



LOST

CAUSES

BY MARK LAING

LOGLINE

Reeling from the death of his brother from a climbing accident, a neuroscientist creates a memory-altering spray only for it and his wife to fall into the hands of a sinister technocrat.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FEATURE	Action, Thriller, Sci-Fi, and Adventure
LENGTH	107 minutes
SCENES	171
LOCATIONS	Kings Canyon National Park, Sequoia National Park, Los Angeles, California Mountains
LOCALES	Office, Street, Road, House, University, Hospital, Highway, Car
TIME PERIODS	Present Day
EST. BUDGET	\$\$\$\$\$\$
CONTENT RATING	R - Language, sexual situations, and violence

WHAT IT IS

Lost Causes is North by Northwest with a twist of Inception and Altered States. We enter the world of extreme rock climbing and extreme science.

Professor Tom Hayworth, who, convinced that disease is remembered or imprinted in the body, is struggling to perfect a memory gas that may help the body to "forget" it is ill. Jolted into action by the suspicious climbing death of his brother Tom accidentally discovers the catalyst to make the memory gas work permanently. Electromagnetic radiation is all around us. Tom's memory gas, called 'Mnemosyne' "Nih-moh-su-nee" (the Greek goddess of memory), uses Ritalin to block the neurotransmitter norepinephrine in the brain and, like the way alcohol inhibits the brain's release of vasopressin -- you park, have a few beers, come back -- and can't remember where your car is, it combines with an electrical field to selectively erase memories. Great for getting rid of traumatic memories.

But one of the university's benefactors, the sinister Pat Doremus, has his own ideas for the gas and also his own ideas for Tom's stunning wife Yolanda, a black LAPD cop. While Tom has been lecturing Doremus has been leching, fantasizing she's a living version of his Rolls-Royce's Spirit of Ecstasy hood ornament. While announcing the discovery to their department Tom is horrified to learn the Mnemosyne has been stolen by piggybacking on a search engine, Mooncalf. Tom then rushes home only to discover his wife is missing and his house is covered in fumigator tarpaulins and has been ransacked. Now, with time running out, Tom must recover the Mnemosyne, and rescue his wife before the world's leading anti-virus researchers have their minds erased just as the lethal Pares virus is unleashed.



PACE, VISUAL STYLE & TONE

Lost Causes has some lighter, more humorous moments in the exchanges between Tom and Steven such as when Steven shoves Tom down the air vents at the Oligov Corp. Think Sneakers or North by Northwest and less Inception in tone. But it is more nervous energy speaking here. What's happening is deadly serious but, being bright humorous guys, they can see the irony or gallows humor in a lot of the deadly situations here. John McClean in Die Hard made wisecracks -- so does our hero Tom Hayworth.

