

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE  
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# Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)

Steven Spielberg

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### OVERVIEW

*Auteur* Stephen Spielberg's work spans many genres. While he is most famous for blockbuster films such as *Jaws* (1975), *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), and *Jurassic Park* (1993), each of which has a firm foothold in horror and science fiction, his filmography also reveals a deep commitment to asking questions about history and humanity. Spielberg's diverse collection of work has been widely recognized as pioneering, frequently engaging with unexplored themes and techniques that have earned Spielberg a reputation as an innovator and a master artist. He has been awarded three Academy Awards, the AFI Life Achievement Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. His films have likewise collectively placed him at the top of the list of the most profitable film directors in history.

*Film* *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is frequently included on lists of the best films ever made. Adopted into the National Film Registry in 1999, this first film in the *Indiana Jones* franchise has been marked as a triumph and an exemplar of the 1980's blockbuster. Remarkably popular at the time of its initial release in 1981 and rising to cult status in the years since, *Raiders* is considered one of the best of the action-adventure films that captivated cinema audiences in the late 1970's and 80's. *Raiders* was followed in its franchise by the prequel *Temple of Doom* (1984) and then sequels *Last Crusade* (1989), *Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008), and *Dial of Destiny* (2023). Spielberg directed all but the latest installment.

*Background* While Spielberg directed *Raiders*, the story was initially conceived by George Lucas and Philip Kaufman, who longed for a cinematic return to serialized cinema they watched as children that featured a recurring hero on many adventures. Although the team of Spielberg, Lucas, Kaufman, and writer Lawrence Kasdan originally considered creating a hero who was a playboy and even an alcoholic, they decided that a more honest and trustworthy character would serve as a better role model for younger viewers. The film included several complicated and elaborate sets and stunts, which were Spielberg's primary investment in the film. The nuances of the film's plot, romance, and story are largely credited to Lawrence Kasdan.

### SYNOPSIS

*Raiders of the Lost Ark* begins by introducing its hero, Indiana Jones, alongside his antagonist, René Belloq. Although Jones navigates through a booby-trapped temple and successfully retrieves a golden idol, Belloq is outside waiting for him with an armed force. Belloq takes the idol, returning to Germany to deliver it to his boss, Adolph Hitler.

A disappointed Jones returns home to his life as a university professor, where he is immediately visited by members of the Army Intelligence unit who seek his expertise as an archaeologist. They ask Jones to find the Ark of the Covenant, an extremely valuable and powerful artifact. Jones accepts the job and travels to Nepal, seeking a medallion owned by his former professor that will reveal the location of the Ark. Finding only the professor's daughter, Marion, in Nepal and in possession of the medallion, the two team up, traveling to Cairo in search of the Ark. Although they are countered by the team of Nazi archaeologists – including Belloq – at every turn, Jones finds and retrieves the Ark. However, Belloq steals the Ark from Jones at the last moment.

Jones and Marion travel with the Nazi party to a desolate island where the Ark is opened. The powers within the Ark kill all of the Nazis who look upon it, including Belloq. Jones and Marion are spared because they

close their eyes and refuse to look. They take the Ark home, and though Jones insists that it needs to be studied by academics, the Army Intelligence unit boxes the Ark and stores it in a secret warehouse filled with similar mysterious boxes.

## MAJOR CHARACTERS

<i>Indiana Jones</i>	An archaeologist and adventurer
<i>Marion Ravenwood</i>	A bartender, and the daughter of Jones' former professor
<i>René Belloq</i>	A French archaeologist who works for the Nazis

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS

### **Indiana Jones**

Jones is a man who has two lives – the first as an academic, and the second as an adventurer. While this film never truly explains how Jones developed both sets of skills, they combine to create a hero who is knowledgeable, ethical, and extremely capable of completing his quests.

*Capable* – From the start of the film, Jones shows himself to be both intelligent and athletic. He leverages his knowledge of ancient cultures around the world to navigate ancient temples and map rooms, locating the treasure in each without getting killed. Alongside being an expert in the occult, Jones can also wield a whip, shoot a gun, and throw a punch.

*Honorable* – While Belloq, his French counterpart, is in archaeology for the riches and the power, Jones respects the history and artifacts of ancient cultures. He continues to insist that both the golden idol and the Ark belong in a museum so that they can be studied by those who best understand their value and power. Jones does not like the idea that these important relics should belong to any individual or contribute to the powers of evil; instead, he believes that these objects, and the knowledge they represent, belong to all people.

