKE from the FIRES hangs in the air, OBSCURING HER VISION ... she can now only hear the CREATURE'S MOVEMENTS and BREATH as it draws ever closer.

ANN cowers back, pulling at her bonds.

A MASSIVE SHAPE moves through the air ... The ground SHAKES with a sudden force of IMPACT!

ANGLE ON: ANN stands trembling, as the swirling smokey cloud slowly DISSIPATES ... a GIANT LEATHERY FOOT is visible.

CLOSE ON: ANN balanced on a knife-edge of TERROR.

A SUDDEN PUFF OF WIND INSTANTLY CLEARS THE VEILING SMOKE.

ANN slowly LOOKS UP, her face filled with DREAD.

The SKULL ISLANDERS reply in UNISON ... a piercing WAIL, from the TOP of the WALL.

ANN'S strength suddenly DRAINS from her legs, and SLUMPS between the POSTS.

Before her is ... KONG!

A 25 FOOT TALL MALE GORILLA! KONG stares at ANN for a beat, leaning forward on his KNUCKLES ... then prods her with his finger.

SUDDENLY ... GUNSHOTS!

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

FRENZIED MOVEMENT: SAILORS, lead by ENGLEHORN, race into the VILLAGE firing WARNING SHOTS in the air ... SKULL ISLANDERS SCATTER in TERROR ...

EXT. WALL GROTTO - NIGHT

WIDE ON: KONG in front of ANN ... HE RISES to his full height and BEATS HIS CHEST!

KONG'S HUGE HAND snatches ANN and roughly PULLS her free of her bonds.

A DEAFENING ROAR!

ANN SCREAMS!

CLUTCHING her tightly, KONG carries ANN away from the ALTAR.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

FRENZIED MOVEMENT: SAILORS, lead by ENGLEHORN, race into the VILLAGE firing WARNING SHOTS in the air ... SKULL ISLANDERS SCATTER in TERROR ...

ANGLES ON: The SKULL ISLANDERS melt away into the darkness ... vanishing as fast as they appeared.

... from behind the WALL, the DISTANT CRY of ANN screaming for help, following by an EARTH SHUDDERING ROAR.

ENGLEHORN
(staring upwards)
What in God's name was that?

JACK
(sudden realisation)
Behind the wall!

ANGLE ON: JACK rushes to the BASE of the WALL and begins to climb
...

DENHAM hurries to the massive, heavily fortified gate.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM staring through the LATTICE WORK of sharpened bamboo ...

DENHAM'S POV: A fleeting glimpse of KONG disappearing into the depths of the jungle. In his HUGE FIST KONG clutches ANN!

EXT. TOP OF WALL - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK has reached the top of the WALL ... he races to the EDGE peering over it. Nothing ... only the primitive ALTAR, and beyond, DARK JUNGLE dissolving into BLACKNESS.

JACK'S POV: The EMPTY ROPES binding ANN'S WRISTS swing from the ALTAR POSTS.

JACK
(disbelief)
She's gone!

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - NIGHT

JACK is hurrying down from the WALL.

JACK
She's gone!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM in SHOCK ... his mind racing, fuelled by FEAR. Gradually his breathing slows and another part of his brain kicks into gear.

JACK makes brief eye contact with DENHAM, who quickly looks away.

JACK (cont'd)
Carl? What is it?
(realizing)
You saw something ...

LATER ...

ANGLE ON: BOXES of AMMUNITION and GUNS have been brought up from the beach. Lids are prised open ... AMMO distributed.

DENHAM is surrounded by JACK, ENGLEHORN and the SAILORS.

ENGLEHORN
You can take Hayes and fifteen others.
I'll put a guard on the gate until you return ... The rest of you, stay with the ship.

JACK grabs his PACK and WALKS away TOWARDS THE GATE, with LUMPY & JIMMY following.

HAYES
Not you, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Com'on Mr. Hayes, look at 'em. None of
them knows a which way to point a gun.

HAYES takes the RIFLE out of JIMMY'S HANDS.

HAYES
Stay here.

JIMMY
Miss Darrow needs me!

HAYES
No!

CLOSE ON: JIMMY, crestfallen.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM by the CAMERA BOXES with HERB and PRESTON.

DENHAM
(quietly)
Bring the tripod - and all of the film
stock.

HERB
You wanna go with the six inch lens?

DENHAM
The wide angle will do just fine.

CLOSE ON: PRESTON slings the FILM STOCK BAG over his SHOULDER.

ANGLE ON: JACK, PRESTON, HAYES, LUMPY, CHOY, BRUCE and 8 SAILORS
as ENGLEHORN surveys the GROUP. DENHAM and HERB are HAULING CAMERA
EQUIPMENT.

ENGLEHORN
You got guns, you got food, you got
ammo. You got twenty-four hours.

BRUCE
Twenty-four hours?

ENGLEHORN
This time tomorrow we haul anchor.

CLOSE ON: JACK ... as he slings his GUN on his shoulder, turns
and HEADS through the GATE.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The VOLCANIC ROCKS form a JAGGED, TORTURED LANDSCAPE of
DEEP CREVASSES and TOWERING CLIFFS. The vegetation is THICK, the
JUNGLE DARK. ANCIENT GNARLED TREES twist out of the ground, thick
LICHEN and long MOSSES hang from branches and TANGLED VINES. STEAM
RISES from festering SWAMPS ...

HAYES is LEADING DENHAM, JACK, PRESTON, LUMPY, CHOY, BRUCE and EIGHT SAILORS. HERB is limping along with the heavy CAMERA on his shoulder.

The atmosphere is TENSE ... unseen creatures scurry in the darkness, fleeing from the approaching humans.

HAYES puts his hands up ... the GROUP stops ... a STRANGE, LOW MOAN echoes from the SURROUNDING JUNGLE ... The MEN stare into the darkness ... watchful, on edge ...

EXT. KILLING GROUND - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN in KONG'S HAND, being tossed around like a rag doll as KONG RUNS through the FOREST.

ANGLE ON: KONG propels himself through the JUNGLE with EASE, barely disturbing the forest, moving with GRACE along a well used route.

CLOSE ON: ANN held fast in his GRIP. She is FLUNG wildly around as KONG BOUNDS across CHASMS, LEAPING over rivers.

ANN'S FEVERED POV: The JUNGLE SPINNING and BLURRING by. She tries to brace herself against KONG'S FINGERS, but the rigors of the journey knock her sideways like a RAG DOLL.

WIDE ON: SHAFTS of MOONLIGHT play on the faces of grotesque STATUES set into a MOSSY CLIFF.

ANGLE ON: ANN clutched tightly in KONG'S HAND. She is rigid with FEAR. KONG squats down ... he LOOKS CLOSELY at ANN.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... we see him clearly for the first time. A very old, brutish BULL GORILLA. Years of survival have left SCARS on his face. One EYE LID is mangled and his JAW is CROOKED ... leaving a huge yellowed INCISOR TOOTH jutting up.

KONG stares at ANN ... she dare not move; only her RAPID BREATHING belies her INNER TERROR.

ANGLE ON: ANN is suddenly swung UPSIDE DOWN and SHAKEN ... the ceremonial NECKLACE falls from ANN'S NECK.

CLOSE ON: ANN'S HORRIFIED FACE ... she sees HUMAN REMAINS amongst the NECKLACES! Bones ... skulls! A WHIMPERING SOUND escapes from the back of her throat.

SWIRLING UPSIDE DOWN POV: The NECKLACE lands on the ground - amid DOZENS of OTHER NECKLACES littering the clearing.

ANGLE ON: ANN is lifted UPWARDS ... KONG'S LIPS curl in a low, slow SNARL.

ANN looks at KONG, aghast, and in this moment her heightened sense of FEAR gives way to something more fundamental: SELF PRESERVATION!

KONG'S FINGERS start to OPEN - ANN seizes her chance! She suddenly PROPELS herself off his HAND! ANN DROPS 12 feet and lands heavily at KONG'S FEET. She rolls amongst grinning HUMAN SKULLS and LEG BONES ... staggers to her feet and RUNS!

KONG rises up with a ROAR, but ANN is already disappearing into the JUNGLE!

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - NIGHT

ANGLES ON: ANN desperately powering through the DENSE UNDERGROWTH. She throws herself over huge FALLEN LOGS, through TANGLED VINES. She GLANCES BACK ...

... TREES are FALLING, KONG is smashing through the undergrowth after her!

ANGLE ON: With surprising AGILITY and GRACE, KONG sweeps down from above and SCOOPS ANN off the ROCK. She barely has time to CRY OUT before being CARRIED AWAY, as KONG disappears into the DEPTHS of the ISLAND.

EXT. TANGLED VINES - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK ... hearing ANN'S DISTANT SCREAMS!

JACK

Ann!

ANGLE ON: JACK starts RUNNING towards the SOUND. DENHAM and the OTHERS follow ... JACK is barging through THICK TANGLED VEGETATION, which is growing between huge moss covered FALLEN COLUMNS.

KONG'S ENRAGED ROAR echos through the JUNGLE.

JACK (cont'd)
(yelling)

Ann!

EXT. TANGLED VINES - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: The GROUP pause at the sound of ANN'S TERRIFIED SCREAM.

CLOSE ON: JACK'S ashen face.

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - NIGHT

KONG LEAPS ACROSS CHASMS as he CARRIES ANN through the JUNGLE.

EXT. KILLING GROUND - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK picks up ANN'S NECKLACE ... a LOCK of BLONDE HAIR still tangled within it's STRANDS ...

WIDE ON: DAWN LIGHT brightens the SKY as the GROUP survey the KILLING GROUND.

LUMPY
Christ! It's a bleeding bone yard!
(horrified realization)
They've been ripped limb from limb.

JACK
(calling)
Ann! Ann!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM casts an eye over the DEBRIS STREWN GROUND ... his gaze rising to a HUGE GASH in the FOREST ...

DENHAM POV: TREES have been RIPPED from the earth where KONG has SMASHED a path through the JUNGLE ...

ANGLE ON: HAYES notices a SAILOR with a WOOLLEN HAT pulled down over his head ... the SAILOR has turned away from the GRISLY REMAINS. HAYES bats the hat off the SAILOR'S HEAD ... it's JIMMY.

JIMMY
Just keep walking, Mr. Hayes. Pretend you didn't see me.

HAYES
Jesus, Jimmy!

HAYES snatches the GUN off him ...

JIMMY
(defiant)
Hey! I need that!

HAYES
(angry)
I'm not giving you a gun!

JIMMY
You were younger than me when they gave you one!

HAYES
I was in the army. I was trained - I had a drill sergeant!

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looks at HAYES.

JIMMY
(quietly)
I just wanna help bring her back.

HAYES's expression softens. He hands the gun back to JIMMY.

HAYES
Don't make me regret it.

EXT. ROUGH TERRAIN - DAY

ANGLE ON: The GROUP'S NERVES are FRAYED ... as they continue sloggng through the difficult TERRAIN. HUGE INSECTS fly around them, AND THE GROUP try in vain to SWAT them away.

ANGLE ON: LUMPY shooting WILDLY at a HUGE BUG ...

HAYES
(growling)
Conserve your ammunition!

LUMPY GLARES at HAYES ... and SHOOTs one last time at a HUGE BUG ON A NEARBY TREE ...

EXT. RUINED VALLEY - DAY

ANGLE ON: SLIDING FEET ... down a VINE strewn slope.

PULL BACK to reveal ... the GROUP have emerged from the JUNGLE into a NARROW VALLEY, deep in the heart of SKULL ISLAND ... The VALLEY is less than 75 feet wide, flanked by sheer CLIFFS.

JACK looks up and down the VALLEY ... he wipes his brow .. the SUN is high, it is hot out of the SHADE.

ANGLE ON: LUMPY stumbling forward with a hacking SMOKER'S COUGH.

LUMPY
I'm knackered! I've gotta have a breather.

LUMPY flops down on the ground, and grabs a cigarette from behind his ear and lights up.

JACK watches as OTHER SAILORS follow suit.

JACK
Hey fellas - we don't have time for this. We've lost too much ground already! Come on, - get up!

HAYES
(quiet)
They're not about to quit on you. Cut them some slack.

JACK stares at HAYES and then sighs, resigned.

HAYES calls to the MEN ...

HAYES (cont'd)
Alright, you got five minutes!
Everybody stay in sight!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM grabs the CAMERA from HERB. Nearby PRESTON sets up the TRIPOD.

DENHAM
(hushed)

Over here. I wanna get a wide shot of
the valley.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he arrives at the top of the SLOPE, he turns
at the sound of a STRANGE NOISE ...

PUSH IN: ON DENHAM ... a look of AMAZEMENT dawning on his FACE.

CLOSE ON: JACK kneels down and stares at an unmistakable indent
in the sand: a GIANT FOOTPRINT!

LUMPY
Bloody Nora!

JACK looks up to see SAILORS gathering around.

JIMMY
Is that what took Miss Darrow?

LUMPY
(sagely)
There's only one creature capable of
leaving a footprint that size ...

ALL look up at LUMPY ...

LUMPY (cont'd)
The abominable snowman!

A ripple of FEAR spreads throughout the CROWD.

The RATTLED SAILORS mutter agreement. There is random chatter of
turning back.

HAYES kneels down beside JACK ...

HAYES
(quiet)
It's gotta be - what? Twenty - twenty-
five feet?

JACK
(grimly)
Carl saw it. Let's ask him.

HAYES looks over his SHOULDER ...

HAYES
Denham!
(no answer)
Where'd he go?

ANGLE ON: JACK walking up the VALLEY.

JACK
Carl!!!

