

FOUNTAIN VALLEY MASSACRE

**Fountain Valley Massacre* unfolds in reverse chronological order, intercut with short, forward-moving scenes that should feel tonally distinct to guide the audience's orientation as the two timelines converge toward the climax.

FADE IN:

TITLE CARD: CHAPTER TEN: NEW YEAR'S EVE - 1984

EXT. ST. CROIX - DAY

A jet descends a pale blue sky. Lush green hills. Swaying palms. Tempting white beaches. A Caribbean island paradise.

INT. AIRPORT -

The pace is slow and easy. The island rhythm. Most of the workers are Black. Most of the travelers are White.

SECURITY CHECKPOINT / X-RAY MACHINE -

Four men sporting suits and sunglasses approach a line of waiting passengers.

MARSHAL JONES (50s, White) flashes a badge and cuts the line.

MARSHAL JONES

Excuse us folks, Federal Marshals.

A loud BEEP sounds from the x-ray machine as Jones passes through. No one takes notice.

MARSHAL SMITH (20s, Black) passes through. BEEP.

The third man is tall and lean - but different. Rougher. A thick goatee. Dark wraparound shades instead of aviators.

This is ISHMAEL LABEET (30s, Black). He has a light coat draped over his hands. He BEEPS too.

MARSHAL BROCK (30s, White) is the biggest guy. Tall and muscular. Boyish face and a crew-cut. BEEP.

WAITING AREA -

Sunburned tourists linger in high spirits, milking their final minutes of vacation. The four men stand apart, stoic.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY -

Grounds crew move boarding stairs in place on a DC-10 jet.

GATE ATTENDANT (O.S.)
 (in a Crucian accent)
 Good afternoon, ladies and
 gentlemen, in just a moment we will
 begin boarding American Airlines
 flight 626 to New York City.

INT. WAITING AREA -

Jones hands her tickets and the men head out to the plane.

GATE ATTENDANT
 Before general boarding, we invite
 our first-class passengers and
 anyone requiring special assistance
 to please proceed to the exit door.

EXT. RUNWAY -

Jones halts them at the stairs. He pulls the coat from
 LaBeet's arms, revealing handcuffs. Unlocks them.

SMITH
 Why you taking those off?

MARSHAL JONES
 FAA regs. No prisoners fly cuffed.
 Supposedly for safety. If we crash,
 he's gotta be able to swim.
 (to LaBeet)
 You swim, boy? Course ya' do. All
 you island boys can swim.

As LaBeet rubs his wrists, Brock shoves him toward the steps.

INT. PLANE -

A perky White stewardess greets them with a big smile.

BONNIE
 Welcome aboard, gentlemen. I'm
 Bonnie. If there's anything I can
 do, y'all just let me know.

They say nothing and head for the very back row.

BONNIE (CONT'D)
Enjoy your flight.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

The plane takes off.

INT. PLANE, LATER -

It's nearly full. The beverage cart is busy as passengers rev up for New Year's Eve.

LaBeet's in the middle seat, last row. Still in sunglasses.

Smith exits the bathroom just behind them. Brock gets up to let him squeeze by LaBeet to his window seat.

LABEET
(in heavy Crucian accent)
I got to use the lavatory, mon.

BROCK
Again?

LABEET
It dis flying. Make me nervous.

Brock looks across the aisle to Jones. He's trying to nap.

BROCK
Chief? He wants to go again.

Jones shrugs indifferently, so Brock lets LaBeet up. A quick scan of the plane and he goes into the tiny bathroom.

PASSENGERS - a few party hats and noisemakers boost the revelry.

JONES - shifts uncomfortably, wishing for peace and quiet.

A small pistol lightly jabs his temple. Now his eyes open.

LABEET - holding the pistol. Intensely calm and completely intimidating. He taps Brock.

LABEET
Gimme your gun.

Brock looks to Jones.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 Gimme dat motherfucking gun or I
 blow his head off!

Jones nods assent. Some passengers notice the shouting.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 (to Brock)
 Slow, mon.
 (then to the passengers)
 Everything cool people! Everyone
 stay calm and everything stay cool!

Brock hands it over. LaBeet aims it at Smith. Cocks it. Fear flows down the plane like a wave.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 (to Smith)
 Now you. Put your gun on the floor.

Smith does it.

Another stewardess - JEAN (30s, White) comes down the aisle to check things out. LaBeet swings both guns at her. Passengers scream and duck for cover.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 Don't come no closer now! Get on
 the floor!

She freezes.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 Get on the fucking floor now lady
 or I shoot dis whole plane up!

