

SPRING HUNTER

Written by

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INT. WEEKI WACHEE THEATER

The four hundred seat theater is filled with families anxiously awaiting the show. When the curtain is drawn the audience finds themselves underwater. A glass wall where the movie screen would be.

(Credits over Mermaids)

Swimming in a crystal clear natural spring, breathing from bubbling hoses are MERMAIDS performing an underwater show. Against a background of pure white sand they perform a synchronized ballet, acrobatic stunts and demonstrate eating and drinking underwater. The show also includes several musical numbers set to the most current popular favorites.

EXT. CRYSTAL CLEAR RIVER RUNNING THROUGH TROPICAL FOREST - SUNNY HOT DAY

A very attractive young couple in their early twenties climb out from the river. They change into their Florida State University tee shirts and cut off jeans. In the back ground college age kids and families floating on tubes riding the river down stream.

After a few minutes spent catching their breath and getting some sun. The girl notices a rabbit path going up a steep fern covered hill.

GIRL

Let's follow this track up to the top. Should be a good view.

The couple start up the hill. Reaching the top they stop a moment to take in the view of the river and forest. Noticing the rabbit track disappears into a crack in the rock. They both lean in to get a better look. The sun shining straight into the crack reveals a cave.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I see a couple of old clay pots in there.

GUY

What was it Dr Jami told us to do if we ever made a find like this?

GIRL

Leave it alone. Take the GPS. Let him know immediately.

Taking out her cellular phone and swiping up and down back and forth a couple times. Sends a text and location coordinates.

GIRL (CONT'D)

There we go all sent. I feel some extra credit coming for this one.

EXT. FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY - MID MORNING

PROFESSOR MAISI LANE, Mid twenties, tall, athletic swimmers build. Coffee with cream colored completion. Florida flag overlaid with the outline of a Rose on her left shoulder.

Professor Lane is on a mission. Hurriedly driving her gold electric sports car through the Florida State University campus. Futuristic buildings are mixed among the original brick constructions. She parks in front of an old wooden building. A sign reads "FSU History Department Warehouse".

DOCTOR CLIFF JAMI, 5'11' slightly stooped, full head of white razor cut hair. Nice looking, academic type, in shape but obviously in his eighties.

DOCTOR JAMI is in the doorway of the loading dock excitedly motioning for Professor Lane to come in.

INT. WAREHOUSE FILLED WITH WOODEN CRATES AND VARIOUS ODD ARTIFACTS.

PROF. MAISI LANE

Just what is so important you want to show me that requires sworn secrecy? You haven't cracked the Voynich manuscript? Have you?

DR. JAMI

(chuckling with a devilish smile)

If I had, I'd probably keep that one to myself. You know publishing rights and all that.

Two squat clay jars sit on a heavy rough wooden table. Manila colored papers spread out next to them. Sitting down Dr. Jami motions for Prof. Lane to do the same.

DR. JAMI (CONT'D)

(dramatic pause)

Apparently there's a subset of humans living amongst us that have learned the secret to immortality.

PROF. LANE
(in a joking tone)
We could all use a little of that.

DR. JAMI
And that is precisely why this
needs to be kept secret. Can you
only imagine what would happen if a
limited resource was discovered
that extend life. Especially one
that could be monetized?

PROF. LANE
It would be exploited and
eventually destroyed.
(Taking a more serious
tone)
Please go on. I will respect your
serious tone.

DR. JAMI
The Indigenous Timucua the original
"People of the Sun" discovered this
knowledge. A gift to them from the
Water Gods.

PROF. LANE
Don't believe I've displeased or
pleased the Water Gods lately.
So, How does this involve me ?

DR. JAMI
What I'm asking is to redirect your
time during your sabbatical. Read
through this chronical with me and
learn as much as we can.

PROF. LANE
You referrer to these people in the
present tense.

DR. JAMI
They called themselves "The People
of the Springs". They believe what
the guide books call the "Spring
Country" are the remnants of the
Garden of Eden. Their sworn purpose
is to protect the Garden.

Professor Lane takes a long moment to contemplate what she's
just heard.

PROF. LANE

At the risk of sounding paranoid.
It's how far they will go to
protect the Garden, is what
concerns me.

DR. JAMI

If they find out we possess the
chronicle There's the possibility
they might initiate us into the
People of the Springs.

PROF. LANE

Or they might see us as a threat
and deal with us accordingly.

EXT. SIGN READS "BERT'S CRYSTAL RIVER DIVE SHOP" - MORNING

The first floor of the two story building is the dive shop
and tour company. A staircase on the end of the building
leads to an apartment.

Two pontoon touring boats are tied up at the seawall in front
of the Dive Shop. In spite of the early hour the boats
already have people on board excitedly awaiting their tour.

INT. KITCHEN OF THE LIVING QUARTERS ABOVE THE DIVE SHOP

BERT HUNTER, 5'8" A hard mid- sixties, short brush cut salt
and pepper hair. Eagle, Globe and Anchor tattoo on his right
forearm arm. No stranger to pumping iron, barrel chest.
Sleeveless flannel shirt. Harley baseball cap on backwards.
In spite of his looks very non threatening vibe.

The kitchen is all pine paneled. The counters old school hand
tile. Furnished like a nineteen sixties Florida Waterfront
Restaurant.

BERT is cutting fruit and dropping it in a blender.

SPRING HUNTER 5'10" Bert's daughter, 27 year old Brunette,
straight hair very toned, on the thin side. Looks like a
young Lake Bell.

From the hallway Spring walks into the kitchen. Wearing a
Bert's Dive and Tours polo shirt. Cargo shorts, day pack over
her shoulder, barefoot. Maui Jim wrap a round sun grasses
pushed up on her head.

SPRING

Dad thanks for making my smoothie
but you really don't have to do
that, everyday.

BERT

My pleasure. I appreciate you covering the Manatee tour this morning.

SPRING

I'm going to go down and check one thing with Lisa. I'll be back in a couple minutes.

Spring goes out the kitchen door and starts down the stairs. Halfway down the stairs, she snaps her fingers, turns around comes back up the stairs. Opens the kitchen door. In time to see her father pouring something from a clear bottle into her smoothie.

SPRING (CONT'D)

What's that you're adding to my smoothie?

BERT

(Really surprised look on his face)

Nothing just some extra vitamins.

SPRING

(Annoyed)

It doesn't even have a label on it. You know how I feel about what I put in my body.

BERT

(Stammering)

I've been doing it for a few weeks now, It WON'T hurt you. In fact you said you've been feeling great.

SPRING

Dad what the hell is that stuff. I've never seen you act so guilty ever. What is it?

BERT

It's an elixir that will help you stay young.

SPRING

What!

BERT

We all take it... Me, Uncle James, Jeni. Well... a form of it anyway.

FLASHBACK: BERT STANDING IN SAME KITCHEN

Bert's Vision blurs for a second. Standing in front of him a an older version of Spring. Clearly SPRINGS MOM SANDI.

SANDI

(loud and direct)

You Impregnated me and brought me
to this humid hellhole.
The water itself smells like
Hell's sulfur.
I can't sleep and when I do I wake
up eaten alive by Mosquitoes.
And now you tell me I'm going to
live forever.
With a crazy man no less!
I'm so glad I never married You.

And with that Spring's mother storms out the door.
The sound of her car leaving the driveway.

END FLASHBACK: RETURN TO KITCHEN PRESENT SITUATION

SPRING

(beyond upset)

So now, ... I'm in a drug cult.
I'm so out of here.

And with that Spring was down the stairs and gone in her
brand Chevy Silverado pickup.

EXT. NIGHT BY A CAMPFIRE - SUPER DARK NO MOON OR STARS

TIM TIMUCUA, Older, Handsome Timucua Indian, tattoos and
native garb.

Tim and a young white couple appearing to be in their mid
twenties are sitting by a campfire. The two young people are
intently listening to the native man.

Tim holds a handful of blue flowers.

TIM

(quietly, seriously)

You will find these growing along
the rivers that flow West to the
salt water.
Eat a handful of these flowers and
seeds, four times a Moon.
Swim in the springs of the Rainbow
rivers.

(Dramatic pause)

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

You will live two, three, maybe
 five lifetimes.
 You will not live forever.
 Do not come to think of yourself as
 a God.
 You will die from what you are
 fated to die from.
 You can sicken and you can be
 killed.
 Your challenge is your own human
 nature.
 Your purpose is to protect the
 gifts of the Garden.

INT. FLORIDA ROOM JAMES CLIFTONS HOUSE - LATE MORNING

JAMES CLIFTON, 6'2" Fit looking, late sixties. Longish
 brown/white hair. Button down shirt, Docker pants.

James and Spring are sitting in James's Florida room with its
 view of Lake Henderson.

SPRING

(Shaking her head,
 quizzical look on her
 face)

So Uncle James if this little camp
 out with Tim happened in 1872 that
 makes you...

JAMES

A hundred and seventy five give or
 take.

(shrugging with a crooked
 smile)

SPRING

And my Dad didn't tell me any of
 this because?

JAMES

Your mother reacted the same way
 you did when he told her. She just
 walked out. Except she never came
 back.

SPRING

And you are sure of all this?

JAMES

I drove her to the airport myself.

SPRING

So for years now Dad let me blame
my very existence for being the
reason Mother left us.

JAMES

You are all he has. I don't think
he would survive losing you.

SPRING

And my family has been keeping from
me the biggest secret since....I
don't know.. We didn't land on the
moon.

Ext. WEEKI WACHEE SPRINGS THEATER - SUNNY AFTERNOON

JENI LANE, 5'7" Early thirties, Beautifully Biracial,
perfectly developed swimmers body. Wearing her blue one piece
swimsuit and cargo pants. Tattoo of the flag of Florida
overlaid a with black rose on her left shoulder.

Spring Hunter and Jeni Lane are walking up the sidewalk
towards the Weeki Wachee parking lot passing a "Mermaids Only
Beyond This Point" sign. They are carrying over sized gym
bags. The tail of Jeni's Mermaid costume slightly sticking
out of her bag.

JENI

I understand you and James had the
"talk".

SPRING

(sarcastically)

Now I know where Secrets come from.
Fear with a little selfishness
mixed in.... But you Jeni?

JENI

I tried to be your mother's friend.
Which was no easy task.
I babysat you. I even mothered you
when necessary. I became your aunt.
Then your sister.
And now your best friend.

SPRING

Ok, Ok. You've done your part.
(pause)
How old are you again?

JENI

Your going to make me say it aren't you? OK ... I was born in 1923. You do the math.

SPRING

(laughing and smiling)
The mean girl in me loves to hear you say that.

Their attention is diverted toward a dark haired young man walking toward them.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Isn't that the Hard Hat Diver who is doing the repairs on the theaters underwater foundation?

JENI

Yes it is. Names Sebastian Sander and my latest love interest.

SEBASTIAN SANDER maybe thirty. Greek American looks like John Stamos in his prime.

