

THE TOMBS OF QUMRAN

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. JERUSALEM - WAILING WALL - DAY

An outdoor synagogue littered with a hodgepodge of JEWISH SECTS; Holy Arks; Torah scrolls; reading tables.

ACROSS THE PLAZA

SIMEON BAR KOCHBA, 30s, long hair, beard -- preaches to a group of RELIGIOUS FANATICS. Wearing a white robe he resembles Jesus Christ. A well cultivated look.

SIMEON

...perilous times have come. For man is a lover of... himself. A lover of... money. Boisterous. Proud.

Religious Fanatics MURMUR agreement.

SIMEON

Man is a lover of... pleasure rather than a lover of my Father.

Religious Fanatics grow restless -- a collective anger coils within them like a snake ready for a fight.

SIMEON

My time here will not be long and my work must be done. It is time to rebuild. Rebuild my Father's Temple.

Manic eyes sweep over Religious Fanatics.

SIMEON

It. Is. His. Wish.

The Angry snake strikes. Religious Fanatics storm the Al-Aqsa Mosque -- attack ARAB WORSHIPERS.

INT. BOBBY THOMAS' APARTMENT - HAIFA

Sparsely furnished but cluttered: sway-backed bookcases overloaded with books; rocks; ancient artifacts.

BOBBY THOMAS, 30s, tall -- athletic with intelligent eyes, scurries around the apartment -- talks on his cell.

INTERCUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION - BOBBY AND HIS BROTHER

INT. MISSOURI THOMAS' PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - NIGHT

The studio of a talented photographer. Walls decorated with cover shots: National Geographic; Backpacker; Nature.

MISSOURI THOMAS, 30s, haggard looking -- a lifetime of suspicion and disappointment etched on his face -- turns toward a television tuned to CNN:

MISSOURI
They're talking another Intifada.

BOBBY
Believe me, nothing to worry about.
The HaDerech are harmless.

Bobby removes a Ruger P95 pistol from his backpack -- checks the clip -- puts the weapon back.

MISSOURI
If you say so.

BOBBY
Can't let some messianic-wannabe
ruin our annual get-together.
Right?

Bobby steps up to a window -- peers out -- steps back.

BOBBY
Trust me. Besides, there's
something I want to show you.
Something special... I think.

Picks up a leather bound journal from his desk.

MISSOURI
You think?

Missouri opens a desk drawer -- extracts a similar looking leather bound journal.

BOBBY
Well, yeah. I know where it is...
just haven't found it yet.

Writes in his journal.

MISSOURI
A big story?

Missouri inscribes a birthday card: TO MY FAVORITE WRITER,
BEST FRIEND, AND BROTHER, LOVE M.

BOBBY
Very. We could work on it together.

MISSOURI
Promotion big?

Missouri places Bobby's present in a gift box -- wraps it in
masculine paper. No bow.

BOBBY
Pulitzer big. You staying at the
Solomon?

MISSOURI
Yeah.

BOBBY
And your flight?

Bobby shoves his journal into the backpack.

MISSOURI
Hold on.

Places the gift in his carry-on bag -- pulls out his ticket:

MISSOURI
El Al flight two-twenty-two. Three
P.M. Thursday.

BOBBY
Got it. Love you, bro.

END INTERCUT

INT. MISSOURI'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Missouri faces the TV -- shakes his head -- switches it off.

CUT TO:

INT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT - DAY

A COMMOTION draws Bobby to his window. He looks out: THREE HOOLIGANS loiter below.

Bobby steps back -- grabs his backpack -- races out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MISSOURI'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Missouri grabs his bags -- flips off the lights -- leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bobby stands near the entrance of an outdoor foyer his back against the wall. He adjusts his glasses -- takes a deep breath -- peeks around the corner:

BOBBY'S POV

A GREEK MONK dressed in black -- GOLD CROSS around his neck.
A MAN in TRADITIONAL ARAB robes.
A third man wears WESTERN CLOTHES.
They LAUGH at an unheard joke.

BACK TO SCENE

Bobby dashes from the foyer.

Greek Monk spots him -- shoves Western Clothes toward Bobby's apartment. Greek Monk and Traditional Arab race after Bobby.

CUT TO:

INT. JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

Missouri charges through a CROWDED terminal. Stops -- checks the flight monitor -- jogs off.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAIFA STREET - DAY

Bobby sprints down a crowded street past: FOOD VENDORS;
TRINKET SELLERS; STREET MUSICIANS.