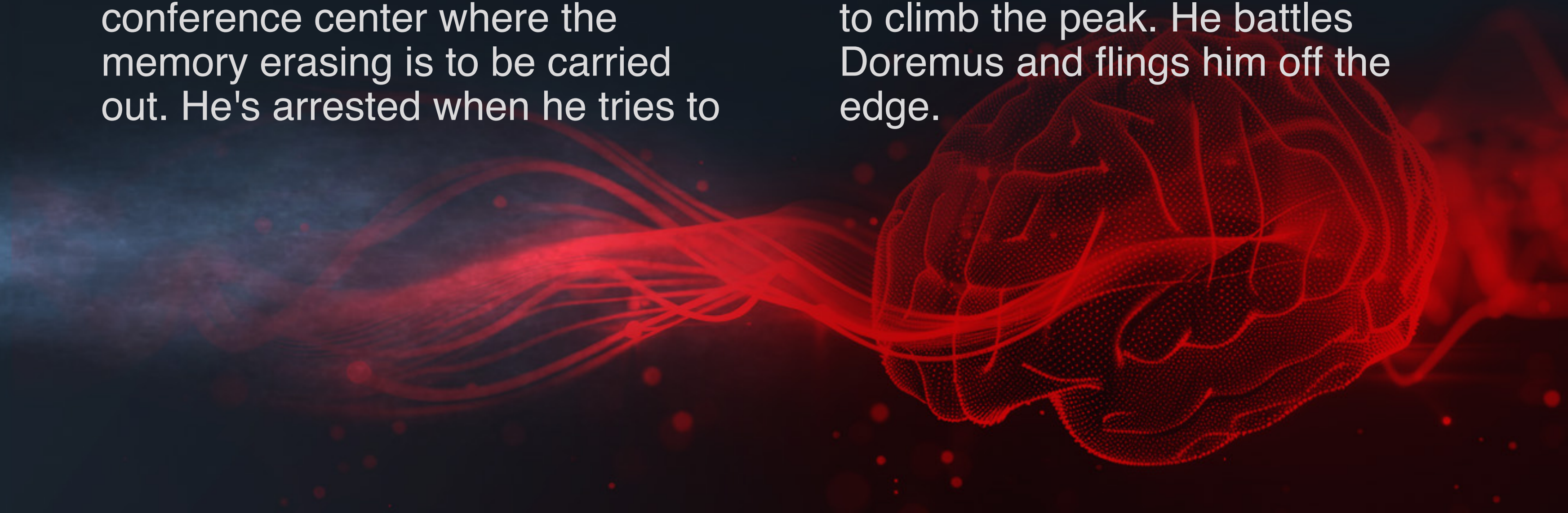
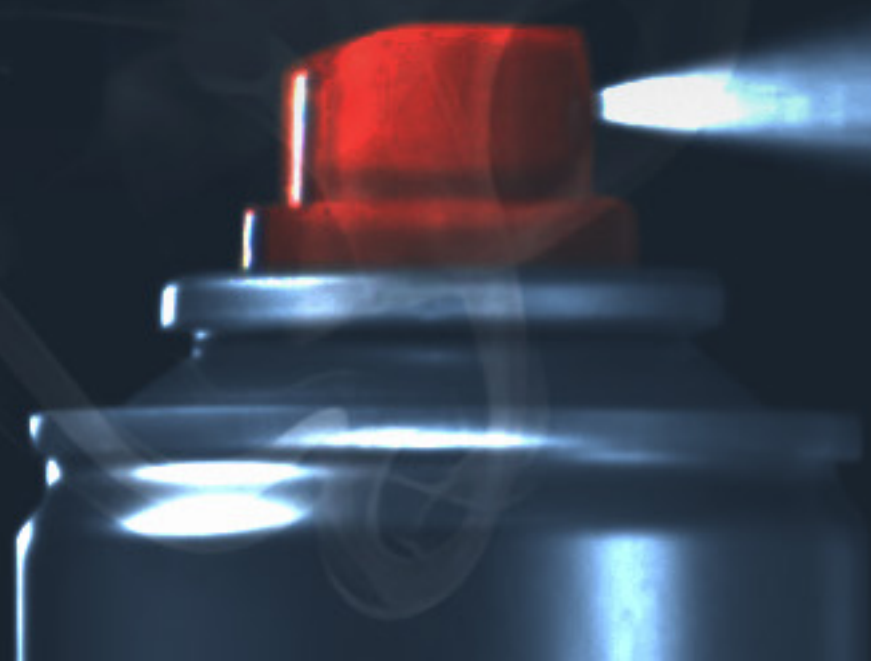
Climbers too inhabit a world of particular 'sang-froid' or deadpan composure in the direst of circumstances.

SYNOPSIS

Neuroscientist Tom Hayworth is struggling to perfect a memory spray that may help the body to "forget" it is ill. Jolted into action by the climbing death of his brother, Tom accidentally discovers the catalyst. The gas is stolen by Pat Doremus who has his own ideas for the discovery and for Tom's stunning black wife Yolanda. Yolanda is taken hostage but Tom and his best pal Steven come up with a plan to sabotage Doremus' scheme to unleash a deadly

computer virus while erasing the memories of the world's leading anti-virus experts. They place a cup of coffee on top of Tom's old vibrating cell phone in Doremus' server room ready to spill and set off the sprinklers. Our heroes escape but Tom is taken by helicopter to Doremus' lodge. Tom is flung out of the helicopter but survives to find his way to the conference center where the memory erasing is to be carried out. He's arrested when he tries to

alert the police to the plot. Tom fights his way back to the conference after a death-defying battle on a log truck with a Lumberjack. The only way to set off the sprinkler systems is by making a call from the top of an impossible climb. As he and Yolanda fight off the bad guys on top of Moro Rock Tom fights off memory hallucinations and starts to climb the peak. He battles Doremus and flings him off the edge.