SEBASTIAN

Ladies or should I say Mermaids.
(tipping an imaginary cap)

JENI

This is my B.F.F Spring Hunter.

SEBASTIAN

Spring Hunter. Pleased to finally make your acquaintance. Mac Gray has mentioned you.

(with a winning smile)
OK... he brags on you.

SPRING

You know Mac? How?

SEBASTIAN

We play Baseball in the men's league. He pitches, I catch.
(raising a warning finger)
And don't you dare make any stupid jokes.

A lifted duel wheel pick-up truck pulls into the parking lot. Driver taps its horn.

Mackenzie Gray, Mac, 6'3" thirty, light brown hair. Looks like a more muscular Tom Brady.

MAC
(shouting)
Sander lets get going. We got a ball game to win.

And with another tip of the imaginary cap Sebastian takes off.

JENI
Now you're off the extract.
(returning the age joke)
And have gone on to the hard stuff.
How you fixed for berries and flowers? I could use a collecting partner.

The two mermaids walk away arms over shoulders laughing.

INT. 1950'S STYLE DINER INVERSES FLORIDA - EARLY MORNING

James and Bert sitting in a booth finishing breakfast.

JAMES
Looks like I'll be morphing soon.
The questions are starting again.
You know, "how long have you been teaching at the school?" "My dad says he had you for history".

BERT
And I'm sure you have noticed some of your past students are starting to look as old as you.

JAMES
If your referring to yourself.
I have.

The two old friends get a good laugh out of that quip.

BERT
I haven't had to reinvent yet. I think I'll use the, "I'm my fathers son ploy". Should work once.

JAMES
And that's about how many times it will work. Luck if you can pull it off once. I've always considered it lazy.

BERT

And that's why you have done it twice.

JAMES

I've had a few more years to work with then you.

BERT

That said. Easy to see where having to reinvent yourself every couple of decades would get really old. Finding a place in this world is hard enough first time through.

JAMES

I maybe done with all that. I'm considering retiring and perhaps writing a memoir. Find some isolated spot and let nature take its course.

BERT

Well I'm certain they've stopped looking for a Draft Dodger from the Confederate army by now. And it's good to hear your plan isn't to burn the High School down. Again.

JAMES

For the thousandth time I fought in the battle of the Rainbow Bridge as a F.S.U. Cadet. The school was an accident. The plan was to destroy my personnel records.

BERT

(fist bumping his own chest)

I know, I know. It just never gets old.

Bert thumb points over his shoulder. There is a government type sitting a booth over, acting like he is not listening. Both James and Bert intentionally take their voices up a notch.

BERT (CONT'D)

Do you think if we grab the investigator and show him The Cave where we keep 500 million in gold recovered by the Timucua Indians from Spanish wrecks he might leave us alone.

JAMES

Only if we initiate him into our family so he can live for five extra lifetimes. And swears allegiance to protecting the Garden of Eden.

The two old friends burst out into laughter cracking each other up with the fantasy. The state agent displays a puzzled irritated look.

BERT

(returning to a lower volume)

On second thought I think I should just pay for his breakfast before I'm brought up on charges of damaging state property for that little reactor accident.

JAMES

When you accidentally on purpose swung a steam generator into the containment Dome. Damaging it to the point where the entire nuclear power plant project had to be shut down.

BERT

That was clearly ruled an accident.

JAMES

(Struggling to contain his laughter)

Yeah by a judge our lawyers bought off.

Bert gets up pays for their breakfast and the State Agents. Returns to their booth. The State man walks by knocks on the table.

STATE AGENT

(Walking off)

Thanks for the eggs I'll get it next time.

JAMES

I have a class to teach. What are you up to for the rest of the day?

BERT

I'm going for a bike ride with an old Navy buddy who usually has some interesting scuttlebutt.

JAMES

Maybe he knows why the government's getting so mean lately. Oh...and call your daughter!

James and Bert get up thanking the waitress and head out the door of the coffee shop.

After walking about a half block the STATE AGENT emerges from an alley gun drawn. With the help of another agent handcuffs them both. Then stuffs them into a parked van with windows blacked out.

BERT

This is a strange way to deliver my income tax refund.

STATE AGENT

I need you two clowns to shut up and listen very carefully because I'm only going to say this once.

JAMES

My goodness who writes your lines. You got to get Someone better. Unless you want to get sued by Humphrey Bogart.

This comment earned James a slight smack up the side of the head with the gun barrel.

STATE AGENT

I know you two belong to a clandestine group of eco warrior criminals. That have been behind dozens so called Environmental Defense battles.

BERT

You flatter this old dive shop owner.

STATE AGENT

(Sticking the gun directly against Bert's temple)
Shut up! The stopping of the Cross Florida Barge Canal. Damaging the Crystal River nuclear reactor. Eradicating outside species, some human. Are major crimes.

Bert starts to say something but thinks the better of it.

STATE AGENT (CONT'D)

The misguided, might make heroes out of you people. But sabotage, blackmail, coercion, bribery, are nothing to be proud of. I'm gonna take you and your cohorts down. You're gonna make my career.

After a few pokes with a "bully club" the State Agent opens the van doors, uncuffs them and shoves James and Bert out on to the pavement. The van speeds off.

James and Burt get up brush themselves off. Looking around there are no witnesses.

BERT

You were saying something about retiring.

EXT. JAMES WALKING THROUGH DOWNTOWN INVERNESS - STILL EARLY MORNING

Looking a little disheveled, James shakes off the roughing up he just received. Enters the High School. Stops in the men's wash room. Splashes water on his face. Lifts his shirt to find several bruises on his ribs and lower back.

INT. JAMES CLASS ROOM - CLOCK READS 8:00

The students already in their places James comes through the classroom door just as the bell rings. James settles into a space he can finally relax. His oversized desk chair position behind an equally oversized blonde Live Oak desk. Still not in a mood to teach.

JAMES

Good morning class.
(bit of a pause)
I'm going to share a little about one of our local Conquistadors. And then we'll have an in class assignment.

The class takes out their notebooks.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Juan Ponce de Leon, we've studied him. Conquistador, first governor of Puerto Rico. Ponce who became extremely wealthy through the ownership of plantations, mines, outright thievery and extortion.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Credited with the discovery of
Florida. Even naming the place.
(standing with some
effort)

He left the New World as rich a man
could ever hope to become. Returned
home married his sponsor's
beautiful daughter and settled into
a pampered life of retirement and
pleasure.
My question for you to ponder is
this.

What did Ponce desire to risk
everything, life and fortune.
Seeking something he dare not name.

I will give you one clue.

It was something that the Pope was
selling. That turned old Ponce into
the original Spring Hunter.

EXT. REMOTE BOAT LAUNCH RAMP - JUST GETTING LIGHT

Small river access in the middle of a thick tropical forest.
The river is crystal clear and very slow moving. Jeni and
Spring are loading gear into large square tailed scanoes
powered by an Electric outboard motor.

SPRING

(looking up toward the
parking lot)
Check out that girl's classic
Volkswagen convertible.

JENI

Cool I wasn't sure she was going to
find this place. Passes the first
test. That's our "ride along" for
the day.

SPRING

So that's our Mermaid wanna be.
Looks kind of young.

JENI

Her name is Holli Raines, she's
just eighteen and freshly released
from the Foster Care system.

HOLLI RAINES 18 , dishwater blonde. Average height, wiry
physique.

Wearing a Buccaneers game jersey as a cover up, Tampa Bay Rays baseball cap, rubber flip flops completes the look.

Passing a sign that reads "BLUE SPRING RUN" Holli runs up to the launch ramp.

HOLLI

Hope I'm not late.
 Could have helped with that.
 (pointing at the stuff already
 loaded).
 I'm Holli you must be Spring.

SPRING

No worries. Jeni tells me you've
 applied to be a Mermaid?

HOLLI

It was either that or a checker at
 Winn Dixie.

SPRING

Like a girl with a sense of humor.

HOLLI

(with a little sarcasm)
 Who's kidding?

SPRING

(to Jeni)
 Like her all ready.

The canoe is pushed off and the paddle up stream begins.

Two very rough looking older men in camouflage fatigues,
 carrying hunting rifles watch from across the river.

JACOB PETTY AND ELIAS DUFF sixty plus years old, stubble
 unshaven deeply lined faces. They have the look that hard
 drinking and cruel intentions create.

PETTY

Our flower girl as brought some new
 meat. As always, I got dibs on the
 dark one.

DUFF

I'll take the tall brunette. We can
 split the toothpick.

They both let out a muffled laugh. Quickly quelling it.

Jeni looks up momentarily thinking she hears something, Then
 lets it go.

The mermaids make their way upstream vines with blue flowers growing along the banks. Jeni steers the scanoie up to the bank where there is a thick patch of flowers growing.

JENI

(gets out in waist deep
water)

The flowers are called Eve's Tears
It's what we're collecting today. I
sell them for table garnishes.
Supposedly they bring good luck.

HOLLI

Put me down for a little of that
luck.

The Mermaids fill a large ice cooler with the blue flowers.

SPRING

We're in the heart of the Deep sky
country sometimes called the
Devil's Garden.

JENI

Isn't this the Spring where your
Dad had his solo diving "incident"

Spring ignores the comment.

JENI (CONT'D)

Why don't you tell Holli a river
story.

EXT. WHITE SAND BEACH BACKED BY JUNGLE - BRIGHT SUN HOT DAY

Several 16th century Spanish conquistadors dressed in full armor looking extremely uncomfortable in the heat. They have several native people chained together. One of which is on his knees with a garrote being tightened around his neck. The Spaniard has a gold chain in his hand. Which he pushes into the natives face.

SPANIARD

Where did you get this gold?
(twisting the garrote)
Tell Me!

All the man can do is make choking sounds. Then another native speaks.

NATIVE

He say. "It Yours"

SPANIARD

I know its mine.

(Angrily)

Where did he get it.?

(one final twist of the garrote)

This is useless.

And with that the Spaniards put all the natives to the sword.

EXT. BACK TO THE RIVER - PRESENT DAY

SPRING

What the Conquistador failed to understand, "It Yours" meant the chain had been recovered from the wreck of a Spanish Galleon.

JENI

(speaking in Holli's ear)

Let me tell you where there is hidden gold. Psssssss....

Duff and Petty have been following along watching and listening. Making filthy comments about what they would do with the girls. The mention of gold refocuses their attention.

PETTY

Did you get that last part?

DUFF

Only something about hidden gold.

PETTY

(grinning through rotten teeth)

Looks like it's the toothpick we'll have a little fun with later.

Dropping anchor at the head water spring the Mermaids jump in for a swim. Duff and Petty who are still following along the bank spying nudge each other with excitement.

DUFF

(almost unable to contain himself)

This is my favorite part.

PETTY

And today three times the fun.

The Mermaids thinking they are alone. Enter the water scantily covered and go into a very alluring routine. Holli fits right in. Grunting and slurping sounds come from the underbrush.

HOLLI

I sear I hear them but haven't seen any wild pigs.