He stops. Scans his surroundings. Steps across the street.

INT. DRY GOODS STORE

An ancient shop. A step back in time. Dusty and dry like the
surrounding countryside.

Bobby enters -- THREE OLD MEN look up.

Bobby strides through the store -- disappears into the back.

CUT TO:

INT. EL AL BOEING 777 - NIGHT

Dark. Quiet. Most PASSENGERS asleep.

Missouri sets aside an in-flight magazine -- extinguishes the
overhead light -- gets comfortable.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAIFA ALLEY - DAY

Narrow, dusty alley meanders into dead end. A YOUNG BOY on
donkey race by.

Bobby exits the rear of a store. Looks up -- down the street.
Heads right.

INT. HAIFA COFFEE SHOP

A cave motif. Plastered walls arch overhead. Distressed wood
tables run parallel to cushioned seats along either wall.

Bobby enters -- tucks himself in a corner -- keeps an eye on
passing pedestrians through a dirty window.

Greek Monk and Traditional Arab jog past -- stop. Greek Monk
points across the street -- Traditional Arab crosses.

Greek Monk turns -- peers into the coffee shop. Leaves.

Bobby rolls his neck -- adjusts his glasses -- takes a seat. He reaches in his backpack -- removes his journal and a pen. Begins to write.

CUT TO:

INT. EL AL AIRCRAFT - NIGHT

FLIGHT ATTENDANT balances a dinner tray -- wakes Missouri with her free hand.

He stretches. Lowers his table -- takes the tray.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAIFA POST OFFICE - DAY

Bobby exits -- an overstuffed backpack hangs from his shoulders. He notes the time -- continues along a dusty, unpaved road.

EXT. HAIFA SCOOTER RENTAL

Bobby ambles past a MAN selling pitta bread -- approaches the rental booth. Money exchanges hands. ATTENDANT gives Bobby a set of keys -- points to a red scooter.

EXT. HAIFA BUS STATION

LOCALS and TOURISTS scurry up and down the street. Bus traffic kicks up a permanent cloud of dust.

Bobby rides his scooter through the cloud -- an empty backpack slung over his shoulder. He parks -- strolls to the ticket window.

BOBBY
(in Hebrew)
Jerusalem. One.

Takes his ticket. Opens his cell -- dials:

BOBBY
(in Hebrew)
Rachel? Bobby. Need a favor. Are you still in Jerusalem? Good. Good. My brother's coming in on El Al two-twenty-two at three-- You will? Thanks.

Flips his phone closed -- looks up.

Traditional Arab and Greek Monk sprint toward Bobby.
Bobby reaches under his jacket -- draws his pistol.

Traditional Arab twists the Ruger from Bobby's hand -- pushes him deep into the alley.

The two men pummel Bobby senseless.

Greek Monk rips open Bobby's backpack.

Traditional Arab rifles Bobby's pockets.
Finds a small scrap of paper.
Gives it a quick glance.
Shoves it in his pocket.
His hand reappears holding an Arab dagger.

CUT TO:

INT. BEN-GURION INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - AFTERNOON

Contemporary. Sleek. Cosmopolitan. CROWDS scurry in all directions -- CONVERSATIONS in a multitude of FOREIGN TONGUES fills the air: a modern day Babel.

Missouri trudges through the sea of TRAVELERS. Stops.
Searches the crowd -- checks his watch. He removes his cell.
Dials. Waits:

MISSOURI

Come on... answer.

Flips the phone shut -- storms off. Greek Monk follows.

Missouri feels uneasy -- peers over his shoulder.

Greek Monk turns away -- checks a nearby flight monitor.

Missouri continues toward the exit -- Greek Monk follows.

P.A. VOICE

Mister Missouri Thomas. Paging...
Mister Missouri Thomas.

Missouri searches for a courtesy phone -- spots one. Races over -- picks up:

MISSOURI

Missouri Thomas. Yes. Thanks.

Grabs his bags -- exits the terminal.

EXT. BEN-GURION INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL

Taxis -- hotel courtesy vans idle at the curb. PASSENGERS jostle for their services.

RACHEL COHEN, 30s, confident, pretty, approaches Missouri as he exits. She extends her hand:

RACHEL
Welcome to Israel, Mister Thomas.

Missouri sets his carry-on down -- takes her hand:

MISSOURI
Miss Cohen. And it's Missouri.
Please.

She picks up Missouri's bag.