THEMES

Lost Causes is a story about what happens when man interferes with nature. It is also a story about covetousness.

Tom covets the success and plaudits from the fame of discovering his memory gas. His wife Yolanda covets Doremus' Rolls-Royce. Doremus covets both Tom's wife and his memory gas invention.

Oligov covets world software domination and hires Doremus to destroy the world's operating systems, lobotomizing the leading software engineers all with the goal of being the next Bill Gates or Steve Jobs.

It's also a story about Loss. Tom loses his kid brother and nearly loses his mind. When you can selectively erase memory does it make sense to keep the bad as well as the good ones? What happens if you use the gas on yourself? Do the old injuries forget they're healed and come back? In Tom's case, this is a danger when he sprays himself and experiences a sort of memory hallucination. Are cellular memories necessary, rather like the white blood cells which replicate and "remember" viruses?

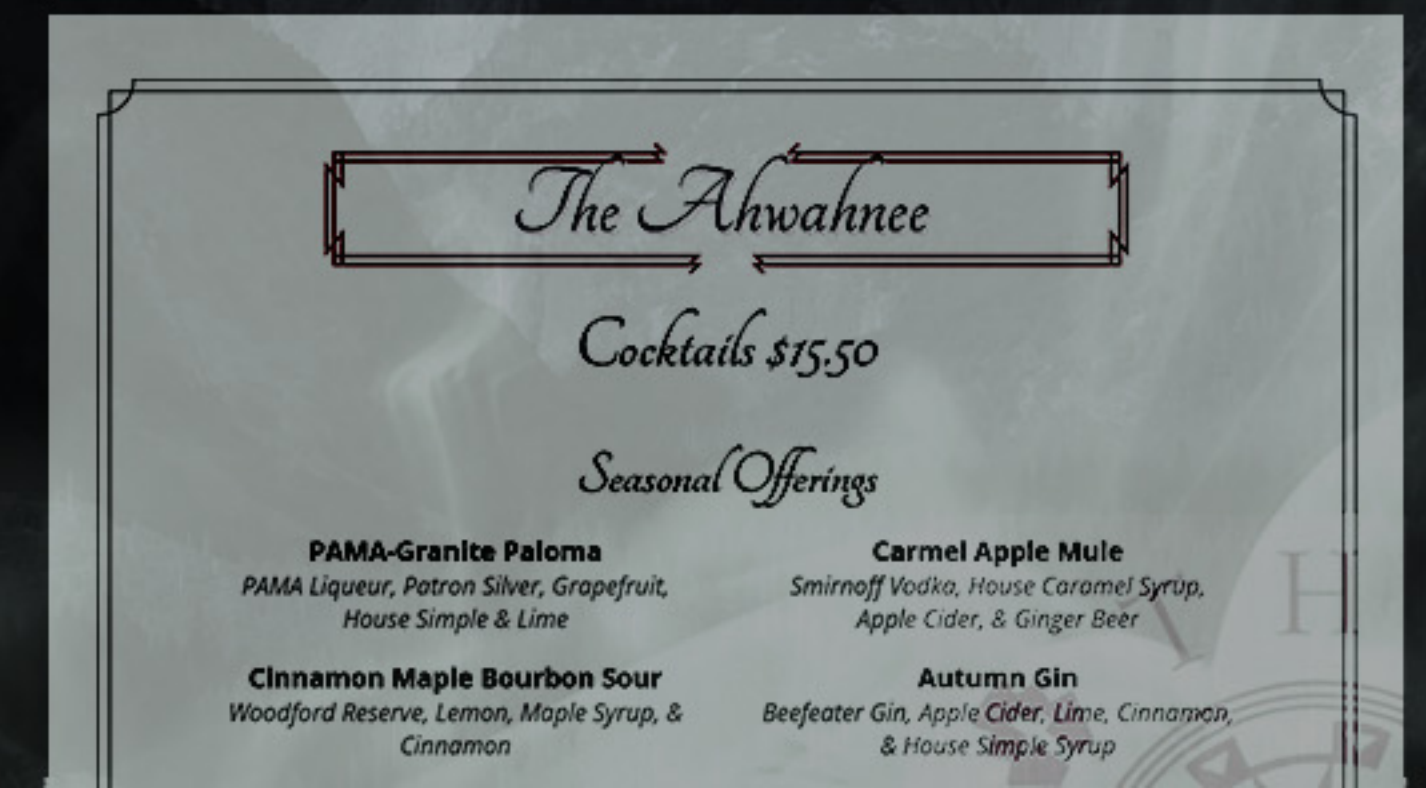


THE WORLD

I've been to Moro Rock in Sequoia National Park a few times and each time its grandeur hits me like, well, a granite fist. It is massive. Some people glide up the handrails like wraiths and others cling to the side like startled rabbits. I've seen folks casually hop over the guardrails to get a better selfie but in the old days, there was just an old rickety stairway that took people to the top.

El Capitan is a different ball of wax. It's just a giant granite wall 3,000 feet straight up. Tom and his younger brother Peter casually cling to the side, pinned like a chrysalis, precariously hanging on to the surface. If you've ever seen Free Solo, Alex Honnold's amazing, rope-less climb of El Capitan you'll know what I mean. High mountains are also great places to get rid of someone as Doremus attempts to eliminate Tom but succeeds only in killing Tom's brother.