JENI

It never surprises me what might be crawling in the bush around these parts. I hear that almost every time I come out here.

With a little help from the electric trolling motor the Mermaids are back at the truck. Scanoes loaded and on their way.

SPRING

Holli!

HOLLI

Yeah? Spring.

SPRING

(giving the thumbs up)
You got the Job. See you at rehearsal.

A happy Holli Raines takes off in her convertible. Only to be followed by a beat up old pick up truck.

EXT. OVERHEAD SHOT OF NISSAN LEAF DRIVING NORTH ON FLORIDA HIGHWAY 19 - MID MORNING

INT. NISSAN LEAF - JAMES DRIVING

James on his cars speaker phone.

JAMES

Thought you might find it interesting that I've been summoned to Dunnellon.

BERT

I wonder what the "Purse Strings" wants. She tends to only call you when she wants help influencing the little people in the family.

JAMES

I'll let you know. Usually is a good story.

EXT. JAMES AND THE LEAF ENTER DUNNELLON

Dunnellon is a classic old Florida town. The Leaf crosses a bridge. Off to the side a billboard stating Junction of the Rainbow River and Withlacoochee River. Paddle Board Rentals.

James parks in front of a mid century two story Florida house. The front yard scattered with various cast concrete bird baths, small antique farm implements, wrought iron plant holders and inside a boutique.

"Candle Box Memorabilia"

CHRISTINE CANDEL A fit older woman appearing to be James's age with the demeanor and acquired accent of a wealthy educated Bostonian.

Christine meets James in her yard with a hug.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

James Clifton, my Jimmy. How good of you to come. I trust your drive was pleasant.

(She pauses and looks James up and down)

I can still see the young man that rented a room in my parents Tallahassee boarding house.

JAMES

And they never asked why a Yankee boy was going to school in Florida in the middle of The Civil War.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

The fact that your parents lived in Tampa and had the money to pay for your school and boarding was enough.

JAMES

(in a devilish tone)

Hard money and hard men were in short supply.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

You flatter yourself.

The two old friends embrace. Walk towards the house. Stopping for a moment on the porch taking a good look at each other.

JAMES

And Tim Timucua saw something in both of us. Enough to invite us into the People of the Springs.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

Pity we never saw it in each other.

INT. CHRISTINE'S KITCHEN

Christine and James sitting at her kitchen table. The kitchen is well appointed with chefs level equipment.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

What can I offer you? Tea perhaps?
(Condescendingly)
Unfortunately I neglected to buy beer.

JAMES

Nothing right now. Thanks.
If needed I could get some later.
That's why the good Lord invented Seven Eleven.

CHRISTINE

(right to the point)
The family requires a chronicler.
And you are the most qualified.
Someone to record the history of the People of the Springs.

JAMES

I don't know if I agree such a document should exist.

CHRISTINE

That's a choice that you will have to make.
I am confident that the next time you need cash to bail out one of your pet projects we will find our selves in agreement.

Christine gets up and makes herself a cup of tea and sits back down at the kitchen table.

JAMES

We are harvesting less and less Eve's Tears every year.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)
To compound matters the power of
the springs is weakening. And
that... money won't solve.

CHRISTINE
I believe I may have a solution.
(pausing for a question
that never comes)

He look on James face reflects he is immediately sorry he
brought the subject up.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Our laboratory has been able to
make an extract from Eve's Tears.
This extract has been proven to
work.

JAMES
On Bert's daughter Spring, all with
your approval I understand.

CHRISTINE
It was entirely Bert's decision.
And after what happened with his
wife?

JAMES
The extract takes ten times more
leaves and seeds than ingesting
them fresh. There won't be enough
to meet everybody's needs.

CHRISTINE CANDEL
Sacrifices will have to be made. We
need to guarantee at least a few of
us will be in the future to carry
on our work.

JAMES
Let me guess. Your plan is to
create a hierarchy, a privileged
class of Spring People living
separate extended lives.

CHRISTINE CANDEL
And I need you to sell the idea.

James spent the night at Christine's. He was up and out
early, leaving a note of thanks.

EXT. RAINBOW SPRINGS HEAD WATERS - WARM SUNNY DAY

James swimming in the spring with long purposeful strokes. James exits the spring and sitting on the grassy bank consumes a large handful of Eve's Tears.

JAMES
(to himself)
There is my answer, Christine.

James dives back into the spring and continues his swim.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY TIME

Holli Raines is in a hospital bed the victim of a brutal beating. Jeni and Spring at her side.

JENI
Who did this to you?

Holli's face purple with bruises, her nose in a cast, both eyes black. A drip bag administrating fluid and pain killers.

HOLLI
I thought I had some mean Foster
Fathers...but.

SPRING
Tell us. Who and why.

Holli her eyes closed, her lips swollen, speaks weakly. The attending nurse obviously not approving of any questioning.

HOLLI
Two nasty old cracker types. Said
they had been spying on us from the
river bank.

JENI
Thought I heard pigs.

HOLLI
(painful to talk)
Lots of questions about hidden
Gold.

SPRING
They must have heard me telling you
the story of the Timucua gold.

HOLLI

They really wanted to know about Jeni. Something about they remember you from years ago in Weeki Wachee.

SPRING

(looking at Jeni)

Not easy being perpetually young and attractive. I'm getting it.

HOLLI

(looking puzzled)

They want to meet with both of you at a real estate office in Chiefland. Saturday morning.

NURSE

Holli needs her rest. She honestly can't take anymore upset. That's got to be it for the day.

Nurse makes the move along motion with her hand.

INT. CHURCH KITCHEN - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Outside a riot is going on. Shouts of "Get out of Rosewood". "We are going to burn you people out". A woman maybe thirty looking through the stained glass windows. Its easy to see the whole town is on fire.

EXT. A SMALL TOWN BURNING - NIGHT LIT BY FIRES

What can only be described as a Race Riot going on. Men in white robes with guns on horses. Anti Black slurs, threats and insults are heard over the complete chaos. Gun shots, screams, cries for life itself, complete the cacophony of terror.

INT. CHURCH KITCHEN

Inside the church kitchen the Black Woman is pleading for mercy. Fighting back the best she can. Her dress being pulled at.

WOMAN

(pleading crying terror in her eyes)

I've never hurt anyone. Please don't do this.

A hate crazed, filthy with ash and sweat white man backs her into a corner and rapes her. Leaving her in a heap. Some how the ravaged woman gets to her feet. She all but falls out the back door.

A short time later, the riot still going strong. The woman stumbles up to a Ford model A truck. Frantic thirty something man and a older woman are waiting. The truck loaded with random household items. They help her in the cab

MAN

Thank God! Get in! We are out of here! Never to come back.

As they drive the town is burning in the back ground, screams and shots can be heard. They pass a sign that says ROSEWOOD.

EXT. PORCH OF A HOMESTEAD - VERY SUNNY MORNING

KAKIKEE CLAY, Very dark complected woman in her late seventies. Dignified air, total demeanor exuding unspoken wisdom. Hundred percent Seminole in stature and style. Calm reserve instantly commanding respect.

Kakikée's Homestead is on the east bank of the headwaters of the Weeki Wachee River. The view is to the West across the Spring Head and down the crystal clear river. Today Kakikée has a visitor Tim Timucua. The old friends rocking on the front porch and enjoying the view across the shimmering pool.

A little caramel colored girl in a flower sack dress, barefoot comes walking down the white sand road.

KAKIKEE

That's Jeni Lane, she comes here to swim.

TIM

All by her self?

KAKIKEE

Yes, much to her mothers worry. I've reassured her the cold water close to the spring head keeps the alligators and snakes away. I also put a spell of protection over her.

TIM

How did her family come to Homestead at Weeki Wachee?

KAKIKEE

Charlie Lane and his family were refugees from the Rosewood massacre. When they stopped for water for their overheating truck. I invited them to join the settlement.

TIM

Her striking blue eyes tell me there's more to the story.

KAKIKEE

Nine months later when Jeni was born with caramel colored skin and blue eyes... It was obvious what had happened to her mother the night of the massacre. A word has never been spoken.

The two old friends watched the young girl enter the water and start to swim and dive. She would take a few strokes and then dive under the water doing turns and somersaults. Her hair and dress flowing, she would kick with both legs together in her own special style.

TIM

I believe we are watching a Mermaid being born.

EXT. INVERNESS COURT HOUSE 1961 - MID MORNING

On a step ladder Speaking through a megaphone a man is dividing a crowd into types. Poster announcing Elvis Presley's "*Follow That Dream*" Extras Needed, tacked to a telephone pole.

MEGAPHONE MAN

(standing on a step ladder)

I'd like you three young people over here in this group. You Sir and your wife and you two please come forward. The rest of you thank you very much. You can go home.

JAMES

(Speaking to a girl who had been selected)

Hi I'm James, So you want to be part of the Elvis movie?

WENDY Looks about James age, pony tailed with sun streaked hair. Lite make up with sunglass pushed up on her head.

WENDY

Sure why not? Chance to meet the King. Oh, I'm Wendy by the way.

YOUNG JAMES

Wendy Byway. Interesting name.

YOUNG BERT

(slightly pushing James
out of the way)

Byway? That's the best you got brother? Sad. Me, Bert Hunter.

JAMES

And you sound like a caveman.

MEGAPHONE MAN

(walking up to the three
new friends)

I need the three of you out by the Yankee Town Bridge at 7:00 AM tomorrow morning. I've got you down as "locals fishing from bridge". Got it?

INT. JAMES HOUSE SCREEN ROOM - PRESENT DAY

James has just finished telling a story. Jeni, Sebastian and Mac all doing their best to look interested.

JAMES

And that's how Wendy, Bert and I met. Trying out as extras for the Elvis movie.

BERT

And we were in it and Elvis himself said we did real good.

JAMES

(laughing at his own joke)
You still sound like a caveman.

SPRING

That's right and that explains the illustrious movie career that you two have had.

And with that Jeni, Sebastian and Mac had a nice laugh.

BERT

And just how many movies have you
been in Smart Girl?

JENI

Does Porno count?

This got a hearty round of laughter from everyone.

SPRING

There is just one piece missing to
complete the story.

**NARRATIVE FADES TO THE PAST. OVERHEAD SHOT OF SAN DIEGO
ZOOMING IN TO A STREET IN PACIFIC BEACH.**

A young Bert Hunter enters Warwick's bookshop.

INT. INTERIOR BOOKSHOP - MIDDAY

Sitting cross legged on the floor in one of the aisles is a beautiful brunette. Wearing low cut jeans, San Diego State sweatshirt and Converse basketball shoes. She is looking through a book with pictures of yoga poses.

BERT

Are you into yoga?

SANDI Maybe twenty-one, tall brunette, striking brown eyes.
California Tan.

SANDI

Not really, I'm just looking.

Considering he just fell in love Bert holds himself together pretty well.

BERT

Yeah...Me too.