MISSOURI
How did you know--

RACHEL
You look like him. Where are you staying?

INT. KING SOLOMON HOTEL - MISSOURI'S ROOM

Small. Neat. Modern. A window overlooks the OLD CITY WALLS.

Missouri unpacks. Bobby's gift sits on the desk.

A KNOCK -- Missouri answers.

YOUNG BELLHOP hands Missouri an envelope. He hands Young Bellhop a tip -- closes the door. He examines the envelope. Smiles.

Another KNOCK.

He slips the envelope in his back pocket -- answers:

MISSOURI
Something wrong with the tip?

A wink of gold against black.

LATER

A ransacked room -- Missouri's things scattered everywhere. He rests on the bed -- flat on his back.

Rachel ushers TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS out the door -- glides over to Missouri -- dabs his lip with a wet towel.

MISSOURI

What are you doing here?

Rachel turns away:

RACHEL

Uh... Came by... the door was open. What happened?

MISSOURI

The bellhop delivered an envelope from Bobby. I closed the door and before I could read the damn thing there was another knock.

Shrugs -- rubs his jaw:

MISSOURI

Guess he didn't like my tip.

Rachel doesn't laugh.

MISSOURI

What's wrong?

RACHEL

Bobby.

Missouri looks worried:

MISSOURI

What about Bobby?

RACHEL

There was a robbery.

MISSOURI

Where?

RACHEL

Haifa. The bus station. He was buying a ticket to Jerusalem. They pulled him into an alley.

MISSOURI

They?

RACHEL

Witnesses saw two men leave the alley.

Missouri's eyes dart toward the desk -- to the floor. Bobby's gift lies strewn across the carpet: shredded; ripped apart.

He leans over -- retrieves a piece of wrapping paper:

MISSOURI

What a shitty birthday. How is he?

Rachel tenses -- bites her lower lip.

RACHEL

Bobby's dead.

INT. RACHEL'S CAR - ISRAELI COAST - DAY

A narrow coastal road follows spectacular scenery.

Rachel concentrates on driving -- Missouri stares out his window a thousand-yard stare.

RACHEL

Tell me about the man who attacked you?

Silence.

RACHEL

Missouri?

Shakes his head.

MISSOURI

Didn't see his face. Dressed in black. Some hefty bling around his neck.

RACHEL

Bling?

He faces Rachel:

MISSOURI

A large gold cross.

RACHEL
Greek Orthodox.

MISSOURI
What?

RACHEL
A monk.

INT. HAIFA MORGUE

Cold. Sterile. Walls and floors painted institutional gray.

SKINNY KID ATTENDANT, 20s, opens a cooler door -- slides out a body bag.

Rachel grips Missouri's hand -- they take tentative step toward the corpse.

Skinny Kid Attendant unzips the bag.

Missouri separates from Rachel -- takes a purposeful step toward the body.

Skinny Kid Attendant reveals Bobby's head and shoulders. Missouri brushes back a strand of hair from his brother's blue-gray face:

MISSOURI
Yeah.

Kisses Bobby's forehead. Turns -- exits.

Rachel's gaze follows Missouri. She turns to Skinny Kid Attendant -- hands him a note -- cash:

RACHEL
Deliver the body to Jerusalem.

INT. HAIFA HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Old. Well used. Two stars fewer than the Solomon.

Missouri rests on the bed -- stares at the ceiling.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

MISSOURI
Yeah?

RACHEL (O.S.)
Me, Rachel.

He pads to the door -- checks the peephole -- opens.
Rachel enters with a large shopping bag.

RACHEL
Got you a few things. A change of
clothes. A magazine.

Inspects the room -- crinkles her nose:

RACHEL
You're more than welcome to stay
with me. There's plenty of room.

Missouri shakes his head:

MISSOURI
I'd rather be alone right now.

She shrugs:

RACHEL
Suit yourself.

Turns to leave.

MISSOURI
Rachel?

She stops -- turns.

MISSOURI
Thanks.

She nods -- leaves. FOOTSTEPS fade--
--Missouri locks the door -- heads for the desk.

Slides Bobby's envelope from his back pocket -- removes the
note -- spreads it out. Stares at two sheets of paper: a map;
a jumble of letters written in code.

MISSOURI
Shit.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUDEAN DESERT - NIGHT

Large campfire casts eerie shadows. Light flickers and dances
over the faces of dozens of MEN and WOMEN.

KAHLID, 20s, the Greek monk kneels before Simeon. Flames reflect off his gold cross. He looks more hit man than monk.