There's a reason Doremus locates his clifftop aerie in the mountains - he's beginning to think he's one of the gods himself and it has become his private Mount Olympus. Like North by Northwest, our hero ends his journey on a sheer rock face confronted by the bad guys but he's in his element here especially once the guns are empty. Tom really begins his memory voyage on a mountain and ends his journey on another. Mountains are to this story what jungles are to Predator. Only the hardest can survive.



STORY HOOK

Ransomware and other viruses are becoming a global problem...but did you know that we've become attuned to sources of electromagnetic radiation around us? We used to worry about carrying our cell phones close to our ears but there are other sources of memory-losing radiation. We've become tuned into our local power line frequency. Most Europeans, if randomly asked to sing a note come up with a G sharp, an American would probably hit a B natural. Food for thought.

CASE

I have a fear of heights but I also love climbing movies. I love the science of memory loss and how the cells may actually store memories inside their walls. "What if?" What if you could lose the bad memories and keep the good ones? Are the big search engines so benign? Who said storing all the world's knowledge in one place was such a great idea? Is it so wise to give so much power to one major search engine? What if we lost them? What if they are erased? What if we erase a memory and it turns out some memories, even the bad ones, are like placeholders, designated to remind our bodies of some traumatic event so we miss the next one through experience? Maybe. Almost everyone these days has a horror story about viruses, ransomware, or malware. What if the next one doesn't just lock up our files but erases them completely? What if there are no antivirus data scientists left intact to battle the next 'big one?' What if the anti-virus experts get a virus?

FINANCIALS

Who doesn't like Jaws, North by Northwest, or The Silence of the Lambs? I love action thrillers and I love thrillers combined with Sci-Fi and fantasy.