She does. He swings guns back to Brock and Smith.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 (to Jones)
 Now you, Chief. Put it on the
 floor. Slow, slow, slow.

Jones does. Now LaBeet has guns in each hand and two in his waistband. Ready for war. And he can't wait.

LABEET (CONT'D)
 (to Jones)
 OK, you sit wit dem. But move slow,
 mon, move slow.

Jones does... catching eyes with Brock. Ankle holster - acknowledged. Brock slowly reaches...

A barrel sticks in his cheek.

LABEET (CONT'D)
Don't be foolish, mon.

Brock relents. LaBeet grabs the pistol. Stuffs it in his waistband. He raises the two biggest.

LABEET (CONT'D)
Dis my plane now! Everyone stay cool and we all have a Happy New Year, mon. You not cool, I shoot dis whole fucking plane up!
(to Jean)
Stewardess lady, time to get up. We goin' to call the pilot.

She gets up. Grabs the inter-plane phone.

JEAN
What do you want me to say?

LABEET
Tell dem turn dis 'ere around. Tell dem we go to Cuba.

JEAN
Cuba? We can't land in Cuba.

He grabs her around the neck. Gun to her head.

LABEET
You know who I am, lady?

She nods her head softly, terrified.

LABEET (CONT'D)
(loudly, to everyone)
I am Ishmael Ali! I am the Fountain Valley killer!

Panic sweeps the passengers. If they weren't terrified before, they are now.

EXT. CITY SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

It's snowing. Late shoppers hustle back to their cars.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Closing time. Workers in party hats stock shelves and mop up, ready to clock out. A CHECKOUT GIRL (20s, White) carries her register drawer into a -

BACK OFFICE - where MARVIN ALLEN (32 here, Black) sits at a desk counting cash. Big, handsome and fit, he moves with quiet, athletic grace.

CHECKOUT GIRL
Two hours left, Mr. Allen!

Marvin doesn't look up. He's in mid-count.

MARVIN
Pardon me.

He has a Crucian accent but is easily understandable.

CHECKOUT GIRL
The countdown?

He looks up. Handsome, a kind smile and soft eyes.

MARVIN
I don't understand.

She shoots him a look. TOOTS her noisemaker.

MARVIN (CONT'D)
Oh, right. New Year's.

He checks his watch. It's an old one.

MARVIN (CONT'D)
One hour, forty-eight minutes.

CHECKOUT GIRL
So, where you partying tonight?

MARVIN
Ah, I don't know. A few friends maybe. Nothing big.

She knows he's lying. Feels sorry for him.

CHECKOUT GIRL
OK. Have some fun. I guess I'll see you next year.

He resumes counting.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Marvin walks, bundled up against the snow. He passes laughing partiers and noisy bars.

INT. MARVIN'S APARTMENT -

Small but neat. A few Christmas cards taped to the fridge.

Marvin takes off his coat, scarf and gloves. Still chilly. He finds leftovers. Flips on a small TV. The 11 o'clock news flickers to life -

NEWS ANCHOR

...just 47 minutes before 1985 now.
We'll head back out to a few of the
local party spots after an update
on our breaking hijacking story
from Tom Egan in New York.

Marvin half listens, pouring a glass of water.

NEWS REPORTER

Thanks Don. FAA officials have
confirmed that a lone gunman
hijacked American Airlines flight
626 today and ordered pilots to
land in Cuba. The plane was en
route to New York after taking off
from St. Croix, one of the U.S.
Virgin Islands.

Marvin's eyes dart to the TV.

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)

No one was injured and the plane is
now headed back to JFK - minus one
passenger.

A photo of LaBeet comes on screen. Marvin freezes.

MARVIN

(whispering)

LaBeet.

NEWS REPORTER

The FBI identifies the hijacker as
federal inmate Ishmael Ali.

Marvin dumps his water and pulls a bottle of Cruzan rum from a cabinet, eyes never leaving the TV. He grasps for a chair and sits, then fills his glass and takes a long gulp.

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)

Initial reports indicate that federal marshals were transporting Ali from St. Croix back to a prison in Pennsylvania - but tonight, he's celebrating New Year's Eve in Cuba. Back to you, Don.

Marvin shuts the TV off. The wall behind it holds family photos from St. Croix. He stares for a long moment, finally focusing in on one.

PHOTO: 'BOMBA' ALLEN (63, Black) - at the helm of a yellow sailboat, has his arm around Marvin, shirtless at 18, both smiling in the sun. Happy days.

MARVIN

You believe that? LaBeet still at it. Even now. Maybe he get away with it after all.

He stares a bit longer, sad. Raises the bottle in a toast.

MARVIN (CONT'D)

Happy New Year, Daddy.