### **Marion Ravenwood**

Marion begins the film by working in her deceased father's bar in Nepal. However, the bar burns down and Marion must join forces with Jones to get her money back. The money is quickly forgotten, though, when Marion's relationship with Jones turns romantic. They end the movie together and Marion never mentions her lost bar or the five thousand dollars that burned up in it.

*Tenacious* – Marion is a character that does not turn away from a challenge. She begins the film in a drinking competition, where she beats a much larger foe and collects a great deal of money without even seeming drunk. When Jones and a delegate from the Nazi party arrive to demand the headpiece that will reveal the location of the Ark, Marion stands up to both, keeping the headpiece for herself.

*Bold* – Unlike the shy and wilting women of many Hollywood blockbusters, Marion insists on an equal partnership between herself and Jones. When they fight in the streets of Cairo, Marion wields a knife and a pot instead of letting Jones simply defend her. When Jones is in a fight on the airfield, Marion knocks out the pilot and climbs into a gun turret, shooting bullets at Nazi foes. Marion does not shy away from action; instead, she boldly makes the moves that are in her own best interest.

### **René Belloq**

A French archaeologist, Belloq frequently waits for Indiana Jones to do the hard work of retrieving an item before plucking it from his hands. Although he is capable and driven, Belloq is also power-hungry. His death at the end of the film is the most gruesome and perhaps the most satisfying; Spielberg was forced to significantly tone it down to avoid an R-rating for the film.

*Clever* – Throughout the film, Belloq demonstrates his cleverness by appearing precisely as Jones finishes a job, trapping him and taking the prize for himself. Belloq also capably leads an incredibly large dig in the desert outside of Cairo to find the Ark. While he fails at this because he did not have the correct information, he successfully negotiates with the Nazi party for more time.

*Greedy* – While Belloq is clever, his greed is his downfall in the film. Unlike Jones, Belloq pursues ancient treasures for the paycheck that comes with them and the power they offer. Although the Nazi officers wish to take the Ark immediately back to Berlin, Belloq insists that the Ark first be opened on an empty island so that he can seize the power for himself. This results in his death.

## THEMES

**Quest** From the very start of the film, Indiana Jones is marked as a mild-mannered professor who leaves his academic life at home on a series of exciting quests. His entire personality changes on these quests, shifting from the bespectacled professor to a whip-wielding adventurer. The first quest the film shows is the search for the golden idol, which results in Belloq's theft of the item. The second quest follows many of the same lines, with Jones having the knowledge and ability to retrieve the Ark, though Belloq again steals it after Jones does all of the work. Jones returns home at the end of each quest to his normal life, but at the end of his second quest he returns with the true prize: his love, Marion Ravenwood. *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, as well as the rest of the *Indiana Jones* series, glamorizes the quest narrative and suggests that men can be their true selves, pit themselves against evil forces, and win great treasure when they step away from their boring everyday lives in the pursuit of something truly important.

**Love** While Jones begins the film as a bachelor whose many female students are in love with him, he ends the film with Marion Ravenwood in his arms. Although Jones is the hero within the story, Marion holds her own against him, a capable foil and a challenging presence who does not collapse against Jones' forceful personality. Marion is not a classic damsel in distress. Although there are moments when Jones rescues her, Marion is also shown killing foes, drinking opponents under the table, and using her wits to escape dangerous situations. The film, as a whole, suggests not that great love forms between a capable man and a helpless woman, but instead between equals who challenge and help each other.

**Revenge** None of the characters in the film prioritizes revenge within the story – Jones is motivated by his academic interest, Marion by a desire to get her money back after her bar is burned, and Belloq by his greed. However, revenge does interestingly come into play with the Ark itself. The Ark of the Covenant is referred to many times throughout the film as a Jewish artifact. It is said to hold the broken tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were originally inscribed. Belloq is hired by the Nazi party to seek the Ark to satisfy Adolf Hitler's interest in the occult and ancient religious artifacts. The fact that the Ark takes revenge on the Nazi party at the end of the film, killing all of the Nazis who look upon its contents, can be read as the revenge of a Hebrew artifact of great power upon a Nazi party that sought the destruction of Jewish people and culture.