SIMEON
Are you sure, my son?

KAHLID
Yes, Father. No one noticed.

Kahlid stares at the desert floor.

SIMEON
You are troubled?

KAHLID
Yes, Father.

SIMEON
The taking of life?

Kahlid raises his head. Simeon unfolds his arms -- places his hands on his knees:

SIMEON
The difference between a true believer's soul... and the souls of the others is greater and deeper... than the difference between a human soul and the soul of cattle.

Peers deep into Kahlid's eyes -- Kahlid trembles: not with fear -- with unconditional love.

SIMEON
Does it trouble you, my son, to kill a cow to feed your family?

Kahlid shakes his head.

SIMEON
Killing an non-believer is the same. It allows me to live... to do my work... to do my Father's work.

Places a hand on Kahlid's head:

SIMEON
It is unfortunate you did not find what I seek. But no matter. I believe the brother will lead the way.

Intense, manic eyes focus on Kahlid:

SIMEON
You are watching him?

KAHLID
Yes, Father.

Simeon smiles -- blesses Kahlid.

CUT TO:

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT

Warm. Feminine. Tasteful.

Rachel relaxes on her couch. Listens to CLASSICAL MUSIC -- a half empty bottle of wine rests on an end table.

Her phone RINGS -- jars her back to reality. She answers:

RACHEL
(in Hebrew)
Yes?

Sits up straight -- continues in Hebrew:

RACHEL
Safe. The Haifa Holiday Inn.
(beat)
Going back tomorrow.
(beat)
A Greek monk.
(beat)
Of course they are related.
(beat)
I didn't tell him, but he's bound
to figure it out on his own.
(beat)
The monk took the note.

Grows angry:

RACHEL
Of course I'm sure. There was
plenty of time to search before he
came to.

Rolls her eyes:

RACHEL
Is that necessary?
(beat)
Alright! I'll keep an eye on him.

Hangs up.

INT. HAIFA HOTEL ROOM

Crumpled balls of paper litter Missouri's room.

He lies in bed -- reads the deciphered note.

BOBBY (V.O.)

-- everything hinges on retrieving my journal and maps. The information is priceless. Share it with no one... except Zarad. I trust him and he will help you. Father Pournaras may be a help. And at all costs, stay away from Simeon bar Kochba. One last thing. No matter what you find or hear, I love you bro.

Missouri folds the paper in thirds -- slips it under his pillow -- turns off the light.

INT. HAIFA HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

A KNOCK. Missouri stirs. KNOCK.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Missouri? Open up.

He checks the clock: 08:12 AM. -- stumbles out of bed -- pads to the door.

Rachel enters with a small paper bag -- two coffees.

RACHEL

Figured you could use some breakfast.

MISSOURI

What I could use is some more sleep.

She places breakfast on the desk.

RACHEL

Jet lag?

MISSOURI

There's that.

Her gaze sweeps across the floor:

RACHEL
What's all this?

MISSOURI
Sudoku. I love puzzles.

She retrieves a ball of paper -- flattens it out -- reads.

MISSOURI
Who are you, lady?

RACHEL
What?

MISSOURI
You a cop?

RACHEL
You were hit harder than I thought.

Crumples the paper -- tosses it:

RACHEL
I'm naturally curious. It's why I
became a history professor.

MISSOURI
That your connection to Bobby?

Sadness creeps across Rachel's face:

RACHEL
We were friends... And business
associates. But friends first.

MISSOURI
What kind of business?

RACHEL
I did consultation work for him.
Authenticate some his stories.

MISSOURI
And his latest project?

She LAUGHS.

RACHEL
You a cop?

MISSOURI

Touché.

She approaches Missouri:

RACHEL

You have Bobby's note, don't you?

Off Missouri's silence:

RACHEL

What was in it?

MISSOURI

Nothing.

RACHEL

Ahh, you don't trust me.

MISSOURI

Nope.

RACHEL

Do you trust anyone?

MISSOURI

I trusted Bobby.

RACHEL

Believe me, I want to help. Bobby was my friend.

He looks deep into her eyes -- decides to test the waters:

MISSOURI

Does the name Simeon bar Kochba mean anything?

RACHEL

He has been in the news all week.

Light bulb moment for Missouri:

MISSOURI

The HaDerech?

RACHEL

What was in that note?

MISSOURI

You first. Tell me about your business relationship with my brother.