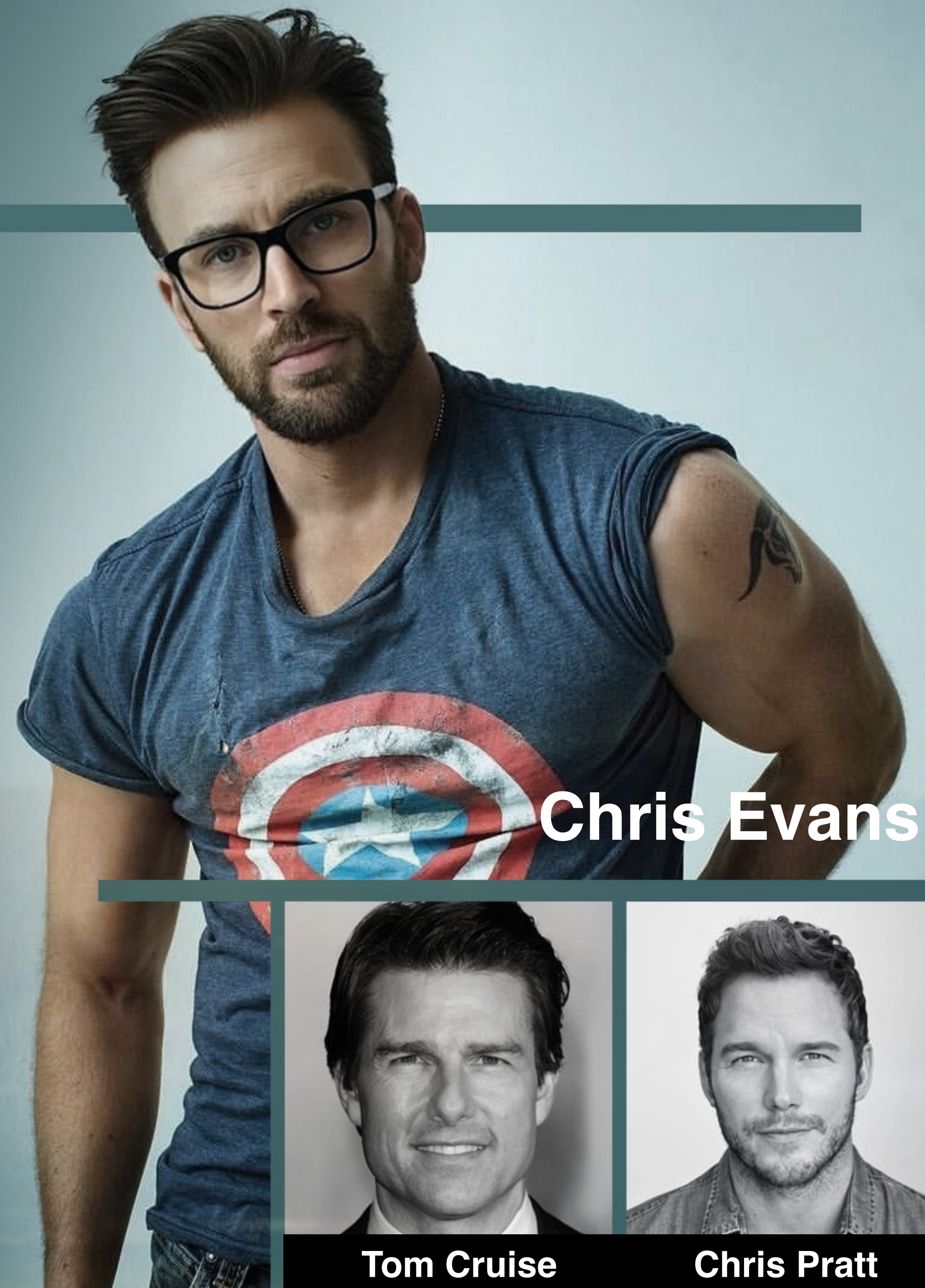
Lost Causes can all be shot 200 miles from Los Angeles -- you just need some great rocks and trees. Do I hear Arrowhead or Crestline, anyone?

CHARACTERS

TOM male - 40s - caucasian

Well-built, toned, and wiry like a wide receiver -- with everything in proportion. Tom is like Alex Honnold meets James Bond or put it this way, imagine Bill Gates fusing with Dwayne Johnson. Brains and brawn. Medium built and tougher than your average tough climber. Tom grew up watching Indiana Jones movies - the sexy, tough professor with the action-man smarts. He's usually the smartest guy in the room and when he isn't he can become almost obnoxious and start challenging other men, and sometimes women, to handshake-squeezing battles.