**Power** Jones is one of the few characters in this film that does not seek the Ark for its power. While he is interested in the Ark for its value as an important historical, cultural, and religious artifact, Belloq – and the Nazi party by extension – are interested in it for the purported power that it contains. The Ark, when present on screen, radiates power, emitting a pulsing energy that confuses animals and burns the wood that contains it. When opened, the Ark releases its incredible killing power on all of those who look upon it. While the Ark ends up boxed safely away in a warehouse by the American government and is apparently lost to history, *Raiders* has a strong message about the pursuit of power. Those who pursue it to control and subdue others – Belloq and the Nazi party – end up dead. Those who simply seek to preserve history and prevent others from the abuse of power – Jones and the Americans – survive and live happily.

**Greed** Belloq and the Nazi party alongside him represent the force of greed within the film. Historically, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party were invested in mining cultures in Europe, Asia, and Africa for their historical artifacts, adding them to Hitler's collection. The pursuit of the Ark is marked as part of this greedy, colonialist pursuit to possess or destroy all of the great treasures of the world. However, it is Belloq's individual greed that spells his downfall. Although the Nazis with whom Belloq works express hesitation about the "Jewish ceremony" that Belloq wants to enact on the island alone before taking the Ark back to Hitler in Berlin, Belloq insists on opening it alone first. This is not mere curiosity, but instead Belloq wanting to seize the power of the Ark for himself. Belloq likewise treats Marion as a valued treasure that he can steal from Jones. However, Marion tricks Belloq when she outdrinks him and returns to Jones, defying Belloq's greedy desire.

**Religion** *Raiders* is a film that walks the line between the religious and the secular. While the Ark of the Covenant has a very real religious history, the Ark imagined by the film has as much fantasy built into it as

fact. The Ark represents well the film's use of religion as a whole: while *Raiders* references very real religions and traditions, it takes extreme liberties with those traditions to tell a compelling story. *Raiders*, in the end, comes down heavily in favor of the Hebrew tradition, suggesting that it is a faith with a great deal of power that should be respected. Although Jones himself is not marked as a Jewish character, he is certainly one whose respect and knowledge of the Hebrew artifact allow him to survive. The Nazis, who misunderstand the power, die.

**Patriotism** Although Jones is not openly motivated by patriotism, *Raiders* takes a strong and unsurprising stance regarding which countries have an appropriate response to power and which do not. The representatives of Germany and France in the film – the Nazis and Belloq, respectively – die when they greedily grasp at the absolute power of the Ark. Those who represent American interest – Jones and Marion – believe that power and knowledge should be respected, studied, and available to all people through institutions, like museums. While the film does in the end critique the American government for hoarding the Ark in a warehouse filled with secrets, the suggestion that America does not greedily abuse the Ark's power is a mark in its favor. Moreover, the suggestion that the American government has the Ark within its arsenal is an unsurprising patriotic move crafted by American filmmakers. These stark portrayals of “right” and “wrong” national responses to the temptation of power become a little obvious when considering that *Raiders* was made more than forty years after the events, which are supposed to have occurred in 1936. The film is thus in some ways a historic fantasy of what could have happened in the years before World War II.

## SCENES

**In the Jungle** A man dressed in a brown jacket and a fedora walks through a jungle. Men follow him, laden with packs and leading donkeys. When the jungle gets too thick, they leave the donkeys behind and start cutting through the brush with machetes. As one of the men cuts through the brush, he reveals a stone statue with a frightening face and runs away screaming. The man in the lead walks calmly up to and then past it. The man encounters a slim projectile in a tree and studies it for a moment before moving on. One of his men rushes up behind him, tasting the tip of the stick and saying it is poisoned. He declares that they are being followed.



**The Entrance** The man in the hat stops at a body of water, studying a torn piece of paper. When one of the men behind him produces and cocks a gun, the man spins and grabs his whip, flicking it and knocking the gun from the betrayer's hand. The betrayer runs away and the man calmly moves forward to the entrance of a hidden temple. "This is it," he says and gathers a sack full of sand as he informs the man who tested the poison dart that his competitor was here before him. The second man begs the first not to go in, but he is ignored.



**Booby Traps** Inside the temple, the two men are first covered in spiders, which they brush away. Further in, the man in the hat advises the second to stay out of a stream of light that flows into the room. When he carefully waves his hand in the light, a speared gate shoots forward with a corpse already impaled on its sharp edges. The second man screams, and the man in the hat murmurs the name of his competitor, looking at the corpse with pity. The two move forward, using the whip to swing over a deep pit.