EXT. SIDEWALK THAT FOLLOWS AROUND MISSION BAY - AFTERNOON

Sandi and Bert talk and walk all the way to her studio apartment.

INT. SANDI'S STUDIO APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

The next morning over love making and coffee.

SANDI

I came out from Pennsylvania to wait for a young Lieutenant from my hometown. He is on extended maneuvers in the South Pacific.

BERT

OK, I get it. A girl has her needs I'm privileged you picked me Thank you Ma'am.

SANDI

We were set to get married and make our home in San Diego. While he pursued his career in the Navy.

BERT

You're almost speaking in the past tense what's changed?

SANDI

YOU! Mr. Going home to Florida.

JAMES (V.O.)

The gravity never went away. Two months later Sandy found herself pregnant And by any calculations it could only be Bert's child.

EXT. SANDI'S SMALL BACK PORCH SITTING AREA OVERLOOKING MISSION BAY - MORNING

Bert and Sandi having coffee.

BERT

My discharge came through. I'm officially a civilian again. Crystal River, my family, and the dream of opening a dive shop are waiting. So...?

SANDI

I've already written "the Lieutenant" explaining I'm not quite ready. And I'm going home to Pennsylvania.

JAMES (V.O.)

Sandy and Bert arrived in Crystal River They were given a bungalow by Bert's grandmother a box fan served as air conditioning.

EXT. BACK TO PRESENT TIMES JAMES AND SPRING ARE SITTING AT THE END OF HIS DOCK.

JAMES

When you were about one and a half years old Bert told Sandi how they would live elongated lives in the Garden of Eden.

SPRING

She must have been beyond stunned.

JAMES

She went into a major rant. "Thank God he's not her husband. This story is that that only a madman could believe. And living in misery with a crazy person is not what she signed on for".

SPRING

And that was it?

JAMES

Like I shared with you before I drove her to Mc Dill Air Base myself.

INT. A CHIEFLAND REAL ESTATE OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

When Spring and Jeni arrive, Duff and Petty are already sitting at displaced agent's desks. They have cleaned themselves up a bit but are still poster boys for what whisky and a violent nature looks like. They stand extending their hands.

SPRING

(Making no effort to conceal her revulsion)
We won't be shaking hands until we come to terms. If then.

DUFF

(With a sarcastic smirk)
Now is that anyway to start off a business relationship.

JENI

(Shuddering)
I Feel dirty already. We know how you do business.

DUFF

Oh, really. Do tell.

SPRING

You kidnap your victims, torture them until they tell you all they know of value.

PETTY

Like the hippie chick telling us you know where Spanish gold is hidden in the rivers.

Jeni shows Duff and Petty some photographs of themselves taken through a rifle scope at different times, different days and from extremely long range.

JENI

We could end you at anytime. You just happen to be worth more alive to us. Right now.

DUFF

(Stroking his chin)

And you need help in getting at the gold.

You are exactly the kind of people we like doing business with. Self righteous and greedy.

PETTY

(Focusing totally on Jeni)

Did your Mama ever swim at the Springs performing for the folk. Or did she just work the motels?

Jeni has to be restrained from coming straight across the desk at Petty.

PETTY (CONT'D)

(Showing almost no reaction)

Yeah that's what I thought?

EXT. JAMES AND BERT SITTING IN A TRUCK

Listening on a wire Spring was wearing.

BERT

Apparently Duff and Petty have no idea of the connection between Eve's tears and the springs.

JAMES

I agree with you. Especially if they don't play that card in the next few minutes.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE

Jeni places in ingot of 16th century Spanish gold on the desk, the King's mark clearly visible.

DUFF

(Shrugging)

So you robbed a museum. Not interested in being your fence.

At this point James and Kakikee enter the office. Kakikee looking very Biscayne Bay Miami.

PETTY

The office is closed for the day. You can take your business down the street

SPRING

Mr. Petty Mr. Duff our associates
Mr. James and Ms. Clay.

Without uttering a word James reaches into a duffel bag. On the desk he stacks eight Spanish gold ingots. All bearing the King's seal.

JENI

How's the interest level now boys?

PETTY

You have our interest. But don't call us boys ever again. That's reserved for your and her kind. (Grant pointing at Kakikee spitting out the words)

SPRING

The Timucua recovered tons of Spanish gold from the wrecks of galleons. Any fortune you find here today you can thank that woman. It's her gold.

DUFF

My goodness aren't we sensitive. Again what do you need from us.

JENI

We need your particular talents and connections to uncover a cache of Spanish gold a hundred times what's on this table.

PETTY

(smirking)

Of course we can never be equals. But we can be partners.

DUFF

And how do you suggest we do this?

JENI

The same way you have always gotten things done. Bribery, extortion. The threat of violence.

SPRING

If you can help place a nuclear power plant in a nature reserve, you should be able to pull this off.

PETTY

Our reputation precedes us. It always pays to do good work.

KAKIKEE

And you can have this gold as a down payment.

PETTY

And what's to stop us from Killing you keeping this gold? Not a bad afternoon.

SPRING

(Showing the wire she is wearing)

You can try. There are some sick military trained boys at the end of this wire. Ready to gut you two like fish.

DUFF

I almost think I'm starting to like you. White trash girl with an attitude. Tell us what you need done.

JENI

You remember a few years ago
something caused the government to
move forward with restoring the
Kissimmee River.

PETTY

As a matter of fact we do.
(the two laughing elbowing each
other like school boys)
They... (making air quotes)
undammed it and allowed it to
return to its natural stream bed.

JENI

We need you to make the same thing
happen on the Ocklawaha River.

DUFF

Simple just remove the Rodman
Impound Dam.

There is a marked pause in the conversation.

JAMES

Once the lake is drained. We go in
and pull half ton of Spanish gold
out of the muck.

JENI

The question remains can you do
this. Do we have a deal?

PETTY

There is an endless supply of
politicians and government
contractors with their hands out.

DUFF

And families to protect.
(again the school boy
chuckles)

SPRING

Say It.

DUFF AND PETTY

Yes, We have a deal

SPRING

Good, I'm still not shaking your
hand.

Not another word was spoken as everyone watched Duff and Petty leave the office, get in their truck and drive away. Gold in hand.

JENI
 (turning to Spring)
 Want to go for a drive?

EXT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - ALMOST SUN DOWN

Spring and Jeni remove the T top from Jeni's Firebird. Opening their view to the night sky. A few minutes later and not so quietly Jeni's 1976 Pontiac Firebird left the neighborhood.

A night drive through the cool air with the T top removed. They jumped on the Veterans Expressway and spent a few minutes at a hundred and ten. Taking the curvy back road through shady hills, it was time to put the custom suspension to work. Once on the I-275 it was clear sailing all the way to the Howard Franklin Bridge.

Flying 20 feet above the water on the Old Howard Franklin Bridge Jeni demonstrates where Firebirds got their reputation.

Thump, Thump, Thump, Thump, Heartbeat of the Causeway.

In a few more minutes they see their intended destination. The fabulous 480 foot tall 10 mile long Sunshine Skyway Causeway Bridge.

Rolling up to the automated toll booth. The sound of seven quarters still bouncing in the hopper. The red light held longer than expected.

JENI
 There's no problem a Firebird or a
 Jet ski won't cure. Tonight is the
 Firebird's turn.

Green light! The Firebird accelerates. The toll gate in the rear view gets small fast.

SPRING
 This whole Secret Springs thing is
 gonna turn me into a liar isn't it?

T top removed and windows down. Night sky and cool sea air are free to circulate through the car.

JENI

Either of them could have easily
have been my biological father.

SPRING

Bringing a San Diego girl to
Crystal River what Did my father
expect?

Now there are only two elements sky and water. Land is gone.
The Firebird starts to climb skyward. There are no reference
points. The water is 20 stories below. The air is cold.

They reach the summit of the bridge.

Traffic clear both ways Jeni stops the Firebird.

JENI

This is usually when I let out a
good scream.

There is only space. Time has been bent. Clarity has been
achieved.

Jeni executes a U-turn. Their descent begins. Lights and
stripes define the glide path. The water's surface, the
lights of distant land come into focus.

JENI (CONT'D)

Charlie Lane was the best Father
anyone could have.

SPRING

If my Mother couldn't love the
place my Dad was from. Not anyone's
fault. Place is important.

The car levels out 25 feet above the water. A little more 110
MPH.

The two more than lifelong friends simultaneously say.

JENI

The girl with daddy issues.

SPRING

The girl with mommy issues.

TOGETHER

GET OUT OF MY HEAD!!

West Shore Expressway home another great drive. The frequently maligned Howard Franklin Bridge over old Tampa Bay is a bonus.

SPRING

We just had the best Therapy a buck
seventy five can buy.

EXT. NARROW SINGLE LANE ROAD - SUNNY DAY

Bert Hunter is enjoying a back country ride on his Harley. When a van coming the other way suddenly hits its brakes and slides sideways. This causes Bert to swerve off the road. Bike flips out from under him. Leaving Bert stunned face down in the wet grass. Two burley men in windbreakers with side arms exit the van. Directed by a third man the same person that accosted James and Bert outside the coffee shop. In a flash Bert is handcuffed with a foot on his neck.

STATE AGENT

Bert Hunter you are under arrest
for Domestic Terrorism and
Destruction of Government Property.

INT. JAMES CLASS ROOM - MORNING

It's Saturday morning. The school building, the campus and James classroom are all empty. James positioned behind his oversized blonde Live Oak desk. Christine Candel walks into the classroom.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

I trust you received word that Bert
Hunter has been released and all
charges dropped.

JAMES

As agreed the Chronical has been
started.

CHRISTINE CANDEL

Please feel free to include this
little incident. We do want full
disclosure.

JAMES

I've always suspected that
controlling the family's finances
would eventually go to your head.
But why this exercise in power?

CHRISTINE CANDEL

After our last meeting a demonstration was necessary to show how things get done in the real world. Acknowledged or not I am the leader of the family. I hope further proof will not be required.

Suddenly from out of the shadows Spring Hunter appears.

SPRING

My father always taught me... A person's true spirit will eventually reveal itself.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - MID DAY

James parked out in front of Christine's Dunnellon house. Standing by his car talking on a cell phone. Random neighbor listening.

JAMES

Yeah, Burt, I came up for a swim. Christine's house is shuddered and weather sealed.

(looking at the neighbor)

The neighbor informs that it's been like that for a few weeks. Christine Candel and Tim Tumucua have simply decided to vanish.

EXT. KAKIKEE CLAY'S HOME AT WEEKI WACHEE - FIRST LIGHT

The two Mermaids in Jeni's Firebird are flying up a rural driveway. Coming to a dusty stop in front of a modern designed concrete and tinted glass home. The Firebird shuts off with a final rumble announcing their arrival.

KAKIKEE CLAY hearing the ruckus steps out on to her front entrance. Seeing its the Mermaids beckons them come in.

KAKIKEE

(to Spring)

Since this is your first visit to my new home, I hope you're not too shocked that I copied your homes style.