WIDE ON: DENHAM, BRUCE and HERB arrive at the TOP of the VALLEY ... they stare transfixed at a HERD of grazing BRONTOSAURS.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is cranking the CAMERA ...

DENHAM
(low)
Walk forward, Bruce.

BRUCE
What?!

ANGLE ON: a HERD of TWELVE BRONTOSAURS are slowly moving through a WIDE CLEARING ahead.

DENHAM
You're the star of this picture! Get into character and head towards the animals.

ANGLE ON: BRUCE nervously SHUFFLES forward ...

BRUCE
What the hell kind of place is this?
(beat)
Are you sure about this, Denham???
Don't we have a stand-in for this type of thing?

DENHAM
I need you in the shot, or people will say they're fake.

BRUCE
Nobody's gonna think these are fake!

SUDDEN flash of MOVEMENT! CARNOTAURS are circling the HERD.

ANGLE ON: the BRONTOSAUR HERD looking EDGY and RESTLESS!

DENHAM
You're making them nervous! No sudden movement.

BRUCE
I'm not moving.

A LOW RUMBLING SOUND can now be heard ... the GROUND starts to SHAKE ...

PUSH IN: on BRUCE as he realizes what is about to HAPPEN!

BRUCE (cont'd)
(under his breath)
Mother of God ...

ANGLE ON: BRUCE suddenly turns and runs!

ANGLE ON: HERB is starting to get NERVOUS as DENHAM determinedly continues filming ...

WIDE ON: A sudden FALL of ROCKS ... Jack looks up!

ANGLE ON: The MEN look NERVOUS as the GROUND starts to TREMBLE beneath their feet!

JACK turns and sees: BRUCE running down the hill ...

JACK
What is it?! Where's Carl?

BRUCE slows down, attempting to appear CALM.

BRUCE
He's - he's ... um ... well, he's up there ... filming.

A LOUD ROAR!

BRUCE bolts like a STARTLED RABBIT!

SEVERAL nervous SAILORS jump up and start running.

ANGLE ON: JACK cautiously moves uphill towards the source of the LOUD RUMBLING SOUND.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and HERB appear on the brow of the HILL. They are running flat out towards JACK!

Seconds later a HERD of BRONTOSAURUS stampede down the hill after DENHAM and HERB!

DENHAM
Run Jack!

JACK
Holy Christ!

HAYES
(yelling)
Go Jimmy - Run!

EVERYONE TURNS and FLEES!

ANGLE ON: JACK running ... he looks back and sees DENHAM trip and fall!

The STAMPEDING DINOSAURS storm towards DENHAM down the NARROW VALLEY!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM is frozen to the spot, staring at the CAMERA, which is lying directly in the rampaging DINOSAUR'S PATH.

JACK turns back ... he attempts to drag DENHAM to his FEET, as DENHAM struggles to grab hold of the CAMERA and TRIPOD.

JACK
Leave it!!!

DENHAM
No!!!

DENHAM and JACK scramble to their feet and start to RUN! DENHAM cradles the CAMERA and TRIPOD in his ARMS, as the BRONTO PACK bears down on them from behind!

Spectacular TRACKING SHOT: ... The PACK of 15 CARNOTAURS are CLOSING IN on the BRONTOSAURUS HERD! A CARNOTAUR leaps onto the back of a FLEEING BRONTOSAUR, causing it to falter and slide against the cliff. TWO MORE CARNOTAURS leap onto the ailing BRONTOSAUR as the rest of the pack stream past.

DENHAM, JACK and the OTHERS are running as fast as they can ... JACK glances over his shoulder - the WALL of THUNDERING BRONTOSAUR LEGS are about to ENGULF THEM!

ANGLE ON: JACK and DENHAM suddenly find themselves in a SEA of HUGE LEGS - like wildly pounding Redwood tree trunks! The CARNOTAURS are snapping and snarling at the LEGS ... they see the MEN! Their only hope of survival is to stay WITHIN THE STAMPEDE, out of reach of the MEATEATERS!

QUICK IMAGES: THE GROUP in the SEA of LEGS ... a SAILOR trips and is CRUSHED UNDERFOOT. A COUPLE OF SAILORS jump clear of the BRONTOSAURS - only to be set on by the CARNOTAURS. JACK ... DENHAM ... SAILORS ... everyone is running madly, dodging BRONTOSAURS, CARNOTAURS and trying not to fall!

A CARNOTAUR focuses on JACK ... it skillfully weaves IN BETWEEN and UNDER the BRONTOSAURS and emerges right behind JACK, it's SNAPPING JAWS inches away from his head!

JACK suddenly SIDE-STEPS, and SHOULDER-BARGES the CARNOTAUR SIDEWAYS - under a BRONTOSAUR'S LEGS. The CARNOTAUR is instantly trampled!

BRUCE is managing to stay ahead of the stampede - possibly RUNNING FASTER than any human before him! A CARNOTAUR races out in front of the stampede and bears down on BRUCE with incredible speed! BRUCE desperately waves a TOMMY GUN at the CARNOTAUR ... TOWARDS THE STAMPEDE!

JACK sees it coming ...

JACK
(yelling)

No!!!!

BRUCE FIRES, missing the CARNOTAUR ...

... but he hits the LEAD BRONTOSAUR, following behind, in the chest. The BRONTOSAUR COLLAPSES AT TOP SPEED! It CARTWHEELS OVER, it's huge NECK and TAIL thrashing out. The OTHER BRONTOSAURS PLOUGH INTO IT, tripping and rolling!

JACK and the SAILORS suddenly find themselves in the middle of an amazing FLESHY FREIGHT TRAIN PILE-UP! SAILORS are crushed as BRONTOSAURS come down on top of them! A CARNOTAUR is squashed when TWO BRONTOSAURS slam together.

JACK rolls against a rock as MOUNTAINS of BRONTOSAUR TUMBLE all around him.

DENHAM throws himself onto the ground, shielding the CAMERA.

In the space of seconds, the MIGHTY HERD OF BEHEMOTHS is reduced to a VAST PILE of DEAD or WOUNDED ANIMALS ... The CARNOTAURS immediately go to work, leaping onto BRONTOSAURS, ripping into fleshy stomachs.

JACK crawls past huge HEAVING BELLIES and TWITCHING LEGS ... he staggers out of the DINOSAUR PILE-UP ... he turns back at the SOUND OF LOUD HISSING - a CARNOTAURUS is climbing over a DEAD BRONTOSAUR, it's gleaming eyes intent on JACK. The CARNOTAURUS leaps ...

BAM! BAM! BAM! The CARNOTAURUS is riddled with BULLETS and falls DEAD at JACK'S FEET!

HAYES hurries towards JACK, clutching his TOMMY GUN!

HAYES
(yelling)
Go! Go!

HAYES sends the rest of the MEN up a steep ROCKY SLOPE ... they SLIP and SLIDE on the SLIMY MOSS-COVERED ROCKS.

JACK doesn't move. He looks around in mounting panic.

JACK
(frantic)
Carl!? Carl?! Get up!

DENHAM limps out of the PILE-UP, bloodied and covered in DUST - the CAMERA in his arms.

HAYES blasts at another CARNOTAURUS - it TOPPLES BACKWARDS.

HAYES
Run!

EXT. SLIMY SLOPE - DAY

The GROUP are desperately scrambling up the STEEP ROCKY SLOPE - slipping and sliding on the WET MOSS ... FOUR SURVIVING CARNOTAURS follow in pursuit ... the MEN start sliding backwards in their panic. The CARNOTAURS are sliding too, but their powerful legs are working furiously, propelling them closer and closer to the flailing SAILORS!

A SAILOR loses his footing completely ... he rolls past TWO CARNOTAURS before being grabbed by the JAWS of the THIRD.

The MEN grab hold of WEEDS, ROCKS ... ANYTHING, to get away from the DINOSAURS. They are crawling towards a network of NARROW FISSURES between HUGE ROCKS ... which the CARNOTAURS cannot squeeze through.

ANGLE ON: HERB is scrabbling up as best as he can with his bad leg ... DENHAM moves towards him, reaching desperately ...

DENHAM

Herb! Come on!

HERB

(gasping)

Mr Denham ... ! Take the tripod.

DENHAM

Come on Herb - I'm pulling you up.
Come on, hold on to your end.

HERB

(gasping)

You gotta go!!

DENHAM

I'm not going anywhere without you!

HERB

You gotta leave me!

HERB is straining to hold the TRIPOD when his GAMMY LEG gives way ... he SLIPS and ROLLS into the path of an oncoming CARNOTAUR!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reacting in SHOCK as HERB is KILLED by the frenzying CARNOTAURS.

EXT. JUNGLE RUINS - DAY

ANGLE ON: KONG drops ANN onto the ground. She LANDS in a LIFELESS heap.

KONG has dropped ANN in a small RUINED COURTYARD, it's WALLS are cracked and split by encroaching JUNGLE CREEPERS.

WIDE ON: KONG circles around ANN who lies MOTIONLESS on the GROUND. He PRODS her ROUGHLY with a FINGER ... no response. KONG GROWLS ... PRODS AGAIN ... ANN lies STILL.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... she slowly OPENS HER EYES! ANN looks warily towards KONG.

EXT. EDGE OF SWAMP - DAY

JACK, DENHAM, HAYES, BRUCE, JIMMY, LUMPY, CHOY and PRESTON clamber down a JAGGED ROCK face into lush sub-tropical VEGETATION. They are followed by a few surviving SAILORS - a bedraggled GROUP ... CUT, BRUISED, COVERED in DUST, SOAKED in SWEAT. Most of the GUNS are lost.

SAILORS slump to the ground, EXHAUSTED.

They are on a NARROW CLEARING at the edge of a MISTY SWAMP. SHEER CLIFFS rise out of the SWAMP on both sides of the SHORE.

HAYES

Jimmy, do a head count. I wanna know
how many injured and how bad -

LUMPY
 (interrupting)
 Injured? Four of us are dead!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reaches with a trembling hand for his HIP FLASK. He takes a big SWIG ... and stands staring out over the SWAMP. PRESTON sits on A TREE STUMP nearby.

PRESTON
 It's not your fault. What happened to Herb - it's no ones fault.

DENHAM
 (soft realization)
 You're absolutely right, Preston ...
 And I'll tell you something else.
 Herbert didn't die for nothing. He died for what he believed in and I'm gonna honour that.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM reaching for that moment of self justification.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 He died believing there is still some mystery left in this world - and we can all have a piece of it - for the price of an admission ticket!
 (excited)
 Goddammit Preston we're gonna finish this film for Herb. We'll finish it, and donate the proceeds to his wife and kids.

CLOSE ON: PRESTON, he has heard this all before.

WIDE ON: BRUCE stands amongst the SEATED SAILORS.

BRUCE
 (desperate)
 We gotta get back to the ship.
 Englehorn sails in nine hours.

JIMMY
 So? We gotta find Miss Darrow.

BRUCE
 Hey, did you hear me? We're gonna be stranded here!

BRUCE becomes aware of JACK staring at him COLDLY. BRUCE self consciously clears his THROAT.

BRUCE (cont'd)
 Miss Darrow was a great gal - no question. She was a wonderful person. It's a terrible loss. We're all gonna miss her.

JACK

I always knew you were nothing like the tough guy you play on screen - I just never figured you for a coward.

BRUCE

Hey, pal, wake up. Heroes don't look like me - not in the real world. In the real world they've got bad teeth, a bald spot and a beer gut ... be seeing ya.

BRUCE walks off. HAYES turns to the rest of the GROUP.

HAYES

Anyone else?

A couple of SAILORS shuffle forward towards BRUCE.

EXT. JUNGLE RUINS - DAY

WIDE ON: KONG SITS on the EDGE of a RUIN, surveying the JUNGLE.

He SITS with his BACK to ANN, in the crumbling remains of an enclosed ENTRY AREA ... which also provides the only way out.

With a splintering rip, KONG pulls off one of the DINOSAUR'S LEGS and starts EATING it.

ANGLE ON: ANN, having feigned unconsciousness, she now cautiously searches for a way to escape.

CLOSE ON: ANN LIFTING HER HEAD, risking a quick look around. The WALLS are TOO STEEP to attempt an escape ...

... but there is a NARROW STAIRWAY across the COURTYARD, leading down into the JUNGLE.

INCH by INCH ANN starts to EDGE FORWARD, CRAWLING on her STOMACH towards the STAIRS. KONG is CHEWING NOISILY ... he SHIFTS HIS WEIGHT, half turning ... ANN FREEZES.

KONG GLANCES at ANN, who has resumed her LIFELESS POSE. KONG doesn't appear to notice she's moved several feet. He continues EATING ...

ANN again starts to EDGE FORWARD ... she is STARTLED when some CREEPY INSECTS swarm out of a CRACK in the FLAGSTONES, inches from her FACE!

With only a few feet left to go, ANN quietly rises and scurries towards the STAIRWAY. She clambers into the NARROW PASSAGE - finally out of KONG'S SIGHT! Glancing back over her shoulder, ANN hurries down the STAIRWAY towards FREEDOM!

EXT. BOTTOM OF STAIRWAY/JUNGLE - DAY

ANN pauses at the BOTTOM of the STAIRS, listening for sounds of KONG. All is QUIET ... she glances back up the stairs ... no sign of him there ...

... gathering all her strength ANN emerges from the PASSAGE and makes a bold run across the CLEARING towards the cover of the JUNGLE!

THUD! KONG'S FIST SLAMS DOWN in FRONT of ANN!

She GASPS and tries to change direction ... THUD! Another FIST blocks her way. KONG GROWLS ANGRILY!

ANN swings around and FACES KONG ... he SNARLS at HER, FURIOUS and DEADLY.