**The Idol** The two men reach a room that contains a golden idol on a raised platform. The man in the hat smiles when he sees it. When the second man rushes forward, the first holds him back and cautions him. He tests the floor and reveals that it is rigged with pressure points that release darts. Slowly, the man in the hat moves forward towards the idol. When he reaches it, he carefully swaps the idol for the sack of sand he gathered outside, ensuring that the pressure on the stone stays the same during its removal.



**Miscalculation** Thinking he has measured correctly, the man in the hat turns away. As he does, the stone on which the bag of sand sits begins to sink, and the walls of the temple crumble away. The man runs forward, triggering the pressure points on the floor to shoot darts at him, but he is not hit. The second man uses the whip to swing again over the pit. The man in the hat demands that he be thrown the whip, but the second man demands the idol first. A wall begins to lower behind the second man. The man in the hat throws the idol and the second man catches it before saying “Adios señor” and running away. The man in the hat backs up and leaps over the pit, barely making it across.



**Escape Alone** The man in the hat makes it under the closing door just in time and turns to find the man who betrayed him killed by another booby trap. The man in the hat takes the idol and runs. Before he gets far, a huge boulder appears above him and begins to roll down a ramp. The man sprints ahead of it, attempting to get away. He hurls himself from the entrance to the temple and finds himself at the feet of several strange men who point spears at him. One of his men stands with him, but he falls forward, dead, with many tiny darts in his back. \



**Belloq** A well-dressed man comes forward, leaning over the man in the hat and greeting him with friendly words: 'Hello, Dr. Jones.' The man informs Jones that he is here to take the idol. Angry and seeing he is outmatched, Jones hands it over, calling the man "Belloq." When Belloq's back is turned to show the idol to the men who helped him, Jones runs. Belloq orders his men to give chase as Jones sprints away through the jungle. The men chase Jones out of the jungle and Jones yells to a man on a seaplane to start the engine. Jones makes it to the plane and they take off, but Jones is dismayed to find that there is a large snake in his seat. The pilot protests that the snake is a pet and Jones shouts that he hates snakes.





**University** The scene cuts to a classroom where Jones gives a lecture on neolithic archaeology. His students, mostly women, look at Jones adoringly. A man enters the classroom and quietly listens to the end of the lecture before the bell rings. Jones calls the man "Marcus" and says he had the idol in his hands. Marcus is supportive, saying he trusts Jones to do what is right for the museum, but also distracted. Marcus asks Jones to come with him, saying that people from Army Intelligence are waiting to see him. Jones follows, asking if he's in trouble.



**The Ark** Jones and Marcus enter a large lecture hall where the people from Army Intelligence greet him and list Jones's credentials, suggesting they know all about him. They ask about the whereabouts of Jones's former professor, Ravenwood, but Jones says he does not know where he is. The men inform Jones that they've come to him because the Nazis are looking for religious artifacts and they've recently received word that the Nazis are searching for something outside of Cairo. They ask Jones for help with interpreting a message they intercepted from the Nazis regarding this dig.