SPRING

Not in the least you know what they say about imitation.

The Mermaids follow Kakikee through the house to the back porch overlooking the Weeki Wachee River.

KAKIKEE

This is the very spot Jeni, where I watched you swim as a little girl.

Spring smiling starts to say something and thinks the better of it.

KAKIKEE (CONT'D)

As much as I enjoy tea and conversation something tells me you ladies have something on your mind.

JENI

(Enthusiastically blurts out)

We want to have children!

SPRING

(amusingly flustered)

Is it biologically possible for us to have children.

(gesturing between herself and Jeni)

JENI

I mean, can we? Aging only one year for every five we're talking a long pregnancy.

KAKIKEE

(smiling having a good chuckle)

I'm honestly surprised this conversation hasn't come up sooner. Of course you can!

(long pause)

And fine mothers you will be. Stop using Eve's Tears for about six months, maybe a little longer and you will conceive.

SPRING

And that's it? Besides the other stuff.

I need to quit while I'm ahead.

KAKIKEE

(directed toward Spring)

Except for you and Mackenzie setting a date for your marriage.

JENI

Auntie Kakikee makes a good point.

SPRING

Yeah about that. There's something
I've been meaning to tell you both.

Kakikee gets up goes to the kitchen and returns with green
tea and sugar cookies.

SPRING (CONT'D)

You remember my trip to Bali? When
Mac was stationed there. He was
involved in some very dangerous
clandestine missions. Well' Mac
insisted we get married. Explaining
that if something were to happen to
him I would have no legal standing.

JENI

Ok. Makes perfect sense.

KAKIKEE

Now, Jeni my dear. Now you need to
make an honest man out of that
handsome Sponge boat captain
you've been seeing.

INT. JAMES IN THE LEAF - DAY TIME

From the drivers point of view. The Leaf hums down the highway
passing a sign "GULF TO LAKES HWY" CRYSTAL RIVER 2 MI.

EXT. PARKING LOT IN FRONT OF BERT'S DIVE SHOP - DAY

The dive shop is on the Crystal River directly across from
Hunter Springs Park.
Bert approaches the Leaf holding a standard six foot
extension cord.

BERT

(laughingly)
Fill her up Sir?

James motions toward Bert's full size Pick-up truck.

JAMES

I'm sure the stock price on oil
moves every time you buy gas for
that beast.

BERT

I would like to see you pull a 32 foot dive boat with that wind up toy. Let's go upstairs and catch up.

They climb the outside stairs to the living quarters above the Dive shop.

INT. BERT'S HOME

The decor is that of an old Florida dockside restaurant and bar.

BERT

So your going to write a history of the Spring People.

JAMES

(doing a Shakespeare impression)

Those that come after us need to know what has been. To plan what is to be.

BERT

Then your going to include my damaging the Nuclear plant. You burning the High School down,,, twice. The bribing of countless State officials and contractors.

(giving James the raised eyebrow)

Finally my friend are you going to reveal there are people living several lifetimes by consuming flowers and seeds and swimming in Rainbow Springs.

JAMES

I'm going to tell the truth as best I can.

BERT

Oh, you mean everything the State Agents couldn't beat out of me.

JAMES

If they had only known. They could have just waited for the book.

BERT

Well here is some more filler for
your story book.

INT. UNDERWATER CAVE - COMPLETELY DARK

Bert switches on his divers light illuminating the grotto. Bubbles are gathering on the Cave roof. Except for the sound of his breathing complete silence .

Bert starts to swim across an underwater chasm. He falls through the water as if it were air. Landing on the bottom. He has fallen about 20 feet. Bert lay on the bottom feeling his full weight plus that of the two tanks strapped to his back. Gravity is having its full effect.

He can see nothing. The blessing is the silt that was been stirred up by his fall, quickly falls back to the cavern floor.

He is in water that behaves like air. He can not float he can't swim. The water has no substance. With great effort Bert crawls his way up the side of the wall.

Taking a moment to look back he sees a Milky white light with rainbow streaks in it emitting from the springs source. Bert again has buoyancy and can swim. He reaches the tunnel. Checking his air gage its the needle is in the red. Bert is pulling hard to get a breath when he reach's the tanks he stashed. This is where he found the artifact.

INT. BERT'S LIVINGROOM

JAMES

"Weak Water" Water that won't float anything. If you dig hard enough you'll find it in most ancient mythologies. Supposedly a source of great power.

Bert went to a tall double doored oak cabinet and took out something wrapped in a black cloth. Setting it on the table between them he pulled back the black cloth to reveal a highly polished flat piece of Onyx.

BERT

This is the artifact I picked up in
The Cave. It is a fragment of a
much larger piece.

On the artifact carved into the stone are several cartouches. One depicting a comet. Another a wavy circle with rays coming out. A third cartouche that of a stick figure lifting a block without touching it.

JAMES

The Younger-Dryas comet struck Earth 13,000 years ago. Ending a greatly advanced worldwide civilization.

BERT

We have watched the documentaries together. Is it time to call Graham Hancock?

INT. JAMES HOUSE - MID DAY

The Family is gathered in the screened room with its view of Lake Henderson.

JAMES

The fish are grilled, the potato salad cold, the beer even colder. Still no Spring.

BERT

Lately cellular phones have become increasingly unreliable. Even the car radio is going in and out. She probably just can't get a call through let's give it a little while longer.

JENI

There's been almost no progress towards the restoration of the Ocklawaha River Valley. Lawsuits are stalled in court. Environmental groups and politicians friendly to the cause seem to have lost interest.

BERT

All true and not very encouraging. And there's no proof Duff and Petty have held up any part of their bargain. I'm starting to feel we've been had.

Spring arrives in a brand new metallic midnight blue Toyota Tundra.

SPRING

I apologize for being late. It was love at first sight. The dealership did the paperwork as fast as they could. Also I did have another small delay.

Getting settled on the screen porch with a plate full of food and a cold beer Spring clearly has everyone's attention.

INT. SPRINGS NEW TRUCK

Leaving the truck dealership, reaching in her backpack Spring pulls out an empty water bottle. She pulls into a small convenience store. As soon as the truck is parked she is approached by two very large men whose intentions could only be construed as bad. Both look as if they had pumped iron in prison for more than just a few years. As one of the men circle to the far side of the truck to prevent her from exiting in that direction, the other approaches directly.

FIRST THUG
(in a low brow Florida
drawl)
Excuse me ma'am could I have a word
with you?

Without hesitation Spring pulls a Glock 43 from her concealed holster pointing the gun directly at the man's head.

SPRING
(Flatly stating)
THE NEXT THING YOU'LL
KNOW... IS DEAD!!

INT. JAMES SCREEN ROOM

BERT
(jumping in)
Good job. Just like I taught you.

SPRING
Judging by their old cargo van and
appearance I would have thought it
was a kidnap and rape situation.

EXT. BACK TO SPRINGS ENCOUNTER

THUG
(Completely surprised)
Whoa! No need for all that ma'am!
Our employers just want to make
sure you keep your side of the
bargain.
(backing way off)
And you might want to take a look
at the 6:00 news.

INT. BACK TO JAMES SCREEN ROOM

The clock on the wall reads 5:50. James clicks on the big flat screen TV. The Evening News has already started.

TV REPORTER

Though we don't have many details at this time, there was a large explosion at the Ocklawaha Impound Dam.

The live feed from a news helicopter confirms the report. What was a dam now just a pile of concrete rubble. Water once again freely flowing down the historic stream bed entering the St John's River at Welaka.

TV REPORTER (CONT'D)

The explosion which occurred this afternoon at approximately 4:00 PM has destroyed the dam. Water is now free flowing into the St Johns River.

The video from the helicopter fly over shows the explosion had ripped a one hundred yard wide gap in the dam. The parts of the that were not destroyed were beyond repair.

TV REPORTER (CONT'D)

In an unrelated story. A local girl having received a severe beating and assault from parties unknown. Sadly has died from her injuries.

Jeni and Spring just look at each other their eyes locked in total agreement. Bert and James notice but wisely say nothing.

BERT

This is military level work Rodman Dam is not coming back.

While Bert and James discussed what would possibly be their next move.

JENI

(Quietly)

We both know what needs to be done.

SPRING

Yeah, a little mermaid business.

EXT. DIRT ROAD IN FOREST - DARK

A Levi County Sheriff's car is parked outside a chained and locked gate. Sign reads "Legacy Springs Ranch Keep Out" one of the officers reluctantly bolt cutting the gate.

DEPUTY SMITH

It took long enough for the sheriff to send us out here. These people's employees are complaining they haven't been paid for several weeks.

DEPUTY JONES

You know how it is; Duff and Petty are big contributors to his campaign. An unauthorized entry on to their ranch won't make them very happy.

The deputies inch their way up the gravel driveway. It is now fully dark. Security lights come on completely illuminating about two acres of well kept property.

DEPUTY SMITH

Imagine that, they each have their own house.

DEPUTY JONES

With their money and proclivities. Wouldn't you? Let's try the front door.

First calling, then flashing their police car lights. Using their loud speakers they make their presence well known.

The deputies perform a thorough search of both houses.

DEPUTY SMITH

(talking on patrol car radio)

Sheriff I swear to you outside of the front doors being unlocked we found nothing unusual. Yes we searched both houses top to bottom everything is in its place as if the maid had just been here. There is absolutely no sign of foul play. And no Duff or Petty.

EXT. A VERY STILL DARK RIVER - PITCH BLACK DARK

Jeni and Spring paddle down the Waccasassa River and straight onto Petty and Duff's compound. The Mermaids silently beach the canoe. Each armed with a Dan Inject Dart Rifle. They slip a ballistic syringe in the chamber.

JENI

(below a whisper)

Dr. Roberts special concoction of
Ketamine and Cocaine.

Spring deftly tosses a rock against a security light. As soon as the security lights come on the two targets appear in their respective front doors. The commando mermaids fire simultaneously. Duff and Petty both receive a dart to the neck. It takes less than 10 seconds for them to drop like stones.

The assault on couldn't have gone easier. The most difficult part is moving the bodies. Two duct taped, wrapped in plastic lumps are loaded in the canoe.

They are administered additional injections.

SPRING

A little extra Valium. They won't
wake up for at least thirty six
hours.

JENI

I hope thirty six hours of
nightmares.

The Mermaid commandos make the twelve mile downstream paddle. Rendezvous with a South American Sea captain who picks up the package at Waccasassa Bay. Loading the two comatose bodies onto the shrimp boat.

SPRING

(in Spanish)

The package is to be taken
somewhere south of Cuba, never to
return. Here's your second payment.

JENI

If you want to get the balance of
your money, don't kill them and
trust me we will know.

INT. JAMES HOUSE SCREEN ROOM - AFTERNOON

The family gathered for a random afternoon of TV Sports.

James happens across a Spanish language news story while perusing his laptop.