ANGLE ON: ANN suddenly ducks under KONG'S ARM and makes a last ditch attempt to escape! She is half way across the clearing when she TRIPS and FALLS!

ANGLE ON: KONG bounds over to ANN, SLAPPING his HANDS on the GROUND in a frenzy of excitement - he utters a GUTTERAL SQUEAL.

CLOSE ON: ANN, flat on the ground, eyes shut, lying still.

ANGLE ON: KONG .. circling around ANN, SUSPICIOUS. He PRODS her a couple of times ...no response. KONG moves on ... ANN'S EYES flick OPEN! At that moment KONG doubles back - CATCHING her out!

... ANN SPRINGS UP, looks at KONG for a desperate moment, wonders if she should run, decides she'll never make it ... and takes another PRATFALL!!

KONG cocks his HEAD! He GRIMACES, baring his teeth and CIRCLES her.

ANN repeats the COMIC FALL! KONG SLAPS his HANDS on the GROUND, SHAKES his HEAD and GROWLS.

ANN starts to draw upon her VAUDEVILLE ROUTINE, swaying drunkenly and falling, then bouncing back up ... working her timing around KONG'S reactions - he grows increasingly ENGAGED.

ANGLE ON: ANN BOUNCES UP ... PANTING ... BEADS of SWEAT trickle down her face. Her EYES dart between the JUNGLE and KONG, she's looking for her chance ...

... but KONG is a DEMANDING audience. He wants more ... he wants ANN to fall down again.

KONG PRODS ANN ROUGHLY, knocking her OFF HER FEET. She FALLS to the GROUND ... WINDED.

KONG slaps his hands on the GROUND, and lets out another EXCITED GROWL. He thumps the GROUND with his FISTS, and SHAKES his HEAD, delighted with the GAME.

ANN tries to get up - KONG pushes her over again! This time she stays on the GROUND, breathing HEAVILY.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! KONG wants more! He tries to PROD ANN into getting up and is STARTLED when she HITS his FINGER AWAY!

ANN
(gasping)
No! I said no!

KONG cocks his HEAD ... he THUMPS his FISTS on the GROUND.

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

ANN (cont'd)
(gasping)
That's all there is ... there isn't
any more.

KONG RISES TO HIS FEET, and BEATS his CHEST, towering over ANN.

His HUGE FIST rises into the air and comes SLAMMING DOWN straight TOWARDS ANN!

CLOSE ON: ANN shuts her eyes ... KONG'S FIST THUDS into the ground inches away from her.

THUD! Another FIST SLAMS into the GROUND!

ANGLE ON: KONG ROARS and beats his chest in a dramatic display of ANGER and FRUSTRATION. He rips a TREE from the ground as his ANGER spirals into violent MADNESS.

CLOSE ON: ANN as the GROUND SHAKES with the fury of his RAGE. For a brief moment KONG and ANN lock in EYE CONTACT!

CLOSE ON: KONG stares at the small figure in his hand who is waiting for DEATH to come.

In this moment an UNFAMILIAR feeling wells inside him ... a half formed emotion he hasn't experienced much in his long life: he feels a connection to this tiny creature.

The SPARK of RAGE goes out in KONG'S EYES ...

KONG stares at ANN as a confusion of feelings wash over him.

KONG pulls back from ANN ... overcome by sudden UNCERTAINTY. He knows only that she has somehow disarmed him ... and this has in turn, DIMINISHED his power.

KONG starts to BACK AWAY from ANN - slowly at first, until DOUBT and FEAR compel him to move faster. Suddenly he turns away.

ANN watches as KONG lopez off. He pulls himself up and over a RUINED WALL and DISAPPEARS from SIGHT.

ANGLE ON: ANN, rising to her feet, finally free of her captor.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN hurrying through the JUNGLE ... pushing THROUGH thorns, TANGLED in VINES ... she is EXHAUSTED, THIRSTY.

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

WIDE ANGLE: DENHAM, JACK, HAYES, LUMPY, JIMMY, PRESTON and the remaining CREW have arrived at a DARK, VINE ENTANGLED CHASM ... spanning the narrow, but deadly RAVINE is a SINGLE FALLEN TREE.

WEAK SUNLIGHT filters through the DARK CANOPY above casting a SICKLY GREEN HUE over the place.

WIDE ON: HAYES, followed by JIMMY, leads the GROUP across the SLIMY, MOSS covered LOG ... the going is treacherous.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM struggling with the CAMERA ... JACK follows HAYES ... LUMPY helps CHOY. They put one foot in front of the other, trying not to let the DROP unnerve them.

ANGLE ON: HAYES suddenly stops ... tensely scanning the DARK RUINS on the other side of the CHASM ...

CREEPY POV: ... something is watching the MEN on the LOG.

JIMMY
(low voice)
What is it?

HAYES motions for JIMMY to be quiet. He stares intently into the DARKNESS of the FOREBODING RUINS.

JIMMY (cont'd)
(whispering)
Mr. Hayes ...?

HAYES turns and looks at JIMMY.

HAYES
If anything happens, I want you to
run! Understand?

JIMMY
I'm not a coward - I ain't gonna run.

HAYES
(gently)
It's not about being brave, Jimmy.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looking at HAYES uneasily, as he continues across the LOG.

EXT. FAR EDGE OF CHASM - DAY

ANGLE ON: HAYES is the first to step off the LOG, to the safety of the FAR BANK.

Ahead, some RUINS have collapsed, creating a LONG DARK TUNNEL.

CLOSE ON: HAYES ... peers into the DARKNESS of the TUNNEL.

ANGLE ON: A PAIR of GLEAMING EYES, reflecting LIGHT ... rushing towards HAYES.

HAYES

Go back! Back across the log!

The GROUP on the LOG FREEZE, start to BACK AWAY, slipping and sliding on the WET MOSS.

JIMMY

I ain't gonna run.

HAYES

Get Jimmy out of here.

ANGLE ON: HAYES... SHOOTS into the DARKNESS of the TUNNEL.

KONG rampages out of the TUNNEL MOUTH! He SNATCHES HAYES with one SWEEP of his HAND.

CLOSE ON: HAYES in KONG's HAND ...

JIMMY yells! KONG's GAZE turns toward the MEN on the LOG!

JIMMY

No! Let him go!

(to HAYES)

Kill him! Kill him!

HAYES

(to KONG)

Look at me! Look at me!

JIMMY

(desperate)

Bring him down! Mr Hayes!

SLOWLY HAYES begins to lift his PISTOL up ... KONG's GAZE locks back on HAYES ...

HAYES

(deadly calm)

You've gotta run, Jimmy.

JIMMY

No! I ain't gonna run.

HAYES

Do as I say.

(to JIMMY)

Go with Jack ... All of you.

KONG stares at HAYES a BEAT ... HAYES suddenly raises his PISTOL at KONG to shoot!

HAYES (cont'd)

Run!

ANGLE ON: KONG HURLS HAYES at the SAILORS ... he flies over their heads like RAG-DOLL and smashes against the FAR WALL of the RAVINE with a sickening CRUNCH.

JIMMY

No!

JIMMY runs at KONG, blinded by tears of GRIEF and RAGE ... JACK KNOCKS him down and SHOTS at KONG.

JACK
(desperate)

Shoot him!

WILD SHOOTING from the SAILORS, as they try to maintain BALANCE on the LOG.

KONG ROARS ... DESPERATE SAILORS try to back across the RAVINE.

KONG runs towards the LOG ... KONG'S FIST smashes at the LOG, knocking the men off balance. A SAILOR plummets off into the CHASM below.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN hurrying through the JUNGLE ... hearing the sound of gun fire.

ANN
Hey! Here! Over here!

She runs up the bank towards the noise.

EXT. FAR EDGE OF CHASM - DAY

WIDE ON: KONG has LIFTED the END of the LOG!

JACK, DENHAM, LUMPY, CHOY, JIMMY, PRESTON and THREE SAILORS hold on for dear life ... as KONG vigorously TWISTS and SHAKES the LOG, bucking the MEN into the air.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM skates on the MOSS and his CAMERA slides away, becoming WEDGED in the fork of a STUMP.

ALL AROUND panicked SAILORS are SHOOTING WILDLY, but fear and lack of balance throws their AIM OFF.

TWO SAILORS FALL ... CHOY scrambles for something to grab.

CHOY
Lumpy! Help me!

LUMPY desperately tries to reach CHOY'S hand ... but CHOY slips away into the ABYSS.

KONG ROARS with FRUSTRATION, and TOSSES the ENTIRE LOG into the CHASM!

QUICK IMAGE: DENHAM, PRESTON, JACK, JIMMY and LUMPY gripping the LOG as it FALLS!

QUICK IMAGE: PRESTON thrown off the LOG halfway down ... he manages to GRAB onto a ROCKY SHELF.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON is nearest to the FAR BANK ... he LEAPS, and MANAGES to catch hold of some hanging VINES, hauling himself up to safety.

ANGLE ON: The LOG plummets into a web of VINES, which arrest its FALL and sends it FLIPPING end on end, throwing the MEN CLEAR into mid-air... DENHAM, JACK and LUMPY land in SOFT MUD which cushions the impact of the LANDING.

EXT. VALLEY EDGE - DAY

ANN suddenly spins around ... the DISTANT SOUND of approaching FOOTSTEPS through the dense JUNGLE. A flicker of hope in ANN'S eyes! She starts hurrying towards the FOOTSTEPS!

CLOSE ON: ANN sees a distant PLUME of SMOKE - over FOUR MILES AWAY ... she hesitates.

She SLOWLY turns towards the SOUND of the FOOTSTEPS, which are now VERY CLOSE. Suddenly a LARGE 8 foot tall CARNIVOROUS DINOSAUR is in the GLADE before her!

ANGLE ON: ANN as she quietly backtracks. The CARNIVORE pauses, as if SENSING something. It's NOSTRILS twitch. She ducks behind a WIDE TREE.

ANGLE ON: ANN PEERING around from behind the TREE ...

... there is another CARNIVORE BEHIND HER! It snares at her ... and pounces!

ANN leaps away ... she barely has time to start running before the CARNIVORE GIVES CHASE!

ANGLE ON: ANN races past the first CARNIVORE ... the creature turns it's head ... and soon BOTH DINOSAURS are pursuing ANN.

EXT. HOLLOW TREE GLADE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN desperately heads towards the TANGLED ROOT SYSTEM of a HUGE TREE. She throws herself forward, as the CARNIVORE'S JAWS snap above her head.

ANGLE ON: ANN ROLLS and SCRAMBLES into a HOLLOW under the ROTTEN TREE.

ANGLE ON: The CARNIVORE CLAW at the TREE, trying to get at ANN.

ANN is lying beneath the ROOTS ... all she can see are LEGS and SLAVERING SNOUTS! The DINOSAUR RAM'S it's nose into the NARROW GAP.

SUDDENLY ... ANN sees the LEGS of one of her pursuers LIFT off the GROUND - it's taloned feet thrashing in mid-air.

The SECOND CARNIVORE turns and FLEES into the JUNGLE, as ANN is forced to watch the twitching legs SHUDDER and FLAIL.

The SOUND of BONE CRUNCHING ... CRACK! The CARNIVORE'S LEGS SPASM and go limp.

ANN is completely still, she dare not breathe ... whatever killed the CARNIVORE is now inches from her hiding PLACE.

CLOSE ON: ANN'S FACE ... as she sees something CRAWLING above her.

CLOSE ON: A DARK HOLE, beneath the tree ... Long FEELERS probe along the ROOF of the hole as a HUGE CENTIPEDE CRAWLS towards her.

ANN doesn't move as it inches towards her face. Suddenly she feels another crawling up over her shoulder.

ANN FREAKS! She desperately scrambles away from the CENTIPEDES ... rolls out on the OTHER SIDE of the TREE and stands to RUN...

... TOWERING above her, with the DEAD CARNIVORE hanging limply from it's HUGE JAWS, is a TYRANNOSAURUS REX!

ANN starts RUNNING! The TYRANNOSAUR crashes after her with the DEAD CARNIVORE still in it's MOUTH... as SHE races through the JUNGLE, dodging TREES, leaping over FALLEN LOGS, smashing through BUSHES, the TYRANNOSAUR POUNDING ever closer in pursuit. ANN can feel its hot sour BREATH blowing on the back of her neck! The HUGE JAWS of the HUGE BEAST open INCHES from ANN'S HEAD!

EXT. VALLEY EDGE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN slips down a MUDDY BANK, rolls over a LOG, and CRASHES NOISILY through a THICKET of PALMS ...

EXT. FALLEN TREE GLADE - DAY

ANGLE ON: ANN'S LUNGS are bursting, but the TYRANNOSAUR is GAINING on her ... she manages to scramble onto a FALLEN TREE that juts out over a small CLIFF. ANN clings onto the MOSSY LOG, and crawls towards the END ... the TYRANNOSAUR cannot possibly follow her.

She falls amongst the roots, lying as flat as possible, praying the TYRANNOSAUR doesn't see her. It seems to work and IT walks off. ANN HESITANTLY SITS up, thinking that she is at last free, only to turn and discover another is behind her!

With an almost delicate movement, the TYRANNOSAUR nudges the LOG with it's head ... causing it to lurch dramatically! The TYRANNOSAUR pushes HARDER, sending ANN over the SIDE ...

she just manages to grab hold of a BRANCH as she FALLS. ANN hangs on desperately ...

SHE SCREAMS!

ANN is HELPLESS ... The TYRANNOSAUR positions it's HEAD for the FINAL LUNGE - gaping JAWS OPEN impossibly WIDE ...

AT THAT MOMENT: KONG CHARGES!