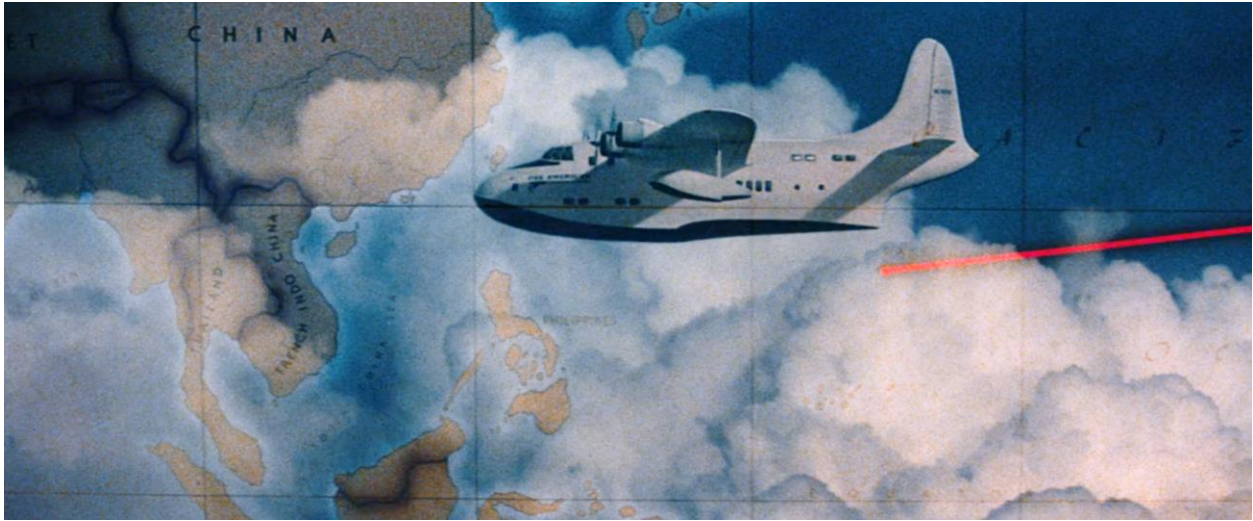
**Ravenwood** Jones declares that the Nazis have discovered the lost city of Tanis, which is the resting place of the Ark of the Covenant, the stone tablets on which God wrote the Ten Commandments. Jones says that the Ark was hidden in a secret chamber called the Well of Souls. While Jones knows a little, he says that Ravenwood is the true expert on the subject. Jones notes that the Nazis will seek Ravenwood, who likely has the headpiece to the Staff of Ra, which is the key to knowing the location of the Ark within the city of Tanis. Jones shows his visitors an image of the Ark, which is purported to hold incredible power.



**A Mission** Marcus arrives at Jones' home and tells him that the Army wishes Jones to go after the Ark. Jones celebrates but checks to ensure that the museum will get the Ark in the end, not the military. Jones begins to pack and says he will start by seeking Ravenwood. Jones wonders if "she" will still be with Ravenwood and Marcus laughs, saying that Marion is the least of Jones's worries. Jones turns to Marcus, who explains further that the Ark is a treasure beyond anything that Jones has searched for before, one with mystical import. Jones laughs and says he does not believe in magic, tossing a gun into his suitcase.



**Travel** Jones boards a large seaplane and is watched by a man with gold-rimmed glasses wearing a black fedora. As Jones takes a nap, the plane flies and a map appears on the screen, tracing his destination to Nepal.



**Drinking Competition** The scene cuts to a rowdy bar, where a young woman sits across from another person, a set of shot glasses between them. Locals shout and toss money on the table, placing their bets. The opponents trade turns taking drinks, the competition becoming rowdy. The older person takes his final drink and collapses. The young woman shouts to the crowds and collects her winnings as everyone leaves. Alone, she spins around when she hears Jones say, "Hello, Marion."





**Reunion** Marion laughs and says, "Indiana Jones, always knew someday you'd come walking back through my door." He smiles at her as she asks what he's doing here. As he begins to answer that he needs one of her father's pieces, she punches him and says she's learned to hate him in the past ten years. The two continue to bicker about their romantic past and Marion tells Jones to get out. Jones stays, insisting he needs one of her father's pieces and asking where Ravenwood is. Marion tells Jones that her father is dead.



**Third Party** Marion cleans up the bar and berates Jones for what he did to her. He apologizes and demands that she give him the bronze medallion he's looking for, offering her money for it. Marion tells him to come back for it tomorrow. Jones leaves and Marion pulls the medallion out from her shirt, where she wears it as a necklace. She studies it and leaves it on a table as she moves away. When the door opens again, Marion sees the man in the black hat with the gold-rimmed glasses standing there.





**Closed Bar** The man in the black hat also asks about the medallion. Marion asks if he will pay more and he says he will. Marion says she doesn't have the medallion anymore but knows where it is, offering the man and his men a drink. Instead, he moves to her fireplace, stirring it with a poker. He then orders Marion seized and brings the red-hot poker close to her face. She begs him not to burn her, saying she'll tell him everything. He replies, "Yes, you will." A whip cracks and the poker falls from the man's hand. Jones shouts, "Let her go."



**Gunfight** Gunshots ring out and Marion hides behind the bar. Jones is outmatched, but he shoots many of his foes from his hiding place by the door. Logs spill from the hearth, scattering fire across the floor. The table on which the medallion rests is knocked over and the medallion sits amidst the flames. Marion uses a flaming log to knock out one of her enemies as Jones is dragged into the fray. Jones begins to take control of the fight, but the man with the black hat spots the medallion. When he grabs it, he screams in pain, holding up a smoking hand. He drops the hot medallion and rushes outside to sink his hand into the snow.