JAMES

I haven't thought of these two in years. Listen to this. Two elderly white men were found operating a still on a remote sugar cane plantation. The pair could not recall where they had come from, how long they had been there. They both seemed mentally deficient. Upon further examination the doctors discovered they had been manually lobotomized.

JENI

(Quietly privately to Spring)

If we were to burn in Hell we Mermaids would not have done anything differently that night of the new moon.

SPRING

I just hope Holli Raines can rest a little bit easier.

BERT

What always amazed me was not one of the plethora of alphabet agencies investigating the disappearance of Duff and Petty ever questioned us.

JAMES

The very same is true regarding the dam explosion. Credit where credit is due. Duff and Petty covered their tracks extremely well.

BERT

And maybe with a little "Purse Strings" magic?

EXT. SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK CATHEDRAL TARPON SPRINGS - DAY

The church marquee board reads;

THE WEDDING OF MISS JENI LANE AND MR. SEBASTIAN SANDER.

INT. CLOAKROOM BACK OF CHURCH

SOFIA SANDER
(Sebastian's Mother)
Who is this girl with no family
about to marry our son?

DIMITRIS SANDER
(Sebastian's Father)
Jeni is the woman your son dearly
loves. She has done everything
possible to ingratiate herself to
you.

SOFIA SANDER
(tone of outrage)
And her baptism. Baptized in the
Weeki Wachee River, at a tent
revival.

DIMITRIS SANDER
(calm yet firm)
To satisfy you Sofia, Jeni spent a
year in Catechism studying the
Greek Orthodox faith. Presbyter
Andrew assured you of Jeni's
sincerity.

SOFIA SANDER
St Xenia's day January 24th of all
days. She didn't even know who St
Xenia was until she took Catechism.

DIMITRIS SANDER
(making a point)
There is something you both have in
common.
Jeni feels the Saint has been
watching over her entire life. Only
you Sofia could find a crime in
that.

INT. SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK CATHEDRAL - AFTERNOON

Sebastian's side of the aisle is occupied by his immediate
family, which include the Sponge Fleet crews and their
families, plus prominent Tarpon Springs politicians and
business folk.

Jeni's side of the aisle is populated by People of the Springs, several prominent Tampa Bay sports stars and Mermaids lots of Mermaids young and old.

In a twist of tradition Carissa Sebastian's twin sister wearing a tuxedo is his best man.

Master Sergeant Bert Hunter in full dress uniform and Professor James Clifton walk Jeni down the aisle.

Jeni chose a Vera Wang sleeveless Princess cut wedding dress with a V neck. The iconic extra long train cut to heel length. West Florida Chic.

Sunday January 24th at 12:01 PM Jeni Lane becomes Mrs. Sebastian Sander. The bride kicks up a heel, throws her head back and kisses her groom. Still embracing they turned to applause.

EXT. SANDER FAMILY SPONGE POINT ESTATE - JUST AFTER SUNDOWN

Carissa and Spring made sure the reception party goes off without a hitch. The D.J. finds a middle ground between the generations. The mermaids do a line dance that blew everyone away.

Jenny wears a Levi's trucker jacket over the Vera Wang. She trades her heels for a pair of Brook Road running shoes. Her hair gone a bit wild. To night Jeni is the sexiest girl in West Florida.

As is the custom the bride and groom have the last dance. Hundreds of dollars are thrown at their feet. Sophia pins a manila envelope inside Jeni's jacket. Demetrius conducts a final toast.

SEBASTIAN

It's time to start our Honeymoon.

JENI

So, we ARE having one?

Sebastian leads Jeni to a already running jet ski. Jeni wraps her arms around her husband as he guns the jet ski.

Sebastian beaches the jet ski on one of the small uninhabited islands that dot the St Joseph's Sound. Scooping his bride into his arms they make their way to the center of the island.

An inflatable glamping tent equipped with down bedding champagne and fresh Bay oysters on dry ice at the ready.

SEBASTIAN

We can thank Carissa and Mac for
this.

(holding the tent flap)

MY LADY...

EXT. BACK YARD DOCK SPONGE POINT HOUSE - MID MORNING

Sebastian deftly maneuvers the jet ski into its harness. Jeni stepping up onto the dock presses a button and the machine lifts out of the water.

SEBASTIAN

What did mom pin in your jacket
last night?

Jeni carefully opened the manila envelope. Removing a very official looking legal document.

JENI

It's the deed to this, the Sponge
Point property signing it over to
you, me and Carissa.

The newlyweds walk around to the front door. For the third time Sebastian swoops Jeni up into his arms and crossed the threshold.

EXT. THE SUMMIT OF MAUNA VOLCANO HAWAII - DARKEST OF NIGHTS

Huge Observatory. Telescope pointed almost straight up.

INT. OBSERVATORY - MINIMAL LIGHT

Two scientists in white jumpsuits in custom reclining chairs looking through eyepieces. A big screen in a control room displaying what they see.

EXT. DEEPEST SPACE - COLD AND DARK

What the technicians are seeing through the telescope. A massive globule of what can only be described as dark blue water fills the screen.

Suddenly at its Center a gigantic eye opens. The eye blinks. The entire mass explodes in a white light that illuminates the entire cosmos.

The mass forms itself into a gigantic counterclockwise dark blue rotating disk.

Within are multi colored rotating disks collapsing in upon themselves. Each with a yellow center. The disks continue to compress in upon themselves.

At the center everything rotating around it is a yellow sun similar to our own.

The multi colored rotating disks complete consolidating in upon themselves forming 11 planets orbiting around the newly formed sun. In a similar fashion various moons form around these planets.

The violence quells. The black backdrop of space reestablishes itself. Revealing an 11 planet solar system. Each planet with colors and characteristics of its own. One of the planets breaks up forming an asteroid belt. The 11th Planet orbiting so far from the central sun it's as if it doesn't exist in relation to the others.

INT. CONTROL ROOM OF THE OBSERVATORY

A replay of the solar system's formation playing in the background on the giant screen. Two very rattled astronomers are having a urgent discussion.

MAN ASTRONOMER

The third planet from the sun by every measure is a newly formed Earth. Spectrometer readings confirm it could support life as it exists here.

WOMAN ASTRONOMER

(visibly shaken)

We just watched an entire solar system form in seven days.

MAN ASTRONOMER

Did I look into the eye of God?
(looking a bit afraid)
This is getting all a bit too Biblical for me.

WOMAN ASTRONOMER

A mirror image of our solar system was just formed. And we have it recorded.
What are we gonna tell the Agency we saw happen?

MAN ASTRONOMER

(at a complete loss)
God showing off?

EXT. OPEN PASTURES ROLLING HILLS SECONDARY ROAD - MID DAY

SKYDAR JONES, Late sixties smallish balding reeks of retired military. Paranoid eyes.

Bert Hunter and Skydar Jones with their two Harley Davidsons are an parked under oak tree. Skydar is fiddling with his bike's motor. In the distance a gray van is parked.

BERT

What's wrong with your bike? It's been sputtering the last couple of miles.

SKYDAR

I backed out the needle valve on the carburetor.

BERT

(Glancing over his shoulder at the van)
For the benefit of our friends I would imagine.

SKYDAR

(Nodding in agreement)
When you saved my life overseas I promised I'd pay you back someday.

BERT

(tapping his temple)
I know that. You would have done the same for me. You owe me nothing. I just don't want to put those guys onto you.

SKYDAR

Oh they already are, trust me. Don't worry. Those guys in the van won't hear a thing. I've got a scrambling device hidden underneath the seat of my motorcycle.

BERT

Good! I hope they enjoy the electronic tinnitus.

SKYDAR

Chatter, I've always liked listening to Chatter. Even when I was a kid with my first radio set, I surfed every frequency I could tune into.

BERT

(thumb pointing over his
shoulder at the van)
Some might call it eavesdropping.
But if the government can do it to
us, turn about his fair play.

SKYDAR

If it even is the government. And
if it is, which one?

BERT

I read ya.

SKYDAR

When I retired to Astronomy Ranch I
was settled enough to build myself
a super listening device.

BERT

I can see where that would be fun.
Everybody loves the inside scoop.

SKYDAR

There are changes in our universe
that even our contemporary
Einstein's and Oppenheimer's don't
understand. Newtonian physics is
being turned upside down.

BERT

Like radio television, cellular
communication, even electricity
becoming less and less dependable.

SKYDAR

Absolutely. Nuclear fusion no
longer follows the rules of
physics. Nuclear power and Nuclear
bombs no longer work.

BERT

Now that's a secret that could get
you killed. But somehow I think
you're gonna top yourself.

SKYDAR

THEY KNOW GOD EXISTS.
AND THEY ARE SCARED!

INT. KAKIKEE CLAY'S HOME AT WEEKI WACHEE - MORNING

Everyone having spent the night James, Bert, Jeni and Spring are gathered in the back kitchen with a view of the spring.

You can feel the anticipation in the air.

JAMES

After being called here with such urgency I can't begin to imagine what "revelation" Kakikee has for us.

BERT

The last time Kakikee called the family together like this was the Petty and Duff situation.

JAMES

Not to be an alarmist, however I am bracing myself.

JENI

I feel action coming on.
(Turning to Spring)
You ready Sister?

SPRING

Hundred percent.
(thumbs up)

Right on que. Kakikee enters the room

KAKIKEE

There are pancakes, coffee, plates and syrup on the kitchen island. Please everyone make a plate and lets dine out here.

Everyone does what you're told and are soon back in place. Ears at the ready.

Kakikee settles into an old-fashion patio chair.

KAKIKEE (CONT'D)

Now that "the people" have accepted that God, Providence or something has finally put its hand on the sociological evolution of mankind.

JAMES

(breaking in)

And for the price of a little free will, the world is becoming a better place.

BERT

Until the human race improved as a species, nothing else would have gotten better.

JENI

With crime rates down, homelessness almost Non existent and hunger eradicated. All the result of an miraculous change in human attitude.

SPRING

The X factor in all this is the loss of control those that rule over us feel. The paranoia it brings and WHAT THEY MIGHT TO DO ABOUT IT.

Everyone had finish eating. A interlude is taken. Soon everyone returns to their places.

Kakikee gets right to it. Direct and clear as she has ever been.

KAKIKEE

The Maya had been coming to the Waccasassa Valley for decades to harvest Chicle Gum. They discovered a tree shrub that seeps a resin that when dried and mixed with Chicle Gum is flavorful. Addictingly so.

BERT

(Cleverly quipping)

So they though they had the next Juicy Fruit.

KAKIKEE

(A finger raised)

There are side effects. First the gum amplifies the power to learn and completely retain knowledge.

JAMES

The Tree of Knowledge. Where else but within the Garden of Eden

KAKIKEE

(now tapping the same
finger)

The second side effect.

If the gum is used by anyone not
yet fully out of puberty, they will
completely, unquestionably believe
what ever they are told.

In other words the gum can be used
for indoctrination and brain
washing.

JAMES

(after a log pause)

This explains why so many Maya
willingly lined up to have their
hearts cut out.