And did I mention those hands? They're medium size and not like the baseball mitts owned by Doremus but they're super strong. Well-formed, almost artistic like a rock-climbing piano player but capable of great finesse and delicate actions like a brain surgeon. Yolanda always said Tom's hands were his best feature -- next to his legs.



Chris Evans



Tom Cruise



Chris Pratt

CHARACTERS

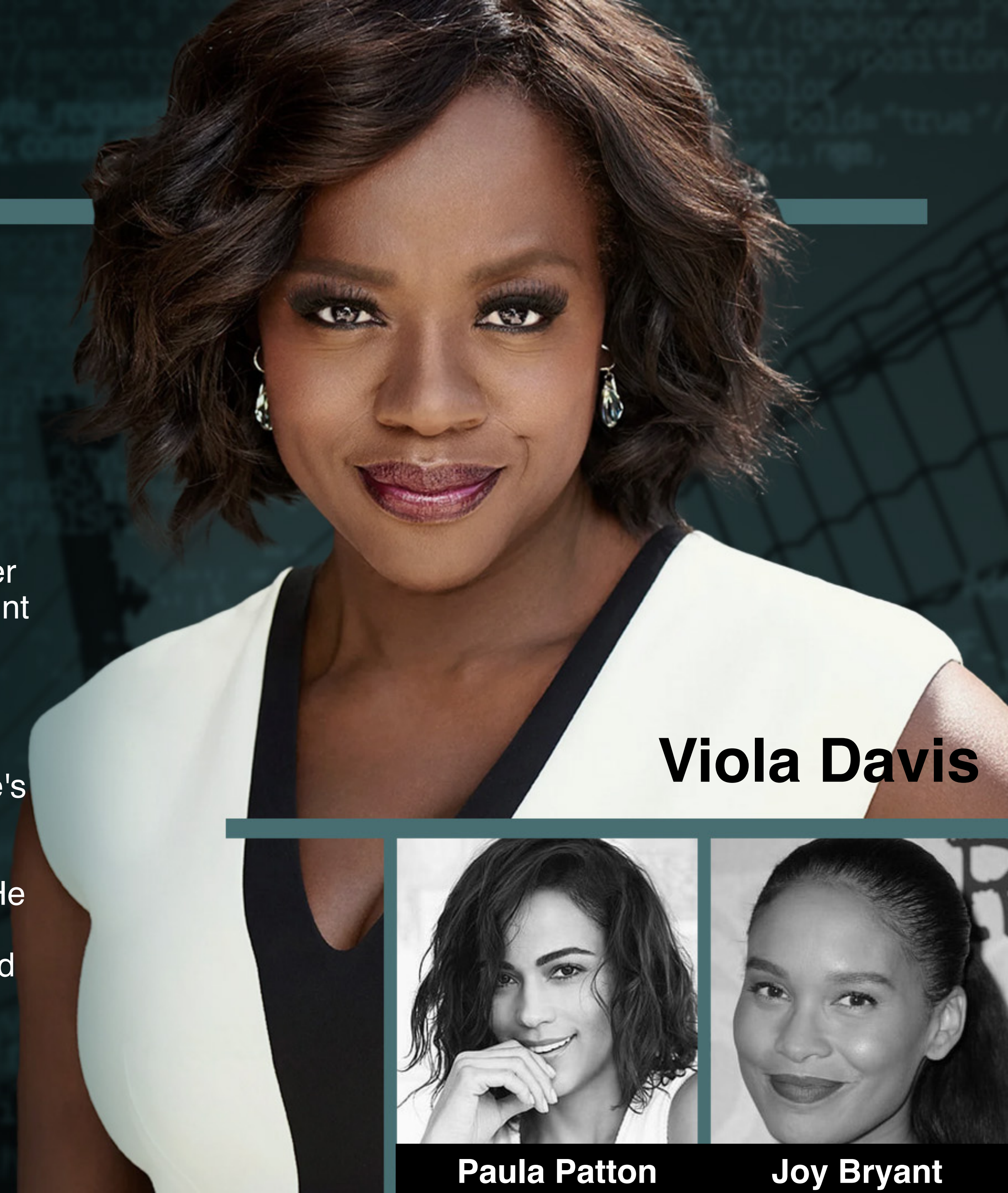
YOLANDA

female - 30s - black

Black, voluptuous, beautiful. A head-turner in uniform. Did I mention she was a knockout? Uniformly swoon-making to both men and women. Wily but not worldly enough to see the danger in Doremus' letting her have a joyride in his Rolls-Royce. Yolanda is accustomed to street toughs and figures all rich people are essentially harmless trust fund babies. She doesn't realize what a can of worms she's opening by getting into the Rolls Phantom II. Or does she?

Yolanda, who had dreams of becoming a runway model before becoming a cop was too

voluptuous to model clothes but did some cheesecake glamour shoots in San Diego and some local catalog and print work. After seeing the tall ships at Dana Point Harbor as a young woman she used to joke that she was like "a ship in full sail" to describe her assets. Tom, her husband, fantasizes about them when she's not with him. Doremus, the evil technocrat villain of our story, becomes obsessed with them. He has, in his mind, already placed Yolanda on his Rolls-Royce hood like the vaunted silver Spirit of Ecstasy ornament.