KONG meets the TYRANNOSAUR HEAD-ON at FULL SPEED! He swings, with his FOOT smashing the TYRANNOSAUR against the FALLEN LOG ... ANN loses her GRASP and FALLS ... as the DINOSAUR SPRAWLS onto the ground beside her ... in a flash, KONG CATCHES HER mid-fall ... ROLLING AWAY as the TYRANNOSAUR LEAPS UP and tries to take another swipe.

EXT. SKULL ISLAND JUNGLES - DAY

FAST FEVERED ACTION: A pair of CARNIVOROUS DINOSAURS leap towards HER! They cling onto KONG'S ARM, clawing furiously, snapping at ANN!

CLOSE ON: Saliva flies from wild, snapping jaws.

WIDE ON: KONG rolls over, THUMPING his arm against a TREE, crushing a DINOSAUR.

ANN is WINDED ... she clings to KONG'S FINGERS as he strangles the second BEAST with one hand, snapping it's NECK with a BONE CRUNCHING sound.

SUDDENLY! A SECOND TYRANNOSAUR ATTACKS!!! He comes charging into shot, grabbing KONG'S ARM in his JAWS! KONG ROARS, sending both TYRANNOSAURS SPRAWLING TO THE GROUND. The FIRST TYRANNOSAUR scrambles back to it's feet! KONG holds ANN protectively as he braces himself for the FIGHT OF HIS LIFE. The TWO TYRANNOSAURS CIRCLE him ... when SUDDENLY! A THIRD TYRANNOSAUR comes from behind.

They ATTACK KONG and ANN ... a BREATHTAKING FIGHT to the DEATH. KONG fights like a madman on three separate fronts ... Not only does he have to do battle with the TYRANNOSAURS, he is also PROTECTING ANN - constantly transferring her from ONE HAND to THE OTHER as the TYRANNOSAURS SNAP AT HER HEELS.

KONG punches and smashes with his fists, but he also uses wrestling-style headlocks and flips ... for a brief moment, ANN rolls free on the ground and has to dodge 25-foot DINOSAURS and the GORILLA, as the frenzied fight THUNDERS all around her.

The FIRST TYRANNOSAUR is taken out when KONG LIFTS up a HUGE BOULDER and SMASHES it against the TYRANNOSAUR'S HEAD.

KONG and the TWO TYRANNOSAURS slide down on to a ROCKY OUTCROP.

KONG outs the SECOND TYRANNOSAUR in a HEADLOCK, FLIPPING it over his shoulder, and throwing it down into the CHASM. CLINGING ONTO THE LEDGE KONG PULLS THE FIRST TYRANNOSAUR OFF THE LEDGE ... BUT AS IT FALLS it SNAPS AT KONG'S FOOT.

KONG ROARS IN PAIN AND TOGETHER THEY FALL DOWN INTO THE CHASM ... DOWN INTO THE VINES. KONG CONTINUES TO FIGHT THE TYRANNOSAUR, AS ANN IS LEFT SWINGING, CAUGHT UP IN THE VINES ... TOWARDS THE SECOND TYRANNOSAUR. HE SNAPS AT HER AS SHE COMES WITHIN INCHES OF HIS JAW.

WIDE ON: KONG SEES AND CLIMBS UP TOWARDS IT, PULLING IT DOWN. THEY ALL TUMBLE DEEPER INTO THE CHASM, AND SUDDENLY ANN FINDS HERSELF DANGLING FROM THE JAWS OF THE TYRANNOSAUR ABOVE THE JAWS OF ANOTHER! KONG SWINGS AND KICKS THE TYRANNOSAUR IN THE HEAD ... ANN LOSES HER GRIP AND PLUMMETS DOWN ... VINES BREAKING AS SHE FALLS. AND more SMASHING AGAINST THE CHASM WALLS ... SHE FALLS AND LANDS ON THE HEAD OF ANOTHER. FALLS AGAIN. SHE LANDS IN THE SWAMP. RUNS. IT CHASES.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

WIDE ON: ANN faces the TYRANNOSAUR! SUDDENLY KONG THUDS DOWN BEHIND HER ... GLARING AT THE DINOSAUR ... ANN FINDS HERSELF CAUGHT BETWEEN THE TWO BEASTS. ANN WEIGHS UP HER OPTIONS BETWEEN BOTH ... and for a moment ANN & KONG LOCK EYES. SHE THEN BACKS BENEATH THE LOOMING FIGURE OF KONG.

THE TYRANNOSAUR SNARLS at KONG and he ROARS BACK ... KONG THROWS ANN GENTLY to the side as HE and the TYRANNOSAUR LUNGE at each other.

KONG GRABS HIS JAWS in BOTH HANDS forcing it OPEN and BITING the TYRANNOSAUR'S TONGUE. HE ROLLS the TYRANNOSAUR over and over, using all his strength to force the TYRANNOSAUR'S JAWS OPEN before RIPPING them clean APART at the HINGE! The TYRANNOSAUR sprawls back, DEAD.

KONG is PANTING HEAVILY ... he has been BITTEN, RAKED and CUT. He puts his foot on the LAST TYRANNOSAUR and BEATS HIS CHEST, TRIUMPHANTLY with a DEAFENING ROAR.

WIDE ON: KONG KICKS THE DINOSAUR OUT THE WAY. KONG ROARS ANGRILY - his blood is up, he is ready to take on the world. HE STANDS NEXT TO ANN, BUT HE WON'T LOOK AT HER DIRECTLY. SHE TRIES TO HIS ATTENTION BUT HE LOOKS AWAY. HE LUMBERS AWAY. KONG has DEADLY INTENT in his EYES. ANN watches as he DISAPPEARS into the JUNGLE.

ANGLE ON: ANN, CONFUSED for a minute ... THEN RUNS AFTER HIM.

ANN

Wait!

ANGLE ON: ANN is roughly SWUNG into the air, as KONG bounds off into the DEEP JUNGLE INTERIOR.

ANN as she is suddenly SNATCHED UP by KONG and SWUNG ROUGHLY on to his SHOULDER.

CLOSE ON: ANN HANGS ON for dear life as KONG GALLOPS into the JUNGLE.

KONG moves SWIFTLY and POWERFULLY through the JUNGLE with ANN on his SHOULDER ...

ANGLE ON: ANN as she looks up at the GIANT GORILLA ... the tension seems to go out of her body, she relaxes into his HAND ... for the first time since coming to SKULL ISLAND she feels SAFE.

EXT. BOTTOM OF CHASM - DAY

CLOSE ON: JACK STIRRING, immediately hearing the SCUTTLE OF INSECTS. HE ROLLS OVER and see's HUGE SPIDERS CRAWLING INTO THE PIT. HE staggers to his FEET ... REACHING INTO HIS PACK and PULLS from it A FLARE. THROWING it at the SPIDERS they CRAWL OFF.

DENHAM is lying nearby.

JACK

Carl!!!

DENHAM STIRS, MUMBLING IN PAIN BUT ALIVE.

JACK SEES JIMMY.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY is looking VACANTLY into space, JACK kneels down.

JACK (cont'd)

Jimmy?

CLOSE ON: JIMMY looks up at JACK, there are tears filling his eyes. He falls into JACK'S arms softly sobbing.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM sitting up... dawning realization in his eyes.

LUMPY, his back to CHOY ... he HOLDS CHOY'S HAND ... but CHOY'S FINGERS SLIDE LIMPLY out of LUMPY'S HAND ... LUMPY TURNS TO CHOY .. ONLY TO SEE THAT HE has DIED.

ANGLE ON: HAYES' eyes closed, his FACE peaceful, lying DEAD on the floor of the RAVINE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM PEERING over a ROCK. The wreckage of the CAMERA lies smashed and broken on the CHASM floor ... a thin, shiny, thread of black FILM trailing from the smashed CAMERA body like spilt innards.

DENHAM reaches out and touches the EXPOSED FILM ... his dreams DESTROYED.

WIDE ON: THE FLARE SLOWLY DIES.

CLOSE ON: JACK cradling JIMMY in his ARMS. HE LOOKS UP as he SEES the INSECTS CRAWL BACK.

ANGLE ON: a HUGE six-foot CARNIVOROUS MAGGOT-THING squirms out! It crawls blindly towards LUMPY and CHOY!

ANGLE ON: LUMPY pulling CHOY'S BODY to safety, but both are ATTACKED by LARGE INSECTS, the size of dogs!

JACK tries to PULL THE GIANT CRAB-SPIDER OFF LUMPY, but instead it TURNS on him! More GIANT CRAB-SPIDERS JUMP at JACK.

LUMPY and CHOY are CONSUMED by the nightmarish BUGS.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is WIELDING a short stick like a CLUB ... he smashes the HUGE BUGS in a psychotic explosion of RAGE, pulverizing their bodies into the DIRT!

All around, MONSTROSITIES OF NATURE emerge from DANK BURROWS and crawl towards the JACK, DENHAM and JIMMY ... these are HUGE INSECTILE MUTANTS - combinations of SPIDERS, CRABS, MANTISES and CENTIPEDES!

SUDDENLY JIMMY notices the TOMMY GUN sticking out of JACK'S PACK. GRABBING IT he aims at the INSECTS on JACK.

BAM! BAM! BAM! The GIANT INSECTS are blown apart!

JACK looks wildly around for DENHAM. THEY SEE that they're SURROUNDED BY SPIDERS. ANGLE ON: JACK desperately swings at the INSECTS with a STICK, whacking and stabbing them.

BAM! BAM! BAM! GUNSHOTS RING OUT. SPIDERS SWARM out of HOLES in the CLIFF AND DIE. JACK spins around ... confused.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN and a COUPLE of SAILORS OPEN FIRE from the LIP of the CHASM, SHOOTING the SPIDERS into SMITHEREENS!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE SWINGS down from above, clinging to a VINE ... GUN BLAZING!

BRUCE proceeds to lay waste to the INSECTS ... those not blasted apart, scurrying away, back in to the darkness.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Moving purposefully along a well-known route to his LAIR, KONG launches himself across a LOW CHASM ... one hand reaching out to clutch at THICK VINES on the other side ...

SUDDENLY! The THICK VINES TEAR AWAY from the side of the CHASM WALL ... KONG falls backwards. ANN still clutched protectively to his CHEST he lands with a THUD!

ANN looks up alarmed!

KONG scrambles to his feet, GROWLING ... he places ANN on the GROUND pushing her protectively behind him.

KONG POV: LOOMING out of the CHASM WALL is a HUGE FACE!

CLOSE ON: ANN as her expression suddenly changes from FEAR to DAWNING COMPREHENSION.

ANN walks past KONG ... who emits another LOW, WARNING GROWL.

ANN

It's alright ... it's okay ...

ANN reaches the WALL and begins to pull away more of the VINES and CREEPERS to reveal ...

A life-size and very life-like eroded STATUE of a SITTING GIANT GORILLA ... the IMAGE of KONG ...

ANN turns back excitedly to KONG, trying to make him understand.

ANN (cont'd)

Look - it's you ... "Kong". See ...
you. "Kong". This is you.

KONG looks from ANN to the HUGE STATUE ...

KONG POV: ANN is dwarfed by the STONE MONOLITH.

PUSH IN on KONG ... a growing sense of REALISATION as he comes to understand the STATUE is in fact a reflection of himself.

CLOSE ON: KONG looking down at his hands ... it's as if he is seeing his GNARLED, LEATHERY FINGERS for the first time.

ANN moves towards KONG ... he looks at her ... there is a VULNERABLE EXPRESSION on his FACE ... FEAR and SADNESS well in his EYES.

EXT. SKULL MOUNTAIN - DUSK

In VERTIGO-INDUCING shots, KONG climbs HIGHER and HIGHER - up into the HIGHEST PEAK of SKULL ISLAND ... carefully cradling ANN in his hand.

A sudden FLAP OF WINGS and FLICKERING SHADOW causes KONG to pull ANN close to his chest as a sinister BAT-TYPE CREATURE lunges at her ... these SCAVENGERS hover in the SKIES around SKULL MOUNTAIN ... they have eight-foot wing spans and TALONED FEET. Their faces are more reptile than bat.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - DUSK

WIDE ON: KONG steps out of a LARGE ROUND CAVE onto a LEDGE that juts out high over SKULL ISLAND ...

This is KONG'S LAIR ... Over the ledge is a DIZZYING DROP of at least 1000-feet down to the JUNGLE.

The "VENTURE" can be seen - moored off the TIP of the ISLAND, some three miles away.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently places ANN on the GROUND ... ANN watches as he moves away and sits to one side of the LEDGE.

The SKY is a FIERY ORANGE as the SUN goes down ... SILHOUETTING the FIGURE of KONG ...

CLOSE ON: ANN looks around the CAVE taking in her STRANGE SURROUNDINGS ... her eyes fall upon a HUGE GORILLA SKULL and SKELETON which lie within the recesses of the CAVE ...

ANN turns and looks back at KONG ... realizing these are the BONES of his FOREBEARS ... that KONG was not always alone.

A SUDDEN flutter in the DARK recesses of the LAIR, a SINISTER SOUND, sends ANN scurrying towards KONG ...

KONG won't look at her.

ANN breaks into a few tap steps ... NO RESPONSE. She leans down and picks up some STONES ... JUGGLING them, attempting to amuse him as she did before. KONG's gaze remains averted ...

He looks out over the JUNGLE CANOPY. ANN follows his GAZE, taking in the RUGGED LANDSCAPE which is bathed in the last EVENING RAYS of the SUN. She stares out to sea, a RAIN CLOUD casts shadows over the OCEAN.

ANN
(softly)
It's beautiful.

KONG sits QUIETLY staring out over the JUNGLE ... she looks up at him.