EXT. YBOR CITY TAMPA OLD CIGAR FACTORY - NIGHT

INT. LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM EXTREMELY WELL APPOINTED

Three well dressed men of the pinky finger ring type sit at a
polished conference table.

VINCENT SOTO sixty plus, well fed on rich food. Straight from
central casting for The God Father.

VINCENT SOTO

(sitting at the head of
the table)

Ok, Papo bring the guy in.

An older man in an off the rack suit is brought in. Though he
is trying to hide it he is obviously extremely nervous.

MICAH TALBIT a well wore man in his late sixties. Ichabod
Crane thin, bald with white fringe. Nervous as a cat in a
kennel.

VINCENT SOTO (CONT'D)

Mr. Micah Talbit, Welcome back. You
remember Mr. Havana and Mr.
Sinatra.

SINATRA

After our first meeting we did some
digging. You neglected to tell us
your family has been a bit overly
involved in Ecological matters.

JOE HAVANA

Also that your wife was Mayan and held the original Spanish Land Grant to the property in question.

SOTO

Which you conveniently inherited due to her recent
(air quotes)
"Accident".

SINATRA

Your birthday was a little hard to pin down. You look old and beaten like a wore out shoe. But a hundred and ten? A total laugh.

SOTO

You were telling us the truth about the chemical samples you brought. As you claimed they increased students learning capabilities exponentially along with the susceptibility to persuasion.

TALBIT

(Excitedly starting to rise)
I told you so, I told you it would work.

SOTO

Keep your pants on Pops, remain respectful. You'll get what you have coming.

Everybody laughed at the boss's tone. Except Talbit.

TALBIT

(Nodding his head up and down)
So, I'm getting paid. A new identity. Transport out of the country.

SOTO

Yes Sir, you're getting everything the whole enchilada. But first the Deed to the property where this "Maya Bush" grows. Your Property.

TALBIT
 (slides documents across
 the table)
 I have it all right here. Legally
 executed and notarized.

For some reason when Havana hears the word executed, he gives a little dry laugh under his breath.

Soto examines the Deed. Comparing it to some documents already on his desk.

SOTO
 (looking up)
 We are good. Mr. Havana, Mr.
 Sinatra please escort Mr. Talbit to
 the international bank.

Soto stands and extends his hand. They shake hands. Soto holds Talbit's hand uncomfortably long. Talbit accompanied by the two large men leave the conference room.

Soto presses the intercom button.

SOTO (CONT'D)
 Marie, send Papo in please.

PAPO
 You wanna see me, Boss?

SOTO
 Did I ever tell you what I hate
 more than a guy that'll sell out
 his own family. A guy that will
 hurt children doing it.

INT. LOUNGE OF A SUPER YACHT-NIGHT

PRESIDENT LAKIN STEEL 58 TALL HANDSOME OVERLY GROOMED
 POLITICAL KEN DOLL

A politically correct group Of cabinet members and advisers pay shameless attention.

PRES. STEEL
 No matter what or whose God is
 getting credit. A counterbalance
 crediting any power besides our own
 for the improvements to society had
 to be found.

V.P. HILL

Something tangible and immediate. A viable long term threat that only We can protect our constituents from.

PRES. STEEL

Someone in my think tank suggested that a credible hostility from outer space just might be that common threat to humanity.

WILLY GRIM

(a worm in human form)
(setting up the Presidents answer)
How would we get the population to buy into such a fabrication?

PRES. STEEL

(Almost too pleased with himself)
We have acquired a School Lunch Supplement that will not only help our students learn but help them see things our way.

V.P. HILL

Soon we will have an entire generation willing to comply with whatever. Even prepare for an Alien Invasion that will never come.

WILLY GRIM

(struggling to contain himself)
At least from Space that is.

PRES. STEEL

And all it cost us was promising to stop prosecuting a certain Tampa crime family and let them go about their business.

INT. LARGE WELL EQUIPPED LABORATORY- DEEP UNDER GROUND

Jeni and Spring talking to a man in a lab coat.

SPRING

Every time I visit you, Dr Watson I'm amazed at how huge this complex is.

DR ROBERT WATSON, Handsome, middle aged with reddish brown hair. Always wears Stylish safety glasses. Has a calming smooth voice and outgoing demeanor.

DR. WATSON

Leftover from the Cold War. We were lucky to get it. And I'm more amazed it's never been discovered by the powers that.

SPRING

We are about to have a generation that believes this planet is going to be invaded and taken over by an alien race.

DR. WATSON

The good news is I think we have a way of stopping it.

JENI

That would be exceptionally good news. So what have you got?

DR. WATSON

One of our top scientists Cindy Lee whose expertise is biochemical life forms has developed a nanobot. A life form that feeds on the roots of Maya Bush.

CINDI LEE twenty something dark red hair sporting the same rose over flag tattoo that Jeni has.

SPRING

For the sake of redundancy. What you're saying is we have a way of eliminating Maya Bush.

CINDI LEE

That is exactly what we're saying. The hard part will be spreading the nanobots. I understand they patrol the property like it was Area 51.

DR. WATSON

The forty pounds that we have created should cover the area.

JENI

Doctor Robert, Cindy, you've done your part We'll take care of the rest.

EXT. RIVER RUNNING THROUGH A THICK TROPICAL FOREST - DARK

Spring and Jeni camouflaged and geared up beach their canoe and turn inland.

SPRING

Its time to trek out for Talbit Ranch.

Passing a sign that reads "Talbit Corporation - Private Game Reserve". They pass an unfinished office barn complex. It appears that no one occupies the property full time. Mixed amongst the trees they find wild and cultivated Maya Bush.

JENI

Its hard to imagine that for a few pieces of silver Micah Talbit sold out the People of the Springs and his families legacy.

SPRING

He is not the first keeper of consequential secrets to sell out. Its sadly always money.

A sandy track paralleling the river takes them down to the outer edge of their reconnaissance area. They set up their launching site. Using super silent drones they proceeded to spread the nanobots throughout the entire Maya Bush area.

Completing another trek. They settle into a blind at a spot downstream from Blue Spring.

JENI

(softly)

There is no evidence of any interest in Eve's Tears.

SPRING

So Talbit didn't completely sell the family out. Some consolation.

Now positioned about 50 yards from Blue Spring. The Mermaids clearly observed half a dozen people all wearing gray jumpsuits. The government types heavily armed are milling around two military communications trailers. No identifying numbers or logos on these listening posts.

The satellite dishes on the roofs of the trailer suddenly came alive. Two wide angle cameras pop up and are pointed directly at the spring.

A column of bright white light shoots straight up from the spring into the air. Immediately a rowboat with two guards aboard who had been taking soundings in the center of the spring sink like a stone.

SPRING (CONT'D)

That must be the weak water phenomena my Father spoke. They didn't even have time to call out for help.

JENI

So the Government knows about and has an interest in zero point energy.

SPRING

Government or an oil company hard to tell.

JENI

There is a difference?

Next, rays of a rainbow shoot up the column of light. Dispersing into the night sky like dashes of Morse code. Then as if a switch has been flipped the phenomena ended.

SPRING PATTING HER DIGITAL CAMERA GAVE JENI THE THUMBS UP.

INT. JAMES CLIFTONS GARAGE - MID MORNING

Bert parks his big pickup truck gets out and walks up behind James. James is standing next to his old Nissan Leaf that he has painted gold.

BERT

Admiring your handiwork.

JAMES

Actually I'm a little bit astonished.

BERT

The paint job's good but not that good.

JAMES

Even though I halfway expected it. Since I painted this car with real gold paint. It's batteries haven't discharged.

BERT

I'm sure you're going to explain.
In layman's terms, please.

JAMES

Many ancient writings spoke of an energy that came from the air. The pyramids were capped with gold to attract the energy.

BERT

I've heard the pyramids being ancient power stations theory.

JAMES

And many of the ancient chambers found vacant showed signs of once containing heavy machinery.

BERT

For decades my life has been extended by a blue flowering vine and swimming in magical streams. Why not. The Earth leaking usable light energy.

JAMES

Noticing your gold tipped Diving batteries didn't discharged gave me my first clue.

BERT

So if the girl that Odd Job painted gold in the Bond Movie had been an android. She'd still be walking around today?

EXT. JAMES AND BERT'S HOME AT MUD CREEK COVE - AFTERNOON

A beautiful two story modern plantation style home built of rough sawn cypress. The two old friends sitting in rocking chairs enjoying the view of the St John's River. Celebrating the now free flowing confluence of the Ocklawaha River into the St John's.

BERT

I don't think there was a better place to build this house.

JAMES

We certainly put our time driving up and down all those dirt tracks in a Gold Electric Winnebago looking for this spot.

BERT

I stopped counting the amount of times we had to wash that thing just to keep it charged.

JAMES

Every blessing comes with its burdens.

They both share a very hearty laugh. James and Bert have the appearance of very sturdy men in their mid nineties.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I have never considered my age or anyone else's for that matter. Truth being, this next birthday I'll be 247 years old.

BERT

Maybe not years wise but odometer wise I'm right behind you. As a result of the stress and pressure of my diving career it has given me an enlarged heart.

JAMES

I guess we're just going to expire like an unpaid subscription.

BERT

Or a set of old bald tires. Beyond the point of rotation doing any good.

Another laugh is shared between the two friends.

JAMES

Did I ever tell you the only argument I ever with my wife Wendy was after she was diagnosed with the Terminal Melanoma.

BERT

You have. She wanted to end the Eve's Tears regimen and let the cancer take its course. And die a relatively quick death.

JAMES

I wanted her to hang on. In what would have been agony in hope of a cure.

(shaking his head)

I was a hideously selfish man.

EXT. RIVER IN FRONT OF JAMES AND BERT'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Jeni and Sebastian arrive by Scanoë. They both have the look of extremely toned late middle aged athletes.

SEBASTIAN

(jumping out of the scanoë)

Since the freeing of the Twenty Springs the Ocklawaha River level has risen about a good two feet. It was easy to navigate the natural waterways from West Florida to your front door.

JENI

One can see why an across Florida Canal was dreamed of.

JAMES

Ironically it was the first truly modern eco battle our people took on.

JENI

Guys check this boat out. Mac gifted us this beautiful 18 foot oak strip Scanoë.

The Scanoë powered by a small electric outboard its battery box painted gold. A true work of art.

A short time later their two daughters Savannah and Sandra arrive paddling a 16 foot racing canoe.

The crunching sound of a truck coming up the gravel driveway announces the arrival of the Spring and Mac Gray family.

BERT

Spring has never lost her affinity for a beautiful truck. It's Spring's all time favorite. A two hundred year old Ford F-150 Lightning with a million miles on the odometer.

JAMES

However Judging from Springs past choices of truck color schemes I don't think gold would have been her first choice.

SPRING

(smiling at her God uncle)
And you would be correct, Sir.

Macon and Mccoy, Spring and Mac's two Sons jumped out of the back of the pickup truck. The four grandchildren who had grown up like brothers and sisters were soon in the canoe headed up the Ocklawaha River to visit friends.