**Escape** Marion shoots the final man just as he is about to kill Jones, who laughs, smiling at her. She shouts, "My medallion!" and uses a cloth to grab it before Jones and Marion stumble out of the burning bar. Marion insists that until Jones gets back the money she lost in the fire, she's his partner. The scene cuts to another aircraft, which carries them to Cairo.



**Cairo** Jones and Marion arrive at the house of Jones' friend Sallah, who Jones calls a "digger." A monkey appears on the back terrace, causing cheerful chaos. Jones and Sallah talk about the Nazi excavation of Tanis, and Sallah says that Belloq, who is in charge, has found the map room. Jones produces the medallion, and Sallah says he has a friend who can help to interpret the markings on it but he is worried about the Ark being disturbed because "Death has always surrounded it."



**The Market** Jones and Marion walk through the marketplace, laughing as the monkey climbs on them and then runs away. The monkey runs to a man with an eyepatch, who sneaks through the market. When he meets some men in suits, the three salute each other in Nazi fashion. The man with the eyepatch peers around a corner, seeing Marion and Jones walking together. The men in suits move inside a house and nod to two lines of men, who disperse.



**Chase** Marion asks Jones why he hasn't settled down, but before he can give her a straight answer the men in suits appear. Suddenly, men dressed in white cloth rush for Marion and Jones, wielding swords. A fight breaks out and Jones orders Marion to run. The two are separated and Marion hides in a large straw basket. The men run past her, but the monkey hops on top of the basket, giving away her location. Jones shouts for Marion and eventually sees her basket being carried away. He gives chase, but Marion's basket is loaded onto a truck. Jones shoots at the truck as it drives away, hitting the driver and the truck explodes.





**Mourning** Devastated by the loss of Marion, Jones sits alone, drinking alcohol and petting the monkey. The man in the eyepatch arrives on a motorcycle and two other men approach, speaking to Jones in German. Jones goes with the eyepatch man, but he takes the bottle and the monkey. Jones is led into a crowded bar where he sees Belloq waiting for him. Jones sits down and Belloq insists that the two are more alike than Jones thinks. When Jones finally gets angry enough to pull his gun, the people surrounding him in the bar likewise pull guns out, directed at him. Sallah's children suddenly flood the room, surrounding Jones and begging him to come home. Belloq lets him leave. Jones takes the monkey.



**Interpretation** Sallah takes Jones to visit an old man who can interpret the medallion. The man with the eyepatch sneaks into the interpreter's kitchen. When the child who was preparing refreshments leaves, the man with the eyepatch pours liquid over the dates. Jones wanders around the old man's home, baffled that Belloq could have gotten a copy of Marion's medallion. As the old man beckons Jones to come closer, the monkey eats one of the dates. The interpreter says the medallion gives information on how high the staff on which it sits should be, but the information is on both sides of the medallion.



**Poison** Jones asks Sallah if he's sure that the Nazis have a headpiece that only has markings on one side. Sallah nods and Jones laughs, saying the Nazis are digging in the wrong place. Celebrating, Jones tosses a date in the air, intending to catch it in his mouth. At the last moment, Sallah catches it in his fist and gestures towards the table, where the monkey is dead, saying, "Bad dates."



**Digging** The scene cuts to the Nazi dig at Tanis. Jones and Sallah sneak in, disguised, and head for the map room. Jones climbs down a rope into the room while Sallah waits outside. Sallah is accosted by Nazis. He is forced away from the entrance to the map room and takes the rope with him. Inside, Jones places the medallion on top of a correctly sized pole and waits for the sunlight to hit it. The sunbeam beam hits the crystal in the medallion and lights up the actual location of the Well of Souls.





**Found** Jones takes notes on the location and, finished, snaps the stick over his knee. Sallah improvises a new rope of random fabric and the scene cuts to an escape, with Jones and Sallah moving through the Nazi camp. Attempting to avoid detection, Jones ducks into a nearby tent and is shocked to see Marion sitting before him, tied to a post. He grabs her and kisses her, asking if she's hurt. She says she is not hurt and begs him to cut her loose. Jones starts to cut her ropes but then realizes that he can't release her without the Nazis realizing he's been there. She protests, but Jones slips her gag back on and leaves her tied up.