ANN (cont'd)
Beautiful.

ANN places her HAND against her heart.

ANN (cont'd)
Beau-ti-ful.

KONG'S BIG PAW unfurls beside ANN ... she hesitates for a moment, then CLIMBS into it.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently lifts ANN ...

WIDE ON: KONG with ANN, high above the JUNGLE, as the last of the DUSK LIGHT FADES.

EXT. LOG CHASM - DAY

CLOSE ON: HANDS reach down as ENGLEHORN and a SAILOR PULL PRESTON up the last stretch of the ROPE ...

ENGLEHORN turns and sees JACK climbing towards the TOP of the CHASM ... TWO SAILORS reaching down to help him.

DENHAM

Thank God.

ENGLEHORN

Don't thank God, thank Mr. Baxter ...

CLOSE ON: BRUCE PULLING HIMSELF UP THE ROPE, gasping from exertion.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)

He insisted on a rescue mission. Me? I knew you'd be okay ...

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks up to see ENGLEHORN standing at the top of the CHASM. ENGLEHORN is watching him IMPASSIVELY.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)

That's the thing about cockroaches; no matter how many times you flush them down the toilet they always crawl back up the bowl!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he rises to his feet.

DENHAM

Hey buddy! I'm outta the bowl! I'm drying off my wings and trekking across the lid!

ENGLEHORN LOOKS at DENHAM a BEAT and then LOOKS across the CHASM in SURPRISE. DENHAM FOLLOWS HIS GAZE.

WIDE ON: JACK at the TOP of the opposite side of the CHASM ... a solitary figure, bloodied and torn.

ENGLEHORN

Driscoll ... don't be a fool! Give it up, it's useless ... She's dead.

DENHAM

(quietly)

She's not dead. Jack's gonna bring her back.

ENGLEHORN turns to DENHAM.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 And the ape will be hard on his heels.
 We can still come out of this thing
 okay -
 (pause)
 More than okay. Think about it, you've
 got a boat full of chloroform we can
 put to good use.

ENGLEHORN looks at DENHAM for a BEAT and then LAUGHS.

ENGLEHORN
 You want to trap the Ape? I don't
 think so.

DENHAM
 Isn't that what you do? Live animal
 capture? I heard you were the best.

ENGLEHORN stares at DENHAM for a moment, it is impossible to know
 what he is thinking.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 Jack!

JACK looks at DENHAM ... DENHAM raises a hand in salute.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 (calling)
 Look after yourself!

JACK
 Keep the Gate open.

DENHAM
 Sure thing, buddy! Good luck!

ANGLE ON: JACK turns to go ... and disappears up the DARK TUNNEL.

DENHAM (cont'd)
 I'm sorry.

EXT. THICK JUNGLE - DUSK

ANGLE ON: JACK struggles through the JUNGLE ... he breaks into
 CLEARING and STOPS SHORT as he see's the VAST VISTA of the
 MOUNTAIN in front of him.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: MOONLIGHT steams into the CAVE ... KONG sits on his
 LEDGE, HE CRADLES ANN IN HIS ARM.

CLOSE ON: ANN SLEEPS PEACEFULLY in his HAND.

ANGLE ON: KONG gently lifts ANN ... he STARES at her ... his
 FINGER touches ANN'S HAIR.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK is climbing up through ROCKS towards KONG'S LAIR!

BAT-THINGS flutter ... AGITATED ... SENSING an INTRUDER.

CLOSE ON: JACK freezes.

ANGLE ON: A LARGE NUMBER of BAT-THINGS are GATHERING amid the STALACTITES that hang from the ROOF of the CAVERN.

He scans the LAIR for any sign of ANN ... but can't see her. The OLD BONES of a LARGE GORILLA lie across the CAVE from JACK.

JACK CLIMBS higher INTO THE CAVE until at last he's on THE LEDGE WITH KONG.

ANGLE ON: JACK moves forward, towards KONG. He stays in the SHADOWS of the ROCKS.

JACK CRAWLS FORWARD onto the LEDGE.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK creeps CLOSE to the SLEEPING KONG'S BACK ... his SHOULDERS gently heaving with each breath.

CLOSE ON: JACK crawls past KONG'S FEET ... he looks in AMAZEMENT.

... ANN is ASLEEP in KONG'S HAND!

CLOSE ON: KONG GROWLS ... JACK SPINS AROUND ... KONG is growling in his sleep!

JACK is less than 8 FEET away from ANN.

CLOSE ON: ANN'S eyes OPEN. For a MOMENT she stares blankly at JACK ... then REALISATION arrives quickly - he has come for her! She looks at JACK with disbelief.

CLOSE ON: JACK looks at ANN, drawing a finger to his lips ... neither DARES to move, or make a sound.

VERY SLOWLY, JACK rises and steps towards ANN. He gestures for her to stay motionless in KONG'S PALM.

ANGLE ON: The salivating, carnivorous BAT-THINGS flutter out of the CAVE and SWARM around the LEDGE ... their FEAR of KONG is overwhelmed by the tempting SIGHT of JACK and ANN.

KONG STIRS.

CLOSE ON: JACK extends his HAND towards ANN ... she reaches out ... their FINGERS TOUCH ...

... and KONG'S EYES SNAP OPEN!

TIME seems to SLOW: JACK attempts to GRAB ANN'S WRIST, but KONG'S FINGERS CLOSE around ANN with stunning SPEED! KONG ROLLS to his FEET, pulling ANN away from JACK!

ANGLE ON: KONG SNARLS at JACK, who now stands HELPLESSLY before him.

The BAT-THINGS SWARM above KONG.

ANN
(yelling)
Jack, run!

ANGLE ON: KONG SWATS at JACK with his FREE HAND. ANN struggles and KICKS in his GRASP.

ANN (cont'd)
(yelling)
No!

KONG places ANN high on a SMALL LEDGE and CHARGES at JACK!

ANGLE ON: JACK ROLLS to the SIDE, KONG'S FISTS smashing DOWN around him!

KONG STAMPS on JACK, who DIVES CLEAR, just as the HUGE FOOT pummels into the GROUND.

CLOSE ON: JACK is LYING on the GROUND with KONG rearing above him ... there is NO ESCAPE!

CLOSE ON: KONG'S EYES, blazing with DEADLY INTENT. He LIFTS his FOOT, ready to SQUASH JACK like a bug!

AT THAT MOMENT! ANN SHRIEKS in PAIN!

KONG spins around ...

ANGLE ON: ANN is under ATTACK from the BAT-THINGS ... they are FRENZYING around ANN, sharp CLAWS lashing her! She cowers against the ROCK FACE, trying to protect herself.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... ROARING with ANGER ... he abandons JACK and CHARGES at the BAT-THINGS!

The FRENZIED BAT-THINGS ATTACK KONG EN MASSE as he snatches ANN from the LEDGE.

They strike at KONG and ANN like a swarm of giant bees. KONG ROARS and THRASHES OUT at them in a FRENZY!

ANGLE ON: KONG puts ANN down against the ROCKS, so he can use BOTH HANDS to strike at the DEADLY BAT-THINGS. With every sweep of his ARM, several BAT-THINGS are KNOCKED TO THE GROUND, but OTHERS claw at his HEAD and BODY.

ANGLE ON: JACK seizes his CHANCE! He rushes along the EDGE of the CLIFF towards ANN ... under the cover of an OVERHANG.

JACK and ANN are inches away from each other right behind KONG'S FEET!

JACK grabs ANN'S HAND and leads her towards the only possible escape route - the EDGE of the LEDGE, 1000 FEET above the JUNGLE!

JACK grabs a LARGE VINE, testing it's strength. He turns to Ann.

JACK
(urgent)
This way! Come on!

JACK pulls ANN to him and clambers over the EDGE of the DIZZYING DROP.

EXT. LEDGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: JACK and ANN desperately CLIMB down the THICK VINES that hang over the LEDGE ... hand over hand ... the SOUND of KONG ROARING above, as he battles the BAT-THINGS.

EXT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: SEVERAL BAT-THINGS are gripping and CLAWING KONG'S BACK in an effort to weaken the huge ape ... he suddenly POUNDS HIS BACK against the WALL of the CAVE, SQUASHING THEM ALL!

The surviving BAT-THINGS wheel away from KONG, HISSING ANGRILY ... 16 lie on the cave floor, STUNNED or DEAD. They FLUTTER towards the BACK OF THE CAVE, preparing their NEXT ATTACK.

KONG LOOKS for ANN ... she has GONE!

EXT. LEDGE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN are 60 FEET down the VINE ... JACK is trying to SWING towards the ROCK FACE ...

SUDDENLY! They start RISING!

WIDE ON: KONG is PULLING on the VINE! He lifts JACK and ANN towards HIM, like a fisherman reeling in a catch.

ANN tightens her grip on JACK'S SHOULDERS as BAT-THINGS flutter around THEM.

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN are HELPLESS ... KONG almost HAS THEM! BAT-THINGS dive towards JACK and ANN!

A BAT-THING CLAWS at JACK'S HEAD. He releases ONE HAND and GRABS it's TALONED ANKLE.

JACK
(yelling)
Hang on to me!

ANN hangs onto JACK for dear life, as he GRABS the BAT-THINGS OTHER ANKLE.

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN DESCENDING RAPIDLY ... the BAT-THING furiously FLAPPING it's WINGS, but unable to stop the SPIRALLING plunge past the CLIFF FACE.

SOUNDS of KONG ROARING WITH GRIEF FROM THE LEDGE.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The BAT-THING wobbles crazily in the sky, rapidly LOSING ENERGY ... JACK looks down - a FAST FLOWING RIVER is 50 feet below. He RELEASES HIS GRIP!

ANN SCREAMS as she and JACK fall into the RIVER ... they are immediately picked up by the current and SWEPT AWAY.

JACK and ANN are carried into the RAPIDS, swept down a small WATERFALL, surfacing into a FAST-FLOWING, but less violent part of the river.

INT. KONG'S LAIR - NIGHT

KONG ROARS with ANGER and GRIEF.

EXT. VILLAGE WALL

WIDE ON: The VILLAGE WALL AND SURROUNDING, as KONG'S ROAR echoes out over the ISLAND.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM & ENGLEHORN as they hear KONG'S ANGER.

EXT. RIVER BANK - PRE-DAWN

ANGLE ON: Half drowned JACK and ANN swim to the side of the RIVER, hauling themselves up on the MUDDY BANK.

KONG'S POV as he CRASHES THROUGH THE JUNGLE in HOT PURSUIT.

AN ENRAGED KONG is visible ... quickly descending from his mountain lair!

EXT. DENSE JUNGLE - PRE-DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN racing through the JUNGLE.

EXT. WALL GROTTO - DAWN

ANGLE ON: LOW ANGLE of the WALL and ALTAR.

A LOW THUNDERING SOUND reverberates ... BIRDS LIFT off from TREES.

SUDDENLY! JACK and ANN appear from the undergrowth, RUNNING towards the CHASM and WALL ... the ALTAR BRIDGE has been raised, and hangs just out of reach.

JACK
(yelling)

Carl!

LOW ANGLE: The TOP of the WALL is deserted ...

ANN
Please! Somebody help us!

SOUNDTRACK: A ROAR ... growing louder ...

ANN casts a nervous glance over her shoulder.

TREES CRASH to the GROUND as KONG SMASHES his way through the JUNGLE towards the CLEARING ...

ANN looks at the deserted wall.

ANN (cont'd)
(ashen)
They've gone.

JACK
(yelling)
Carl? Oh Christ! Carl?

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAWN

CLOSE ON: DENHAM silently listens to his FRIENDS calling.

WIDER ON: PRESTON, ENGLEHORN, BRUCE and JIMMY are waiting nearby.

PRESTON
Drop the bridge! Do it now, for
chrissakes!

DENHAM
(quiet)
Not yet ... wait.

The GROUP react to KONG'S ROAR - now VERY CLOSE. A SAILOR with a MACHETE hovers near the ROPE, ready to cut it on DENHAM'S COMMAND.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Wait ...

PRESTON
(incensed)
No Carl ...

PRESTON suddenly leaps to his feet and SNATCHES the MACHETE. He slices through the ROPE ...

EXT. WALL GROTTO - DAWN

ANGLE ON: The BRIDGE DROPS, just as KONG explodes from the JUNGLE!
KONG sees ANN and charges forward!

JACK and ANN race across the BRIDGE, getting to the other side
just as KONG LEAPS the CHASM.

JACK leads ANN through the HOLE in the DOOR ... KONG SMASHES
through the BAMBOO defences.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE/WALL - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK and ANN run into the VILLAGE ... it looks deserted.
DENHAM suddenly rises and walks past them towards the GATE,
fixated on the ROARING BEAST, smashing at the TIMBERS.

CLOSE ON: ANN ... seeing GROUPS of SAILORS crouched behind rocks,
with GRAPPLING HOOKS at the ready. PRESTON lies to one side, a RAG
held against his BLEEDING FACE. ENGLEHORN gripping a CRATE OF
CHLOROFORM BOTTLES.

ENGLEHORN
(shouting)

Now!!!

ANGLE ON: KONG SMASHES through the GATE! For a BRIEF MOMENT KONG
makes EYE CONTACT with ANN ... she looks at him DESPAIRINGLY. He
reaches towards her ...

DENHAM
(to ENGLEHORN)
Bring him down! Do it!

ANGLES ON: SAILORS THROW GRAPPLING HOOKS at KONG, HAULING on the
ROPES.

ANN
No!

JACK
Are you out of your mind? Carl!

BRUCE rushes forward, pulling PRESTON to his feet, hustling him
towards the TUNNEL EXIT.