Viola Davis



Paula Patton



Joy Bryant

CHARACTERS



Tom Hiddleston

STEVEN

male - 30s - british

Bespectacled, pale, lanky Steven, slender, almost a double tall long drink of water, would stop a bullet -- or flying crumpet for his best mate Tom. He has a fear of heights, is NOT a climber but, if anything, is more cerebral than Tom. He enjoys crossword puzzles whereas Tom hates them, he loves playing the Catan board game whereas Tom hates it. He loves pale Asian women like his girlfriend Kim.

DOREMUS

50s - american

Bull-necked and bull-headed Pat Doremus has a mother who lived to be 106. Think of a rich, white version of Mike Tyson without the tattoos. He's in his mid-fifties now but doesn't expect to reach such a lofty number himself. Thus the rush. The rush to get the memory drug before the dopey eggheads mess it up even more. He also has a quest for efficiency which has made him a rich man with a finger in many pies from lumber, oil (well, he's from Texas after all), and software.



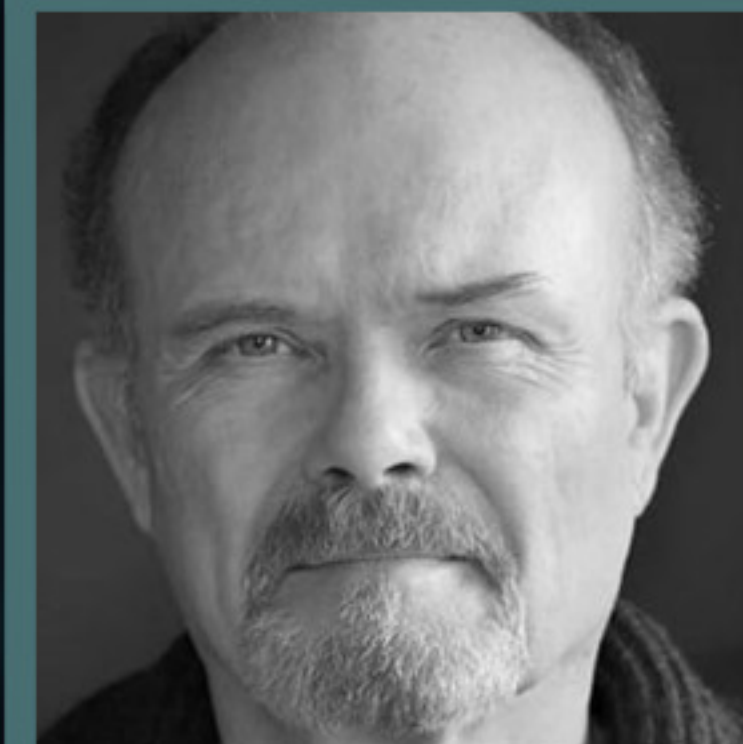
J.K. Simmons



Colin Hanks



Simon Pegg



Kurtwood Smith



Bobby Cannavale

CHARACTERS



Franka Potente

BETTINA

**female - 30s -
German**

Greasy short, short, light brown hair which never seems to see a brush. Tall and built like an East German hurdler. Remember those folks? Remember that nasty girl in middle school who always dipped YOUR hair in the inkwell? That's Bettina. She may have a thing for Kurt. Yep, this gal prefers blondes.