RACHEL
Not much to tell. From time to time
Bobby brought me pieces of pottery.

MISSOURI
Shards.

RACHEL
Right. They were inscribed. They
seemed to point to the location of
a tomb.

MISSOURI
Valuable?

RACHEL
They all have value. The writing
hinted at the occupants.

MISSOURI
And that would be...?

RACHEL
A family.

MISSOURI
Famous?

She shrugs:

RACHEL
Maybe.

Missouri paces -- whispers:

MISSOURI
Pulitzer big.

Faces Rachel:

MISSOURI
Where are these tombs?

RACHEL
That's what Bobby was trying to
figure out.

MISSOURI
And what about this Simeon?

RACHEL
A crack pot. They sprout up every
year like desert flowers.

Missouri stares -- wants more info.

RACHEL

He's a second-rate magician. Used to work the Palestinian refugee camps. Now he thinks he is the Messiah. The Second Coming.

MISSOURI

He thinks he's Christ?

She nods.

MISSOURI

He is a whacko. Did anyone else know about Bobby's project?

RACHEL

Not from me.

MISSOURI

Someone knows.

RACHEL

May I see Bobby's note.

He lifts his pillow -- hands her the top sheet. She notices the second sheet of paper:

RACHEL

What's that?

MISSOURI

Personal.

RACHEL

Ahh--

Reads. Looks up:

RACHEL

Father Pournaras?

MISSOURI

What about Pournaras?

She hands the note back:

RACHEL

The Greek Patriarch. One of the men who killed Bobby was a Greek monk. A Greek monk attacked you.

MISSOURI

So?

RACHEL

Maybe Bobby went to Pournaras for help. Maybe the monk overheard them talking.

MISSOURI

A monk and a Messiah?

INT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door BURSTS open -- wood splinters fly. A dark silhouette fills the doorway -- backlit by the morning sun.

Missouri enters -- surveys the room: books litter the floor; bookcases toppled; pictures ripped from the wall.

Missouri picks his way through debris -- enters Bobby's

BEDROOM

finds more of the same: mattress sliced open; pillows torn to shreds; Bobby's clothes strewn everywhere.

Missouri inspects the remnants of his brother's life. Picks up Bobby's clothes -- rehangs them.

Stands a toppled dresser upright. Slides a DRAWER into place. And another. Picks up a third.

He stops -- turns it over: a KEY taped to the back.

INT. HAIFA BUS STATION

LOCALS and TOURISTS rush helter-skelter to and from busses.

Missouri checks for a tail -- searches for the locker. Rechecks the number on the key -- smiles -- inserts the key.

CLICK! The door swings open.

He removes a large envelope -- rips it open. He extracts a ledger -- flips through a few pages.

Pulls a PEN from his pocket -- scribbles some notes on the envelope. Returns the ledger to the locker -- stuffs the envelope in his back pocket.

EXT. JERUSALEM CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

Desolate. Dry. Mounds of fresh dirt -- bouquets of flowers.

Missouri chats with ZARAD, 50s, old, fat, cheerful -- and Zarad's daughter, BATYA, 20s, dark, athletic, beautiful.

ZARAD

...I will do what I can, my friend.
Batya will assist.

Missouri peers over Zarad's shoulder:

MISSOURI'S POV

Rachel in a serious discussion with a man: DANNY SHAVIT, 30s, skinny, nervous.

ZARAD (O.S.)

If she ever decides on her thesis
she will have a doctorate in
archaeology.

BACK TO SCENE

Missouri focuses on Zarad:

MISSOURI

I'm sorry, Zarad. You were saying
something about Batya?

ZARAD

Only that Batya may be of some
assistance.

BATYA (O.S.)

Papa?

Zarad faces his daughter -- she appears worried. He understands her concern.

ZARAD

We should go. It is growing dark.
The streets are not safe.

Missouri hugs Zarad -- kisses his cheeks. Hugs Batya.

MISSOURI

I'll come see you tomorrow.

Zarad nods -- turns -- leaves.

Rachel approaches with Danny in tow.

RACHEL
Who was that?

MISSOURI
Who's this?

Missouri stares at Danny.

RACHEL
Sorry. A colleague. Danny Shavit...
Missouri Thomas.

Missouri extends his hand:

MISSOURI
You a professor too?

Danny turns -- marches off.

MISSOURI
Nice to meet you too.

Rachel appears embarrassed -- apologetic:

RACHEL
I apologize for Danny's behavior.
He's not a people-person.