ENGLEHORN yells at SAILORS poised on the TOP of the WALL.

DENHAM
Drop the net!

ANGLE ON: The SAILORS drop BOULDERS attached to a LARGE SHIP NET
... KONG is PUSHED to the GROUND by the WEIGHT.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM turns to ENGLEHORN.

DENHAM (cont'd)
Gas him!

ANN
 (sobbing)
 No! Please - don't do this!

CLOSE ON: JACK holding ANN back.

JACK
 Ann ... He'll kill you!

ANN
 No, he won't.

ANGLE ON: KONG trying to get up ...

ENGLEHORN hurls the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE at KONG, smashing it on the ground right under his face.

ANN (cont'd)
 No!

KONG breathes in the cloud of CHLOROFORM, he tries to push himself up.

ENGLEHORN
 Keep him down!

SAILORS throw BOULDERS down from the TOP of the WALL, pummelling KONG'S HEAD.

ANN breaks away from JACK, rushes at ENGLEHORN, grabbing his arm just as he prepares to throw another CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

ANN
 Stop it! You're killing him!

ENGLEHORN
 Get her out of here! Get her out of his sight!

JACK takes ANN'S ARM ... DENHAM yells at him, as KONG'S RAGE intensifies.

DENHAM
 Do it!

CLOSE ON: ANN STARES up at JACK.

ANN
 Let go of me ...

CLOSE ON: JACK, he STARES at ANN, torn about what to do. His eyes flicker towards KONG. He makes his decision.

ANGLE ON: JACK pulling ANN by the HAND towards the TUNNEL ENTRANCE. She struggles to break free.

CLOSE ON: KONG WATCHING ANN being DRAGGED AWAY ... he EXPLODES with ANGER, suddenly RISING to his FEET, ripping the NET to PIECES! He SWINGS the ROPES AWAY, sending HAPLESS SAILORS flying through the AIR!

CLOSE ON: DENHAM looks on in HORROR, as his PLAN to CAPTURE KONG falls apart.

SAILOR
We can't contain him!

ENGLEHORN
Kill it!

DENHAM
No!

ENGLEHORN
It's over, you Goddamn lunatic!

DENHAM
I need him alive!

ENGLEHORN
Shoot it!!!

ANGLE ON: ENRAGED KONG throwing SAILORS and overturning STONE BUILDINGS.

CLOSE ON: JIMMY, gripping a TOMMY GUN, stands in front of KONG ... his POSE reflecting HAYES' last stand. ENGLEHORN pulls JIMMY away by the collar, shoving him down the path.

ENGLEHORN (cont'd)
Jimmy - get out of here! Get to the
boat!
(yelling)
All of you! Run!

KONG climbs DOWN THE WALL.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK running with ANN towards a waiting BOAT ... ANN fights as JACK tries to LIFT her on BOARD ... both turn!

JACK
Get in the boat!

ANN
(distraught)
No! It's me he wants. I can stop this -

KONG stampedes down towards the COVE ... JIMMY stands his ground with his TOMMY GUN.

JACK yells at BRUCE.

JACK
Take her!

BRUCE takes ANN, as ENGLEHORN leaps into their BOAT ... he yells to the SAILORS.

ANN
Let me go to him!

ENGLEHORN
Row! Get the hell out of here!

ANGLE ON: JACK pushes JIMMY into the SECOND BOAT.

JACK
Jimmy! No!

JACK tries to prevent JIMMY from shooting at KONG, as SAILORS push their BOAT away from the shore.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM finds a CRATE of CHLOROFORM BOTTLES on the FLOOR of the BOAT. He snatches one up ... prepares to throw.

ANGLE ON: JIMMY manages to fire a BURST at KONG ... KONG CHARGES in FURY and THUMPS his FIST down on the BOW of the BOAT.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM is flung into the water, still clutching the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

ANGLE ON: KONG flings the BOAT against the COVE WALL, smashing it - sending JACK, JIMMY and SAILORS into the SEA!

ANN looks on in horror as JACK SURFACES, holding onto JIMMY, who is COUGHING SEA WATER.

KONG turns to ANN'S BOAT ... he looks at her ...

ANN
Go back!

KONG PAUSES at the SOUND of her VOICE ... as if sensing her fear for him.

ENGLEHORN
Hold her!

BRUCE holds ANN as ENGLEHORN suddenly FIRES a HARPOON into KONG'S KNEE ... KONG ROARS in PAIN and SINKS into the water. ANN is sobbing with DISTRESS.

ANGLE ON: ENGLEHORN starts LOADING a SECOND HARPOON ... DENHAM scrambles on to a ROCK, clutching the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE.

DENHAM
Wait!

ENGLEHORN ignores him, intent on killing KONG with his next HARPOON.

ANGLE ON: KONG starts CRAWLING painfully towards ANN. ENGLEHORN has almost finished LOADING.

ANN
Leave him alone!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steadies himself on his rock as KONG crawls past. He hurls the CHLOROFORM BOTTLE ... it smashes against KONG'S FACE. KONG starts choking on the GAS.

ANGLE ON: JACK in the sea, holding the unconscious JIMMY, watching ANN from across the void of water ...

KONG starts to succumb to the GAS ... he reaches for ANN.

ANN watches KONG'S HAND reach out to her But she can no longer help him ... she has failed to stop this happening.

CLOSE ON: ANN turns away from KONG ... as he slumps into unconsciousness.

CLOSE ON: ANN and JACK make EYE CONTACT across the water She starts to CRY. JACK is unable to offer her any comfort.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM steps up to the UNCONSCIOUS KONG:

DENHAM

The whole world will pay to see this.
We're millionaires, boys. I'll share
it with all of you! In a few months
his name will be up in lights on
Broadway! "Kong - the Eighth Wonder of
the World"!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: NEON LETTERS announce "KING KONG - the EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD!" on a HUGE GLITTERING marquee.

WIDE ON: The bustle of TIMES SQUARE on a WINTER'S NIGHT, the colorful LIGHTS reflecting in newly FALLEN SNOW.

An EXCITED and CURIOUS CROWD are converging on the THEATRE - cabs are pulling up ... a QUEUE is forming ... SCALPERS are selling tickets outside the door.

CLOSE ON: BILLBOARDS outside the THEATRE proclaim "Relive the adventure of the Century ... see Miss Ann Darrow offered to the Beast!"

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN is seated alone in a DRESSING ROOM, she is putting on STAGE MAKEUP. There is an emptiness in her face. She appears DISCONNECTED, her thoughts on things far away.

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: CROWDS flowing into the THEATRE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The THEATRE LOBBY is teeming with people, handing COATS and HATS to the CHECK-IN GIRLS on the CLOAKROOM.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM who is WARMLY GREETING ZELMAN along with the SLEAZY and THUGGISH INVESTOR ... both of whom have STARLETS hanging on their arms ...

ANGLE ON: PRESTON watching from the BALCONY. He is looking at DENHAM.

REVERSE ON: DENHAM glancing up, catching the STRANGE LOOK in PRESTON'S EYE ...

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns away and turns on an INSTANT SMILE for a waiting PHOTOGRAPHER.

PUSHING IN ON: PRESTON ...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK a sudden burst of UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER!

DREW V/O

Look at yourself! Look at what you've become!

INT. ARTY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: EDGAR, a young man, DRESSED as a WOMAN is pulled to one side by his FRIEND, DREW. They are on the STAGE SET of a HOTEL LOBBY. A LARGE BOWL of FRUIT sits on a DECORATIVE SIDEBBOARD.

DREW

No woman is worth this!

EDGAR

This woman is worth it. I've gotta win her back. I don't care what it takes.

DREW

She's not gonna buy it for a second!

EDGAR

Shuddup and hand me the grapefruit.

EDGAR proceeds to stuff a LARGE GRAPEFRUIT down his BRASSIERE.

THE AUDIENCE BREAKS into LAUGHTER. THE CAMERA PANS along a row in a SMALL FRINGE THEATRE, and comes to rest on a THEATRE PROGRAMME in the hands a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN. The front cover reads: "Cry Havoc" by Jack Driscoll.

PULL FOCUS to reveal: JACK sitting behind the WOMAN, intently watching the stage ...

ANGLE ON: JAYNE a BLONDE ACTRESS who looks similar to ANN, and THELMA, her CONFIDANT, entering THE HOTEL LOBBY from the other side of the STAGE ...

THELMA

Tell me everything - every little detail!

They sit on a SOFA as EDGAR takes a seat in an ARMCHAIR nearby.

JAYNE

So, he took me to a fancy French restaurant ...

THELMA

French, huh?

JAYNE

Anyway about half way through the whore derves - he clutches my hand ...

THELMA

He clutches your hand?!

EDGAR

(falsetto)

It felt like the right thing to do at the time.

(falsetto)

Oh! I'm sorry - I couldn't help but over-hear!

The TWO WOMEN look at him a beat before turning back to each other.

JAYNE

He's looking into my eyes -

THELMA

And that's when he told you how he felt?

JAYNE

No - he never said it.

THELMA

He never said it?!

EDGAR

(falsetto)

He probably thought he didn't need to say it.

AUDIENCE LAUGHS!

THELMA

Then how does she know that it's real?

JAYNE

He said it was not about the words.

THELMA

Please - if you feel it, you say it. It's really very simple.

JAYNE

He said we'd talk about it later. Only
there was no later ...

CAMERA PUSHES IN on JACK

JAYNE (cont'd)

It never happened.

(reflective)

I just thought that maybe this one
time, things might actually work out -
which was really very ...

CLOSE ON: JACK, hearing his own words ...

JACK/JAYNE

... foolish

SUDDENLY JACK stands and making his way past surprised AUDIENCE
MEMBERS, heads for the EXIT.

THELMA

Men! They'll give you the world ...
But they let the one thing that truly
matters slip through their fingers.
All for the sake of three little
words!

EDGAR

(indignant)

The three hardest words in the English
language!

AUDIENCE MEMBERS break into fresh LAUGHTER as JACK leaves the
THEATRE.

EXT. ARTY THEATRE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: JACK strides out of the SMALL THEATRE, pulling his collar
up against the cold. Above him, a simple BILLBOARD advertises "Cry
Havoc, a new play by Jack Driscoll"

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE WINGS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: CARL DENHAM quietly waiting in the WINGS of the HUGE
BROADWAY THEATRE. It is a moment of calm ... he is feeling a
mixture of PRIDE and ANTICIPATION.

The SOUND of KONG BREATHING - a RASPING WEAK GROWL - causes DENHAM
to flick his eyes to the darkened AREA behind the CURTAIN.

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN in HER DRESSING ROOM pulling on her COSTUME.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: The HUGE AUDITORIUM is filled with nearly 2000 people. The EXCITEMENT in the air is PALPABLE.

WIDE ON: The LARGE CROWD APPLAUDS as DENHAM strides onto the stage in the GLARE of THE SINGLE SPOTLIGHT. He waves enthusiastically to the AUDIENCE, basking in the acclaim he has wanted for so long.

DENHAM

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Ladies and Gentlemen, I am here to tell you a very strange story ... a story of our adventure in which seventeen of our party suffered horrible deaths! Their lives lost in pursuit of a savage Beast, a monstrous aberration of nature! But even the meanest brute can be tamed. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, as you will see, the Beast was no match for the charms of a girl - a girl from New York ... who melted his heart. Bringing to mind that old Arabian proverb ...

INT. THEATRE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: ANN, now in a WHITE VELVET GOWN, a look of SADNESS in her EYES.

DENHAM V/O cont'd)

"And lo the Beast looked upon the face of Beauty and Beauty stayed his hand ... and from that day forward he was as one dead ..."

A VOICE interrupts ANN'S contemplation.

STAGE MANAGER

You're on, Miss Darrow, five minutes.

ANN stands up ...

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

DENHAM basking in the SPOTLIGHT.

DENHAM

And now Ladies & Gentlemen, I'm going to show you the greatest thing your eyes have ever beheld. He was a King in the world he knew but he comes to you now ... a captive!

DENHAM lifts his ARMS ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
Ladies and gentlemen: I give you Kong -
the Eighth Wonder of the World!!

STAGE MUSIC strikes up.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: With a DRAMATIC FLOURISH the CURTAIN slowly rises to REVEAL:

KONG sitting slumped and unresponsive, his WRISTS MANACLED to a STEEL SCAFFOLD. Other MANACLES and CHAINS secure his ANKLES, NECK and WAIST.

There is a BIG GASP from the AUDIENCE ... KONG'S sheer size is OVERWHELMING.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ... euphoric, as the collective GASP of 2000 PEOPLE washes over him.

ANGLE ON: KONG's head lolls, as if he is barely aware of his surroundings ...

DENHAM
Don't be alarmed, ladies and
gentlemen. It is perfectly safe. These
chains are made of chrome steel!

WILD APPLAUSE!

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK, jostled on a crowded NEW YORK STREET hurrying rapidly along the sidewalk.

JACK crosses the BUSY ROAD, heading straight towards the BROADWAY THEATRE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

WIDE ON: DENHAM on stage with KONG ...

DENHAM
(dramatic)
Observe if you will, I am touching the
beast! I am actually laying my hand on
the twenty-five foot gorilla.

DENHAM reaches up and touches KONG'S LEG. KONG'S foot twitches slightly causing DENHAM to jump back in fright ...

CLOSE ON: JACK enters the AUDITORIUM.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM signals to the STAGE HANDS in the WINGS ...

ANGLE ON: A STAGE HAND begins to CRANK a WINCH ... the CHAINS at KONG'S WRISTS tighten ... the AUDIENCE GASP as KONG is SLOWLY FORCED to his FULL HEIGHT ...