INT. JAMES AND BERT'S GREAT ROOM - AFTERNOON

James and Bert allowed a couple of days to pass before they called everyone into the great room for a family meeting. James sitting behind his Blonde Live Oak desk that had followed him from Inverness High School.

JAMES

Spring tell us what you found on your journey to India.

SPRING

The spiritual power of Mount Kailash is Omnipotent. There is no need of Springs or Eve's Tears within its radiance.

BERT

Do you think there's any room for a old scuba diver?

SPRING

I'm sure there is Dad. But you two didn't invite us to hear about my vacation.

An awkward pause in the conversation. A long minute passes. Once everyone is reset, attention turns to James.

JAMES

I have completed the Chronicle. At least my part of it. You are all invited to read all or any part of it. I believe I have accurately covered about eight hundred years of our history.

Everyone stands and James receives an impromptu round of well deserved applause.

JAMES (CONT'D)

As we all have experienced, digital information is unreliable. A book printed using standard methods may survive five hundred years.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Taking my inspiration from the Dead Sea Scrolls. I have printed the chronicle on alkaline paper using coal black ink. Under the right conditions and with a little luck it may last three thousand years.

BERT

After that good luck to whoever is left around.

Burt manages to break the serious mood.

James indicates two squat clay jars with lids set on a sturdy side table

JAMES

They are made from the finest Georgia clay. Unmolested the jars themselves could last ten thousand years. The plan is to place the Chronicle in the jars in a cave with the lowest humidity possible.

BERT

We know all of you are as familiar with the Garden like the back of your hands. I trust you to locate a suitable place to sequester the jars.

SPRING

(speaking right up)

Mac and I know of a perfect place to sequester the jars of clay.

MAC

It's in the High Springs country well above any potential water line...

Mac is cut off by James raising his hand.

JAMES

I honestly would prefer not to know
the location.

Lisa Taylor much to everyone's happy surprise enters from the
kitchen with a pitcher of Ice Tea.

LISA TAYLOR Bert's longtime captain and companion now
appearing as a very steady woman in her late seventies.

LISA TAYLOR

(getting right to the
point)

There are certain deceptions to
aging when living an extremely
extended life. Tim Timucua's
admonishments must always be kept
front of mind.
Please don't judge the choices
others make.

SEBASTIAN

We all do Lisa. We all don't.
Especially the warning about Human
Nature.

MAC

(smiling at his old
friend)

Says the hundred and seventy year
old man.

JAMES

Lisa I'll take it from here.

Lisa starts to cry softly. Spring sits next to her. They hold
hands.

Complete and utter silence descends upon the room.

BERT

The bottom line, James and I have
decided to stop taking Eve's Tears.
But will continue swimming in the
springs.

SPRING

(tears still running down
her face)

Dad! I love you... you...

JAMES

If we're lucky this is how we all
go. It just happens to be our time.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)
Decisions made. Respect it and let
things go on as usual.

BERT
(waving Lisa's offer of
tea away)
I don't know about the rest of you.
I'm ready for an ice cold beer.

Few minutes pass. Drinks are served around. Some soft
progressive jazz is playing. And considering this family,
normal conversation ensues.

Spring recognizes a framed embroidered quotation hanging on
the wall in Bert's study.

SPRING
(pointing the wall hanging
out to Jeni)
I grew up with that little piece of
art hanging in our living room.

JENI
I remember your Dad calling it his
"Religion"

The two Mermaids unnoticed by the others walk over to read
the bit of folk art.

**WORK HARD
BE JOYOUS
BE GOOD
LET GO**

JENI
If you had noticed that seven weeks
ago you could have saved a trip
India.

**EXT. AERIAL SHOT OF RAINBOW SPRINGS FOLLOWING THE RIVER ALL
THE WAY TO THE CRYSTAL RIVER AND OUT TO THE GULF.**

Tracking along with the drone shot a Voice Over.

VOICE OVER
As it had been ordained James and
Bert returned to their maker within
days of each other.
Their deaths were the reward of
true warriors. The two old friends
had simply gone to sleep.

(MORE)

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

They had lived exemplary lives and had been an integral part of The Garden transforming back to Eden.

James was laid to rest on the high ground overlooking his beloved Rainbow Springs.
A quiet place in a dream jungle.

Bert found his peace in the family plot next to the Spring bearing the Hunter family name.
The only building left in the area was his dive shop which remained in pristine condition.

Christine Candel had been correct.
They both had been needed in the future.

EXT. THE SPONGE POINT HOUSE - BRIGHT SUNNY AFTERNOON

Dr. Robert, Jeni and Spring are watching Sebastian and Mac steading a small air ship at its makeshift mooring.

DR. ROBERT

They found the four person Naval Observation Blimp in a hangar at Jacksonville Naval Air Station. Designed to be carried aboard a naval warship it is very compact and completely electric.

JENI

It's their favorite toy. Since conventional aircraft won't fly anymore it's been fun getting up in the air once in a while.

INT. LIVINGROOM SPONGE POINT HOUSE - SUN GOING DOWN

Family meeting of the four lifetime friends.

SPRING

With the long distance guidance of Skydar Jones, Sebastian Has assembled a powerful shortwave communication station.

SEBASTIAN

The weather everywhere has evened out.

(MORE)

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Rain is falling regularly in arid areas long abandoned by humans. The old places have become the best places.

Spring passes around an overhead shot of Chaco Canyon Reinhabited. The city completely restored, green with crops, having returned to its former glory.

SPRING

Our life here in the garden has been and is idyllic. Chaco Canyon, Oraibi and the Zuni Pueblo once again flourish. Crops grow easily and the new inhabitants are rebuilding the ancient cities.

DR. ROBERT

The Rainbow Springs have weakened in power to the point I don't believe they will last another generation.

JENI

This Has been accelerating since the Earth decided to be kinder to its people. In turn humans have become kinder to each other.

SPRING

We have outlived our usefulness as witnesses and influencers of history.

DR. ROBERT

Silver Springs, Rainbow Springs and Weeki Wachee will probably be the last to lose their powers. We are the last of the last.

SPRING

The world is becoming the promised garden.

The exact... WHY... behind this change is not known.

(taking a beat)

I propose that we go on an exploration of this new Earth and possibly learn the...WHY

MAC

With Sebastian and my experience with the airship we will be able to pilot it for this journey.

(MORE)

MAC (CONT'D)

(excitedly)

We'll leave in the springtime.
We'll be catch the prevailing trade
winds and ride them westward.

SEBASTIAN

And when we decide to return, we
leave on a cold front. Pushed
southward across the Southern
Plains and the Gulf of Mexico back
here to home.

As Spring, Mac and Sebastian start making plans for the trip
west. Lisa Taylor takes Jeni aside.

LISA TAYLOR

And what about you Jeni? Are you
happy?

JENI

I'm still a Mermaid. I've started
to perform again at Weeki Wachee
Springs. Still love my jet skis and
my Firebird; all having been
electrified. I'm a busy
Grandmother.

Lisa gives Jeni a long quizzical look. Still waiting for an
answer.

JENI (CONT'D)

Yes! Yes. I am happy. It's just
been a little hard getting used to
not having some kind of threat or
obstacle to overcome.

Dr. Robert who was been listening from the wings steps into
the conversation.

DR. ROBERT

No one has ever done a study on the
effects of living three or four
lifetimes. Given what has been
asked of you.
Combat fatigue is a word that comes
to mind.
(giving a beat for his words to
settle)
My prescription is... go on this
adventure.

Jeni points over to her bed. The bed is covered with piles of
clothing, a variety of shoes, toiletries and random gear.

JENI

(laughing with slight
tears)

I guess I should be grateful that
the biggest problem I have is; How
to pack for six months with a forty
pound weight limit.

EXT. LAWN AROUND AIR SHIPS MORING - DAY

MONTAGE OF PREPARATIONS AROUND AIR SHIP

The next few weeks were filled with preparation. Equipment
was gathered, sorted, weighed, resorted, reweighted.

Test flights were made and the airship is declared ready.

EXT/INT. SPONGE POINT - DAY AND NIGHT

There is a huge Family gathering at Sponge Point. The get-
together reflects Jeni and Sebastian's wedding reception
party. The guest list is very similar.

The old traveling portable Mermaid Tank is assembled on the
lawn. Mermaids of all ages put on impromptu shows.

A dance floor is set up. A country rock band provides the
sound track.

During the Sponge Point Celebration Jeni takes Spring aside
to have a private conversation.

INT. JENI'S BEDROOM - EVENING

JENI

(As earnest as she has
ever been)

My friend sister and companion
through time. A Mermaid in the
desert seems an oxymoron to me.
I'm willing to take a vacation from
this life.

(pausing to reset)

However this is where my people are
in the ground and I fully plan to
join them someday.

I will go with you.

I will learn the secrets of the New
Earth.

I will bring those secrets home to
Weeki Wachee.

(tearful pause)

(MORE)

JENI (CONT'D)

Promise me this when I decide to
come home you won't try and stop
me.

SPRING

This I promise you solemnly my
dearest friend and sister.
WE will come home TOGETHER.
(sealed with mermaid tears)

EXT. ABSOLUTELY PERFECT FLORIDA SPRING MORNING

The day of departure comes early the next spring. All the children and grandchildren gathered at the Pinellas Aerodrome. Like a wind sock the little air ship steadies out. Its nose into the easterly Trade Wind.

An airline boarding stairway the kind used by dignitaries is rolled out and positioned in front of the Air Ship.

Dr. Robert walks to the base of the stairs and faces the excited throng.

DR. ROBERT

The woman who needs no introduction
the Spiritual Guide and Godmother
of our family.

KAKIKEE CLAY ascends a few stairs. Dressed in Timucua ceremonial robes, with a bough of Eve's Tears. In a language only the Water Gods understand she prays. Shaking golden pollen on the nose of the blimp. Blesses the Air Ship.

KAKIKEE

(in English)

God bless this Air Ship
Our Children who sail her.
I name thee OCALI.

The cheers and spontaneous expressions of elation and joy go on for ten minuets. There are hugs and tears exchanged.

The boarding stairs are shifted so the four adventurers can climb in.

Everyone on board. The Air Ship is released from its mooring, and comes about.

JUST AS FRODO AND GANDALF HAD SET OFF FOR THE UNDYING LANDS.
THE AIRSHIP LIFTS GENTLY.

SAILING AT A WESTWARD ANGLE ACROSS THE FACE OF THE DEPENDABLE
FLORIDA TRADE WIND...DISAPPEARS.

Roll credits

(Credits over Mermaids)

The "Weeki Wachee Mermaid" song playing in the Back ground.

Swimming in a crystal clear natural spring, breathing from
bubbling hoses are MERMAIDS performing an underwater show.
Against a background of pure white sand they perform a
synchronized ballet.

DEDICATED

TO ALL THE **SPRING HUNTERS** SEEKING THE LIFE GIVING WATERS.