MISSOURI
More like rude.
(beat)
I'll be going to the Old City
tomorrow.

RACHEL
Father Pournaras?

MISSOURI
He can wait.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL
She's pretty.

MISSOURI
What?

RACHEL
Never mind.

Hands Missouri her business card:

RACHEL
That's my cell. I'll be staying at
the King David. My room number is
on the back. Call if you need
anything.

MISSOURI
Keeping tabs on me, Miss Cohen?

She blushes -- recovers:

RACHEL
Don't flatter yourself. I have
business here.

Missouri takes her card:

MISSOURI
Don't we all.

INT. ZARAD'S STORE - BACKROOM - DAY

Cushions surround a short table; a tiny charcoal burner sits
in the corner; a couch rests along the opposite wall.

Batya prepares coffee on a hotplate -- pours the hot liquid
into cylindrical cups. Sets them on the table in front of
Missouri and Zarad. Leaves the room.

Zarad raises his cup in a toast:

ZARAD
To Bobby.

MISSOURI
Bobby.

A BEAT.

MISSOURI
Have you finished?

Zarad removes a handful of notes from his apron -- slides
them across the table.

Missouri reads. Looks up:

MISSOURI
Will we have any trouble getting
there?

The pudgy shopkeeper LAUGHS.

ZARAD

We?

LAUGHTER trails off:

ZARAD

I am an old man, Missouri Thomas.
Too old for such adventures. Batya
will lead you there.

Missouri looks skeptical.

ZARAD

The desert is her second home, my
friend.

Missouri raises his hand in mock surrender.

MISSOURI

One other thing. What do you know
about a priest named Pournaras?

Zarad gags -- recovers:

ZARAD

A very dangerous man.

Missouri waits -- Zarad continues:

ZARAD

He heads the Greek Orthodox Church.
Controls half the city. Very
powerful.

MISSOURI

Controls the city?

ZARAD

The Church owns vast amounts of
Jerusalem. The Parliament. The
Knesset. Both sit on Church land.

MISSOURI

Your government allows this?

ZARAD

The Church has been here much
longer than the state of Israel.

MISSOURI

Who knew. When we return I might want to pay him a visit. How do I find him?

ZARAD

The Patriarchate is near Jaffa Gate.

Leans toward Missouri:

ZARAD

Be careful.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUDEAN DESERT - DAY

Dust billows from the desert floor in the wake of TWO DARK FIGURES on motorbikes.

LEAD RIDER raises a hand -- both Bikes slow to a stop. Riders remove their helmets: Missouri and Batya.

MISSOURI

Where the hell are we?

BATYA

About two kilometers north-west of wadi Qumran.

MISSOURI

That narrows it down.

Batya points to a cliff surrounded by a soft, marl terrace:

BATYA

There. We climb.

Missouri's eyes linger on the cliff face:

MISSOURI

Up there?

Batya dismounts -- snatches her backpack.

MISSOURI

What about rope? Carabiners?

BATYA

You may wait if you wish.

She heads for the cliff -- Missouri races after her.

LATER

Halfway up the terrace Missouri and Batya struggle; covered in dust; drenched in sweat. Batya stops -- shades her eyes. Points to a tiny opening in the rock face:

BATYA
There! See it?

Missouri squints. Sweat cascades into his eyes -- rapid eye blinks clear his vision.

MISSOURI
That?

She nods -- scrambles ahead.

INT. CAVE

Millennia of debris litters the floor: bat dung; spider webs; animal bones. Slabs of sandstone block passage deeper into the cave.

Batya sweeps her flashlight across the floor: footprints.

BATYA
Bobby?

MISSOURI
I hope so.

She peeks into a crevasse created by sandstone slabs:

BATYA
Through here.

Crawls between two large slabs -- disappears.

Missouri drops his pack -- follows her to the other side of

THE FALLEN SLABS

Batya swings her light along smooth sandstone walls. Stops: a smiley-face scratched into the rock.

Missouri runs his fingers over the graffiti:

MISSOURI
Gotta be it.

Kneels down -- digs with his hands -- removes several small rocks -- stops. Pulls a plastic box from the ancient dust.

Inside he finds: a journal; pottery shards; coins; a note.

Batya examines the shards:

BATYA
Early first century.

Examines another:

BATYA
Tombs. A family.

MISSOURI
I know. Let's get out of here.

BATYA
Why?

MISSOURI
Gotta feeling.

Grabs the shards -- returns them to the box.