ANGLE ON: JACK walks into the BACK of the BALCONY of the darkened AUDITORIUM. He quietly makes his way down the SHADOWED AISLE.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns back to face the AUDIENCE ...

DENHAM (cont'd)

We have in the auditorium tonight, a surprise guest. The real life hero of this story ... the man who hunted down the mighty "Kong"!

CLOSE ON: JACK as he watches DENHAM, unnerved by the SPECTACLE.

DENHAM (cont'd)

The man who risked all to win the freedom of a helpless female! A big hand for ... Mr. Bruce Baxter!

ANGLE ON: BRUCE striding on stage, dressed as the Great White Hunter.

HUGE AUDIENCE ACCLAIM! DENHAM shakes BRUCE by the hand, slapping him on the BACK as if they were OLD FRIENDS ... BRUCE turns and acknowledges the ADULATION of the AUDIENCE.

A LINE of DANCERS, dressed as cheesy NATIVES appear from either side of the stage. They dance to the beat, playing to KONG, who stares impassively at them.

A PULSATING DRUM BEAT begins to fill the AUDITORIUM!

DENHAM (cont'd)

Ladies and Gentlemen, imagine if you will an uncharted island ... a forgotten fragment from another time ... And clinging to life in this savage place, imagine a people untutored in the ways of the civilised world. A people who have dwelt all their lives in the shadow of Fear! In the shadow of ... "Kong"!

CLOSE ON: JACK ... staring TRANSFIXED at the STAGE.

BEHIND him in the DARKNESS of the AUDITORIUM a FIGURE rises from a SEAT.

PRESTON

(quietly)

He was right ...

JACK turns to find PRESTON standing beside him ...

PRESTON (cont'd)
 ... about there still being some
 mystery left in this world ...

CLOSE ON: PRESTON stares down at the figure of DENHAM, standing
 to one side of the STAGE ...

PRESTON (cont'd)
 (softly)
 And we can all have a piece of it ...
 for the price of an admission ticket.

ANGLE ON: PRESTON turns to look at JACK ... JACK'S EYES flicker
 towards the SCAR which runs down one side of PRESTON'S CHEEK ...

JACK
 (quietly)
 That's the thing you come to learn
 about Carl ... his unfailing ability
 to destroy the things he loves.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM as he strides to the FRONT of the STAGE ...

DENHAM
 Please remain calm, Ladies and
 Gentlemen - for we now come to the
 climax of this savage ritual ... the
 Sacrifice of a beautiful young girl!

The CROWD erupts into WILD CHEERS!

The LIGHTS DIM ... The DRUM BEAT increases ... The NATIVE
 DANCERS fall to their KNEES in WORSHIP as a PLATFORM rises from
 beneath the STAGE ...

DENHAM (cont'd)
 Behold her terror as she is offered up
 to the mighty "Kong"! A big hand folks
 for the bravest girl I ever met! Miss
 Ann Darrow!

A DRAMATIC SILHOUETTE of a WOMAN dressed in a WHITE SILK GOWN.
 She is tied to a wooden ALTAR, her BACK to the audience.

CLOSE ON: KONG, a flicker of HOPE in his EYES.

The TINY FIGURE tethered to the ALTAR looks up! For the first
 time KONG sees her FACE.

ANGLE ON: KONG utterly CONFUSED; this is NOT ANN, but a woman in a
 blonde wig, dressed to look LIKE HER!

KONG roars!

FAKE ANN thrashes around SCREAMING unconvincingly!

FAKE ANN
 No! No! Help me, no!

ANGLE ON: KONG staring at FAKE ANN with mounting CONFUSION and ANGER!

CLOSE ON: JACK as he realises it is not ANN on stage. He turns to PRESTON.

JACK
Where is she??

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK glances at PRESTON, who turns away looking UNCOMFORTABLE.

JACK
(urgent)
Where's Ann?

PRESTON
I've no idea. I heard he offered her all kinds of money and she turned him down flat.

INT. SHOWGIRL'S THEATRE - NIGHT

SLOW, DREAMY MUSIC ... A FEATHERED FAN sweeps across a FACE to reveal ... ANN.

WIDER: ANN dancing in a LINE of CHORUS GIRLS, all identically dressed ...

ANGLE ON: A MALE DANCER slides into VIEW ... the STAR of the SHOW ... the WOMEN behind him, merely window dressing.

PUSH IN: on ANN as she goes through the motions of the routine ... a look of DISTANT SORROW on her FACE.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: PHOTOGRAPHERS push forward, LIGHT BULBS flash at KONG who ROARS ANGRILY.

DENHAM signals to BRUCE to join him ... behind them we can see the FAKE ANN still performing her feigned terror ...

DENHAM
Here's your story, boys - "Beauty and the Man who saved her from the Beast".

ANGLE ON: JACK watching from the BALCONY ... he STARES at KONG who is BREATHING HARD through his NOSTRILS ... JACK can feel KONG'S mounting ANGER.

JACK
(turning to PRESTON)
We have get these people out of here -

JACK'S eyes turn to the AUDIENCE seated nearby ... he gets up and attempts to usher people out.

JACK (cont'd)
Everyone has to leave.

CLOSE ON: KONG, his ANGER growing as he struggles against his chains.

PRESS MAN 2
How did you feel, Mr. Baxter - when you were on the island?

BRUCE
Well to be honest with you, I had some anxious moments ...

The MEMBERS of the PRESS all nod, understandingly ...

BRUCE (cont'd)
For a while there it looked like I wasn't going to get paid ... But as it turned out, Mr. Denham here has been more than generous -

CLOSE ON: DENHAM ...

DENHAM
Let him roar! It makes a swell picture!!!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM and BRUCE as they POSE for the PHOTOGRAPHERS.

ANGLE ON: JACK heading down the STAIRS, trying to convince members of the audience to leave.

JACK
Head for the exits ...

AUDIENCE 2
Get your own seat Buddy - you ain't having mine.

The CONFUSED AUDIENCE continue to APPLAUD ...

CLOSE ON: The FAKE ANN'S EYES suddenly WIDEN as:

KONG rips one of his MANACLED HANDS FREE!

FAKE ANN lets out her most CONVINCING SCREAM!

JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS start backing away, snapping pictures as they retreat ... FLASHBULBS POP ... KONG COWERS BACK shielding his eyes ... ROARING in DEFIANCE!

ANOTHER DEAFENING ROAR!!! DENHAM looks up, AWESTRUCK, as he sees KONG TEARING FREE of the rest of his CHAINS!!

The AUDIENCE BEGIN TO RISE from their SEATS ... PANIC sets in!

AAAARRRRRGH!!!! The FAKE ANN tethered to the ALTAR screams again for help!

KONG reaches across and picks her up, HURLING the FAKE ANN and the ALTAR across the wide AUDITORIUM!

SLOW MOTION: LINKS snapping ... CHAINS breaking, BOLTS lifting from the FLOOR!

With a MIGHTY FLOURISH, KONG rips off his WAIST RESTRAINTS and is at last completely FREE! The AUDIENCE RUSH the EXITS in a COLLECTIVE STAMPEDE!

KONG swings from the STAGE into the FRONT ROW SEATS ... STOMPING and CRUSHING the slower moving PATRONS!

EXT. BROADWAY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: PATRONS rush out of the THEATRE into the street.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

KONG ROARS and hurls a PLASTER CORNICE across the length of the THEATRE - straight at JACK!

KONG is now below the BALCONY LEVEL ...

In that moment KONG turns ... and sees JACK! For a brief second their EYES LOCK!

ANGLE ON: KONG using his amazing STRENGTH to SWING up to the UPPER LEVEL BOXES ... with a LEAP he jumps on to the BALCONY ... the BALCONY crumbles under his WEIGHT ... sending DOZENS OF PEOPLE plummeting into the STALLS.

JACK turns and RUNS for the DOOR as KONG struggles to REACH him.

JACK reaches the EXIT, turns and looks back at KONG, a mixture of DREAD and AWE on his FACE.

CLOSE ON: DENHAM remains in the middle of the THEATRE mesmerized by the spectacle of KONG'S unleashing power!

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: JACK emerges from the THEATRE, all around him PANICKED PEOPLE run in TERROR!

BOOM! JACK turns in time to see ...

The VAST THEATRE WALL explodes onto the street, showering PEOPLE and CARS with BRICKS and STEEL ... KONG bursts into the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD!!!

ANGLE ON: JACK stares up in horror as KONG heads straight for him ... JACK is going to DIE!

With an ANGUISHED ROAR the HUGE GORILLA stumbles past JACK into the BRIGHT LIGHTS of TIMES SQUARE ... he hasn't seen JACK!

KONG spins around reacting with terrified confusion to the STRANGENESS of CARS, TRUCKS, TRAMS, LIGHTS ... screaming people everywhere!

JACK watches as KONG'S FEAR builds to a growing sense of ANGER and FRUSTRATION!

ANGLE ON: KONG circles TIMES SQUARE ... snatching up any WOMAN with BLONDE HAIR ... desperately looking for ANN!

DODGING bits of FLYING DEBRIS, JACK tires to push his way through CROWDS of FLEEING PEOPLE towards KONG...

CAR WINDSCREEN POV ... KONG STOMPS on the CAR in FRONT, LIFTS FOOT and STOMPS over CAMERA.

ANGLE ON: A TRAM heading straight for KONG ... the GIANT GORILLA THRUSTS out an ARM PROTECTIVELY ... KONG pulls his arm back ... TRAM firmly attached! KONG'S FIST is CAUGHT in the TRAM'S WINDOWS!

CLOSE ON: JACK ... as he realises what KONG is doing ...

JACK
(under his breath)
Oh Jesus ...

ANGLE ON: JACK as he watches KONG heading off down BROADWAY.

CRASHING off BUILDINGS KONG CAREENS out of TIMES SQUARE ...

EXT. NEW YORK SHABBY THEATRE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ANN emerges from a SHABBY THEATRE, just as SEVERAL POLICE CARS drive past at SPEED.

ANN runs to an INTERSECTION and looks up the STREET. Several blocks away PANDEMONIUM is erupting outside a BROADWAY THEATRE.

ANN starts to RUN.

EXT. BROADWAY/NEW YORK - NIGHT

JACK spies a CAB that has STOPPED in the MIDDLE of the ROAD ... it's DRIVER watching the scene, MOUTH AGAPE!

ANGLE ON: JACK jumping into the BACK of the CAB. He gestures towards KONG!

JACK
Follow that ape!

ANGLE ON: The CAB DRIVER jumping out of the CAB.

CABBIE
It's all yours, Buddy!

ANGLE ON: JACK scrambling into the FRONT SEAT of the CAB ... he throws it into GEAR and heads off after KONG!

ANGLE ON: KONG reacts like a CORNERED ANIMAL in a BLIND PANIC ... FLAILING his arms in PANIC, the TRAM swinging through the air and SMASHING into BUILDINGS like a GIANT CLUB!

ANGLE ON: JACK drives the CAB DOWN BROADWAY ... swerving to MISS bits of TRAM that disintegrate off the FIST of KONG ...

JACK accelerates, straight through the LEGS of the GIANT GORILLA!

ANGLE ON: the CAB SPINS so that it now is facing KONG!

ANGLE ON: KONG ... his FIST about to SMASH down on a TRAM full of PEOPLE! The BLARE of a CAR HORN makes him turn ... he hesitates ... realizing who is behind the wheel of the CAB!

JACK'S POV ... as KONG comes closer. PANICKING DRIVERS PILE into each other. JACK desperately tries his door, but it won't open, he is WEDGED IN by CARS on either side.

KONG LIFTS THE CAR directly in front - HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD, throwing it into a BUILDING.

EXT/INT. STREETS/CAB - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: JACK'S FOOT depresses ACCELERATOR.

The WHEELS are SPINNING WILDLY ... in a CLOUD OF BURNING RUBBER, the CAB speeds down the ROAD, weaving in and out of the path cut by KONG'S DESTRUCTION.

KONG BOUNDS AFTER THE CAB, running on all FOURS with incredible speed.

JACK crosses an INTERSECTION, driving up on the SIDEWALK to get a CLEARER DRIVING LANE ... PEDESTRIANS scatter - not only from the CAB, but from KONG who is in HOT PURSUIT.

The CAB SLEWS across the STREET, disappearing up a TINY ALLEY, only just wide enough for the CAB, but TOO NARROW for KONG.

JACK glances back at KONG, ROARING with frustration at the ALLEY ENTRANCE.

EXT/INT. HERALD SQ/CAB - NIGHT

JACK speeds out of the ALLEY and CROSSES the TRAFFIC FLOW, causing much BRAKING and HORN action. He gets SLOWED in THICK TRAFFIC ...

KONG BURSTS his way out of the ALLEY ENTRANCE ... RIGHT IN FRONT OF JACK'S CAB!!!

JACK SWERVES on to the SIDEWALK ...

JACK steers the CAB wildly along the SIDEWALK scattering PEDESTRIANS in all directions!

KONG follows in HOT PURSUIT!

JACK sends the CAB into a couple of TIGHT TURNS ... he rounds a bend and DRIVES straight into a FRUIT VENDOR'S STALL!

ANGLE ON: The CAB, covered by the RUINED STALL, SLAMS into the WALL of a BUILDING. JACK is thrown forward on IMPACT ...

KONG rounds the corner and BOUNDS PAST JACK'S CAB ... hidden beneath the RUBBLE ...

KONG searches for the CAB, ROARING in FRUSTRATION!

KONG'S HUGE EYES glance in the WINDOW, just as:

KONG suddenly FREEZES! He inclines his HEAD; unsure if what he is seeing is REAL.

KONG'S POV: ANN is walking towards him!

