

EXT. RUSSIAN FOREST - MOBILE PHONE - DAWN (NEAR FUTURE)

A small, plastic smartphone sits on a snowy tree stump. Suddenly- SMASH! A hand SMACKS a heavy rock into the screen. It CRACKS. Another blow- WHAM!

WIDE - HUANG

A man- we'll call him HUANG, 31- kneels in the snow. He wears a green military uniform- wet, torn and filthy. His hair strays from a carefully combed pompadour.

There is no one else in sight. A single track of footprints leads right to Huang. Sunlight creeps between the trees. Huang picks up the phone.

EXT. RUSSIAN FOREST - SMALL STREAM - MORNING

Huang struggles to slide off the back of the phone. A plastic cover SNAPS off. He digs out a thin battery and a microchip.

He drowns the phone and battery in the quiet stream. Covers them completely in mud and rocks.

THE COMPUTER CHIP

Bends between his fingers until- CRACK! He tosses one piece into the stream. Hurls the other one into the trees.

EXT. RUSSIAN FOREST - MORNING

Huang jogs through the knee-deep snow. Cheeks red. Arms tight around his chest. He scans the empty sky. A few BIRDS SING in the trees. It's a beautiful morning. Huang runs faster. Suddenly, the snow thins out to-

EXT. RUSSIAN FOREST - DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

An unpaved road cuts through the thick evergreens. Huang scrambles behind a tree. He fumbles through his pockets. Pulls out a small leather case. Jams his thumb onto a sensor on the front. It opens.

A LOW, MECHANICAL RUMBLE echoes through the trees. Huang looks up. Something's coming. He pulls out a stack of papers and cards from the case. RIPS them in half. Again. And again. Shoves them back in. SNAPS the case shut.

The GROWLING GROWS LOUDER. Huang unbuckles his belt and empty pistol holster. Drops them on the ground next to the case. He reaches up to his shoulder.

SEWN ON PATCH - NORTH KOREAN FLAG

Huang's half frozen fingers pull at the patch. Slowly and deliberately RIPPING it from his uniform.

SELF-PROPELLED LOGGING TRUCK

Lumbers around a curve, swaying side to side and spewing smoke from its exhaust column. There is no cab, just a long bed of freshly cut timber.

Huang covers his effects in the snow under the tree. Waits until the truck starts to go by. It isn't moving fast, barely a brisk walk. Just as it moves past his tree-

He grabs onto the back of the truck and climbs aboard. He collapses on his back, swaying gently with the logs. Huang sighs and closes his eyes.

FADE TO:

INT. RUSSIAN LOGGING VILLAGE - LOCAL HARDWARE STORE - MORNING

A burly, balding shopkeeper, VASILY, 55, leans over a fingerprinted glass case holding a selection of chainsaws. He swipes a thick finger across a tablet. The store is stocked with the usual hammers, oil, and power tools.

Vasily doesn't look up as the LOGGING TRUCK RUMBLES past the shop. A moment later, the DOOR OPENS. It's Huang. He looks around and goes to the counter.

Vasily straightens up as Huang fumbles for the right word.

VASILY
(in Russian)
Can I help you?

HUANG
(in Korean, no subtitles,
holds hand to ear)

VASILY
(pulling phone from
pocket)
Sure, here.

HUANG
(takes phone, points at
back door)

Vasily shrugs and goes back to his tablet. Huang hurries
though the door, but it doesn't close completely.

After a moment, HUANG'S ANXIOUS VOICE leaks through. Vasily
looks up. Leans over the counter. We CAN'T HEAR what Huang is
saying. Is that even Korean? Suddenly-

A young man, OSIP, 19, bursts out of a back office, clutching
another tablet. He races for the counter.

OSIP
(in Russian)
Papa! Look at this! Look!

Osip shoves his tablet over the counter. Vasily's eyes widen.

The back door opens and Huang returns. He says nothing-
tosses the phone onto the counter and bolts to the door.
Through the window, we see him running through the muddy
street of the desolate village.

Osip and Vasily ignore him. They're enraptured by the tablet.
We LEAN IN CLOSE to see-

ON THE SCREEN - NUCLEAR MISSILE

In flight. Streaking through the sky on a column of flame.