**Proper Motivation** Jones uses surveying equipment to find the location of the Well of Souls. Belloq walks with Nazi officers, explaining away his failure to find the Ark. They suggest that he needs to ask “the girl” more questions and that she will say more if she is “properly motivated.” Belloq insists that Marion knows nothing and the man in the black hat comes forward when the Nazis suggest they know someone proficient in torture. He raises his hand in the Nazi salute, revealing that the medallion's details were burned into his palm.





**The Well of Souls** Jones brings a shovel to a small rise outside of the main site and begins to dig with a crew of men. They work until the sun sets. When darkness falls, lightning crashes across the sky. When the group finds a stone door in the ground, they pry it open, revealing an elaborate chamber beneath. Sallah, peering inside, asks "Why does the floor move?" Jones drops a torch inside, revealing the floor to be covered in snakes. He rolls onto his back, saying, "Snakes. Why do they have to be snakes." Sallah insists that Jones go inside first.



**Date with Belloq** Belloq arrives at the tent in which Marion is tied up. He unties her and is very polite, letting her know that she cannot escape on foot and inviting her to eat with him. Marion yells at Belloq about her treatment and he apologizes, offering her a beautiful white dress and asking her to wear it for him. Marion consents and asks for a drink. As she changes, Belloq asks Marion for more information, but she insists she has told him everything. Marion sits down with Belloq and suggests he send the guard away, saying they don't need a chaperone.



**Into the Well** The scene cuts to Jones being lowered with ropes into the Well of Souls. Snakes swarm on the floor, though a small area has been cleared with the use of torches. On the ground, Jones calls for Sallah to come down as he spreads gasoline and sets the snakes on fire. The scene returns to Marion, who drinks with Belloq, tipping back her liquor with expert ease.



**The Ark** Back in the well, Jones and Sallah slowly approach a stone casket. Together they struggle to lift the top off, sending it tumbling to the ground. Back in the tent, Marion and Belloq laugh drunkenly and she pulls a knife on him, saying that she likes him very much but that she's leaving. Belloq sighs as the man in the black hat suddenly appears, blocking Marion's exit.





**Removing the Ark** In the well, Sallah and Jones lift the Ark from its place in the casket. It glows with a brilliant golden light. They carry it out into the main chamber, box it up, and have their men lift it with ropes. The sun rises outside the Well of Souls and Belloq sees the dig site adjacent to his. He immediately runs towards it and orders the Nazis to wake their men. The Nazis run to the dig site. Sallah climbs out, but the rope drops in after him. Belloq appears at the top of the well, shouting down to Jones.



**Locked In** – Belloq takes possession of the Ark and, despite Belloq's shocked protest, the Nazis throw Marion into the well. She dangles from a statue before falling into Jones's arms. Marion at first attempts to run before climbing on top of Jones to get away from the snakes. Marion vows her revenge as the men replace the door to the well, locking Marion and Jones inside. Sallah is placed under arrest.





**Escape** – Jones and Marion bicker about where she got her pretty dress and how they're going to get out. Jones notices that snakes are coming through the wall. He pushes over a gigantic statue, breaking through the wall. Marion and Jones climb through the wall and into a room filled with mummies. Marion screams and panics before Jones shows her that light streams through the far wall. They push a block out of the wall, escaping into a Nazi airfield.



**The Plane** Jones and Marion hide behind barrels and he tells her the plan: they will already be on the plane once the Nazis load the Ark. Jones sneaks across the airfield and attempts to climb onto a plane, but he is stopped by a man speaking German. A fight ensues. Marion crouches beneath the plane as Jones takes on two Germans, one much larger than the other. Marion steals the wheel blocks, using them as a weapon to knock out the pilot. However, the plane begins to spin, knocking open a large barrel of gasoline. Although Jones was losing to the much larger man, the man is killed when the plane's propeller blades hit him. The gasoline catches on fire. Jones pulls Marion free and they run just before the plane explodes.



**Car Chase** – Sallah escapes in the chaos of the airfield explosion and meets Jones and Marion by chance. Sallah tells Jones that the Ark is being loaded onto a truck bound for Cairo. The scene cuts to the Ark being loaded onto a chaotic Nazi convoy. Jones crouches with Marion and Sallah, telling them to get back to Cairo and find some reliable transportation to England. Jones chases after the truck on a white horse. The Nazis spy him and shoot, but Jones leaps from the horse onto the truck, knocking out the driver and taking control.