KONG tentatively inches TOWARDS ANN!

ANN stops ... KONG stops. They stare at each other for a long moment ... ANN offers KONG a small SMILE, and reaches her HAND out hesitantly towards his ARM.

KONG gently picks ANN up ... his EYES never leaving her FACE.

ANN holds tightly on to his HAND and they DISAPPEAR into the night.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

WIDE ON: KONG carries ANN through the snow covered trees of CENTRAL PARK ...

SUDDENLY he finds himself stepping on to the FROZEN POND ...

ANGLE ON: The GIANT GORILLA slipping on the ICE ... as soon as his hand hits the ice he slips ...

KONG stands up and growls ... he slips again, spinning this time ... it becomes a game ...

CLOSE ON: ANN realizing what is happening ... She starts to LAUGH.

LIGHTS spin past ... it is a brief moment of respite ...

SUDDENLY! BULLETS RAIN down on KONG & ANN ... KONG rears back in FRIGHT.

ANGLE ON: MILITARY TRUCK as it launches ROCKETS at KONG.

COMMANDER

Fire!

MORE RAIN down as SMASH! The ICE CRACKS under the weight of the MORTAR FIRE ...

ROARING with ANGER KONG struggles out from the FROZEN POND and flees ... back on to the STREETS of NEW YORK.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

KONG bounds out into the streets, swaying to avoid the bullet fire, angrily smashing cars out the way.

ANGLE ON: The TRUCK flipping through the AIR as KONG continues on his way through the STREETS ...

KONG ROARS DEFIANTLY as the GUN'S BARREL swings in their direction!

The STREETS are TEEMING with these VEHICLES as the ARMY spreads out across town in the hunt for KONG.

ARMY VEHICLES are RACING along the QUIET STREETS ... an ARMORED CAR is firing at KONG ... followed by a TRUCK carrying a MOBILE SEARCHLIGHT.

KONG bounds into a construction site, climbing with ease up through the frame.

A MILITARY TRUCK races through the STREETS of NEW YORK ... still firing at KONG.

ANGLE ON: ANN clutches KONG as he BOUNDS along the roofs at HIGH SPEED!

ANOTHER SEARCHLIGHT FINDS HIM! ... and ANOTHER! The ARMY are closing in. MACHINE-GUN FIRE rips past him as he LEAPS another GREAT DISTANCE across the STREET. ANN clings on, shutting her EYES.

As BULLETS WHIZZ around him, KONG LEAPS ACROSS THE STREET - 10 stories high! He LANDS on the opposite ROOFTOP and BOUNDS AWAY.

ANGLE ON: JACK running along the STREET, following a STREAM of POLICE and MILIARY VEHICLES.

ARMORED CARS and MOBILE SEARCHLIGHTS converge on KONG ... ahead of him, across the CAVERN of 34th STREET, rises the SHEER WALL of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!!!

An MOBILE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN screeches to a HALT on 34th STREET.

ANGLE ON: An ARMY COMMANDER shouts rapid orders to his MEN.

COMMANDER
Standby to fire!

The CAPTAIN runs up to the ARMY COMMANDER ...

CAPTAIN

I can't give that order! Sir, the
ape's holding a girl -

ANGLE ON: The ARMY COMMANDER brushes past the CAPTAIN ...

COMMANDER

(drily)

Then I guess it's her unlucky day.

(shouts to his GUNNERS)

Take aim!

CAPTAIN

Sir ...?!

COMMANDER

(to his GUNNERS)

Shoot to kill!

(yells)

Fire!

POV: Looking up CROSS-HAIRS at KONG, high on the side of the
building - a SITTING DUCK.

A SUDDEN BLOOM of FIRE erupts from the GUN BARREL speeding
straight towards KONG and ANN!

ANGLE ON: KONG leaps across 34th STREET just as BOOM! The MISSILE
hits the BUILDING'S ROOF!

WIDE ON: KONG smashes into the SIDE of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!

GLASS RAINS DOWN 12 STORIES TO THE STREET as KONG uses WINDOWS for
HAND and FOOT HOLDS. He is ONE-HANDED - his other hand still
holding ANN protectively to his CHEST.

JACK runs forward amidst the noise and confusion he stares up at
the long length of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ...

PUSH IN: JACK staring at the unguarded, darkened entrance to the
EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ...

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - PRE DAWN

Looking at MANHATTAN from the HARBOUR ... the EMPIRE STATE
BUILDING rises from the MIDTOWN area like a giant solitary finger,
reaching for the heavens.

WIDE SHOT ... KONG climbing the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, silhouetted
against the LIGHTENING SKY.

LOOKING DOWN ... ANN clings to KONG'S SHOULDER, a DIZZYING 1000
foot drop to the street below.

KONG climbs onto the OBSERVATION DECK of the EMPIRE STATE
BUILDING. He gently places ANN down ... a CHILL WIND catches at
her DRESS. ANN looks up at KONG ... BLOOD slowly seeps from his
numerous WOUNDS ...

KONG sits still, staring out across the CITY ...

To the EAST the sun is rising, casting an soft glow over buildings ... glinting off the WATERS of the EAST...

KONG looks down at ANN ... he gestures with his hands ... touching his heart ... ANN looks at him confused, he repeats the gesture ...

CLOSE ON: ANN, she understands ...

ANN
(whisper)
Beautiful ...

Here, high above the squalor and the noise and confusion, the city lies quiet, almost peaceful ...

ANN (cont'd)
Yes ... yes it is.

WIDER ... KONG cradles ANN in his HAND as they SHARE the moment.

WIDE ON: KONG and ANN sit on the LEDGE, watching the SUN RISE. SIX NAVAL BIPLANES suddenly ROAR INTO SHOT, sweeping low over the DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT ... and closing in on KONG. These are TWO-SEATERS, armed with TWIN MACHINE-GUNS for the PILOT, and a flexible MACHINE-GUN for the OBSERVER.

CLOSE ON: PILOT'S FINGER on trigger.

A COLD WIND blows ANN'S hair as she watches the PLANES approach. KONG is UNEASY about these BUZZING PREDATORS as they CIRCLE above him.

The NAVAL PLANES peel off into an ATTACKING DIVE at KONG.

DOWN GUN-SIGHTS ... drifting left and right as KONG grows in size ... LOCKED ON!

KONG is suddenly FEARFUL ... he INSTINCTIVELY pushes ANN towards the BUILDING'S WALL!

The PLANES split to either side of KONG, ZOOMING straight at him!

KONG ROARS at the PLANES, as if issuing a CHALLENGE.

ANN is screaming ...

ANN (cont'd)
No!!!

THE SIX NAVAL PLANES fly at KONG from different directions! MACHINE-GUNS START FIRING!

KONG ROARS ... and SNATCHES at the NAVAL PLANES as they ZOOM by ... he FLINCHES as he is HIT BY BULLETS!

KONG clambers onto the SIDE of the BUILDING and begins climbing to the UPPER MOST LEVEL...attempting to DRAW the PLANES away from ANN ...

CLOSE ON: The MASKED FACE of a PILOT as he heads straight for KONG.

ANGLE ON: KONG swipes at the MOORING MAST and sends it crashing down to the streets below.

WIDER ON: KONG stands atop the BUILDING, ROARING & DRUMMING HIS CHEST in ANGER.

ANGLE ON: ANN as she desperately begins to climb up a SERVICE LADDER on the outside of the STEEL DOME ...

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - DAWN

ANGLE ON: KONG ROARS in pain as the bullets hit ... As the PLANES fly past he SNATCHES at them ...

CLOSE ON: A GUNNER ...

ANGLE ON: KONG recoils in pain as each bullet hits... HE ROARS IN PAIN.

ANGLE ON: KONG leaps into the AIR smashing at the last PLANE ... the GIANT APE falls through the AIR ...

The CRIPPLED PLANE spins out of control ... plummeting towards the street!

The PLANES continue their attack as KONG tries each time to SWAT at them.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON: JACK RACES into a LIFT and hurriedly punches the BUTTON ... nothing happens ...

OLD SECURITY GUARD
Hey, hey, nobody past this point. You
can't go in there.

JACK pushes past the OLD SECURITY GUARD!

ANGLE ON: JACK races round a corner ... races into the SERVICE ELEVATOR ... the doors slowly close.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING/MANHATTAN - PRE DAWN

The continued assault ... POV: through the gunners sight as bullets attack KONG.

ANGLE ON: ANN continues to climb the ladder, SHE is nearing the top.

SUDDENLY a PLANE FLIES straight at KONG. He LEAPS out the way and FALLS...

KONG smashes into the SIDE of the BUILDING ... one hand still grasping onto the UPPER LEVEL ... the TOP of ANN'S LADDER gives way ...

HIGH ANGLE ON: ANN dangling precariously in mid-air as she desperately tries to hold on to the STEEL RUNGS ... her fingers slip ... ANN FALLS!

KONG stretches out and catches ANN in his HUGE PAW ... behind him the planes are circling preparing to dive once again ...

KONG reaches through the BROKEN WINDOWS and puts ANN in the GLASS-IN UPPER-OBSERVATION DECK ... ANN tumbles to the GROUND.

Before she can stand another BURST of GUNFIRE rakes the BUILDING! WINDOWS SHATTER! GLASS FLIES all around ANN. BULLETS SLAM into the BACK of KONG!

KONG circles the building trying to get away from the PLANE but it continues to follow him.

ANGLE ON: KONG leaping back on to the top of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... He grabs the PLANE'S WING, spinning it around and around ...

ANGLE ON: The PLANE CRASHING in to one of the OTHER PLANES ... both PLANES plummet to the ground.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON: ANN staggers to her FEET and races outside to the balcony, desperately looking for KONG.

KONG looks FEARFUL ... he is WEAKENING from his BULLET WOUNDS.

ANGLE ON: ANN climbs the SMALL STAIRWAY which leads to the STEEL DOME ...

EXT. UPPER-LEVEL, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

KONG, clearly weakened, looks out across the city to the approaching PLANES.

THE PLANES are CIRCLING in the DISTANCE, preparing for an ATTACK RUN.

INT. ELEVATOR, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

CLOSE ON: JACK watches the LIFT FLOOR INDICATOR as it slowly rises.

EXT. UPPER-LEVEL, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - DAWN

ANGLE ON: A LONE PLANE as it NEARS it's TARGET.

CLOSE ON: THE PILOTS FACE...

CLOSE ON: KONG musters all his remaining strength and in one last challenge, rises up ROARING at the APPROACHING PLANE...

ANN races between KONG'S LEGS to the EDGE of the BUILDING ... she frantically waves at the PLANES, screaming as loud as she can!

ANN

No! No!

CLOSE ON: THE PILOT ... seeing ANN, he decides not to fire.

ANGLE ON: KONG, now barely clinging to the top of the building, gently picks up ANN and STARES AT HER ONE LAST TIME. HE places her GENTLY down on the ground ...

WIDE ON: THE PLANES as they fly at KONG.

GUNFIRE SMASHES into KONG. ANN looks up ... KONG grasps the side of the BUILDING ... She crawls over to him, clutches his FINGERS, hugging them, trying to COMFORT HIM. TEARS STREAM DOWN HER FACE ... KONG slowly lifts her in his HAND ... he looks beyond her ...

ALL SOUND FADES AWAY ... except for a gentle breeze ...

The FEAR leaves KONG ... he looks at ANN with TENDERNESS and LOVE.

CLOSE ON: KONG ... as the light in his eyes slowly fades and goes out.

KONG topples back ... disappearing from sight.

WIDE ON: KONG plummeting away ... Towards the ground FAR BELOW.

ANGLE ON: ANN as she moves towards the edge of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... she stares down at the STREETS BELOW ... overcome by a sense of utter despair ...

CLOSE ON: ANN ... for a brief moment she wants to do nothing more than follow KONG ...

ANGLE ON: JACK as he climbs on to the ROOF ... he looks at ANN.

SLOWLY ANN turns and faces him ... her grief still trapped inside her ... JACK can see in her eyes how close he is to losing her.

ANN stares at him a beat ... tears begin to spill from her eyes. Slowly she rises to her feet and walks hesitantly towards Jack.

JACK gently embraces her. She wraps her arms around him.

WIDE SHOT: JACK and ANN holding each other as dawn light washes over them.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - MORNING

CROWDS are gathering to STARE at KONG'S BODY. A SWARM of JOURNALISTS converge on KONG ... light-bulbs flashing ...

ANGLE ON: TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS climb onto KONG'S CHEST ... CAMERAS AIMED right at KONG'S FACE ... they jostle for position.

A POLICEMAN drags them off ...

POLICEMAN

Come on, boys, move on! Show's over!
Stay back! Behind the line!

As the NATIONAL GUARD begin holding the CROWD of ONLOOKERS BACK.

SOLDIERS pose for PHOTOS.

CLOSE ON: PHOTOGRAPHER 1 staring up the long length of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ... the distance that KONG has plummeted.

PHOTOGRAPHER 1

Why'd he do that? Climb up there and get himself cornered? The ape musta known what was comin'.

PHOTOGRAPHER 2

It's just a dumb animal - it didn't know nuthin'!

ANGLE ON: DENHAM pushing through the CROWD. He stares at KONG, DREAD, REALIZATION dawning on his face.

PHOTOGRAPHER 2 (cont'd)

What does it matter? The airplanes got him.

PUSH IN ... on DENHAM staring at KONG, an ASHEN expression on his face.

DENHAM

It wasn't the airplanes ...

The PHOTOGRAPHERS stare at DENHAM ... expectant.

DENHAM (cont'd)

... it was beauty killed the beast.

ANGLE ON: DENHAM turns and slowly walks away from CAMERA.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END