And she's also a natural-born killer.

SAVILLE

male - 30s - british

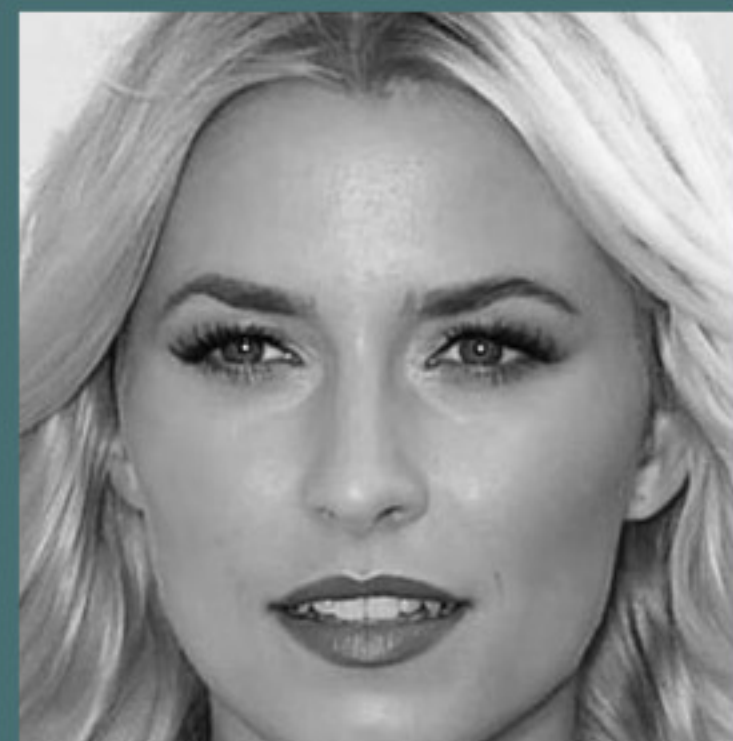
Short but wears high-heeled boots and shoes to hide his height -- or lack of it. Grayish almost alien skin pallor, like he hasn't been in the sun more than twice in the last year. This is not Saville Row but Saville the sadist. An absolute "rotter" at school, a boarding school, of course, Saville hasn't had any of his rough edges smoothed away. He's a cad. Well-bred. but breeding has bred cruelty and a viciousness of spirit which runs through him like a stick of Brighton Rock (candy).



Robert Pattinson



Julia Stegner



Lena Gercke



Josh Dylan



Josh O'Connor

CHARACTERS



Forest Whitaker

BIGGS

male - 30s - black

Big, Black, and buffed out -- under several layers of fat. Eats large pretzels with mustard from a greasy bag constantly while flicking the large salt crystals at Singh and Kurt. Mr. Biggs is big in name and big in stature. He's the only one of the crew not intimidated by Pat Doremus mainly because of his immense stature and toughness. Biggs has his eyes on Yolanda ever since he first drugged her when kidnapping her from her home.

KURT

male - 30s - finnish

Blonde, blue-eyed -- think a young Dolph Lungren. But short, muscular, and with a few nasty scars on his face making him look like a mad Viking. I knew a "Kurt" once when I first moved to LA. He was as blonde and blue-eyed as can be and talked just like our Kurt but in stuttering English. But boy, was he tough. He used to go and box in a boxing club down in south central LA. He also has a thing for Bettina.



Gustaf Skarsgård



Michael Clarke



Ving Rhames



Joel Kinnaman



Andreas Wilson