**Off the Road** – The Nazis retaliate, trying to take their truck back, but Jones runs them all off the road. The soldiers in the back of Jones' truck, who were guarding the Ark, attempt an assault. Only two get through, one shooting Jones in the arm before he falls and another breaking through the driver's side and thrusting Jones through the windshield. Jones falls over the top of the car and slides beneath it, using his whip to attach himself to the moving vehicle and pull himself back up the back. He regains his driver's seat and tosses the other man out of the windshield. Finally, only Belloq's car in front of the truck is left, but Jones runs it off the road.





**The Ship** – Chased by Belloq, Jones drives the Ark back to Cairo, where fruit vendors quickly help him to hide it in a warehouse. Dirty and limping, Jones and Marion board a ship that Sallah has arranged for them. Sallah assures them the Ark is on board and introduces them to the captain. Marion kisses Sallah goodbye and thanks him before she and Jones board the ship.



**The Captain's Cabin** – Jones and Marion clean up and accept the captain's offer to use his cabin. Jones winces at his many wounds and Marion helps him to clean them. He objects at first that it hurts too much, but she calls him a baby. They bicker and then share a kiss before Jones falls asleep.





**Stopped Engines** – Below decks, the Ark sits within its wooden box, which has been marked with a Nazi swastika. The Ark pulses and a nearby rat twitches and runs away from it. Slowly, the swastika on the wooden box burns to black. The scene cuts to Marion waking up as Jones prepares a gun. She asks him what's wrong and he says the engines have stopped. When he goes on deck, they see a Nazi submarine pulling up alongside them. The captain encourages Jones to hide. He attempts to go back for Marion, but she's already captured. The Nazis take Marion and the Ark, but Jones hides in a large cowl vent, avoiding detection.



**Disguise** – Belloq takes Marion aboard the submarine, which begins its descent. At the last moment, Jones is seen climbing aboard the submarine just before it sinks beneath the waves. A map appears, suggesting that the submarine is travelling a long distance to a small, unnamed island. When they arrive, Jones beats up a Nazi and steals his clothing as Marion disembarks at gunpoint. Belloq orders that the Ark be taken to a predetermined point to hold what a Nazi calls a “Jewish ritual.” When the Nazi expresses concerns, Belloq convinces him that the Ark is best opened before they arrive in Berlin so that they know whether or not the stone tablets are inside.



**Transporting the Ark** – A long line of Nazis marches through a desert, taking Marion and the Ark with them. Jones is last in a long line of soldiers and he ducks away from the group, obtaining a shoulder-fired anti-tank weapon and standing on top of a cliff, threatening to blow up the Ark if they won't give him Marion. Belloq calls his bluff, moving everyone aside and telling Jones to blow it up. Belloq reminds Jones that he's an archaeologist and that the Ark "is history." Jones sighs and lowers the gun. Then he is captured.



**The Ceremony** – Night falls and Belloq and the Nazis set up an elaborate ceremony with the Ark at its center. Marion and Jones are tied to a post at the edge of the gathering, allowed to watch. When the Ark is opened, the Nazis gather close to see what is inside, but it is just very fine sand that runs through their fingers. Electricity pulses through the area and all of the powered equipment sparks and explodes. A pulsing noise begins and Belloq looks towards the Ark, where a blue light begins to glow. Jones tells Marion not to look at it, no matter what. Both press their eyes shut.





**The Horrors** – Lights and ghostly forms begin to fly from the Ark, moving between the shocked Nazi soldiers. A beautiful woman flows from the Ark, the largest of the forms, and Belloq shouts that it is beautiful. However, her face suddenly turns into a skull, and all of the Nazis begin to scream. A flame erupts from the Ark, shooting through the bodies of the Nazi soldiers and killing them. The Nazi commander's head shrivels and shrinks, the face of the man in the black hat slowly melts from his skull, and Belloq's head explodes before fire sweeps through the whole area.



**Survival** – Marion and Jones keep their eyes shut even as flames sweep around them. Eventually, the flames shoot up into the sky and then recede into the Ark, the top slamming firmly shut on top of it. Jones and Marion find that their bonds have been burned away and they hug each other, shaken but alive. Together they stare at the enclosed Ark in awe.





**Where the Ark Belongs** The scene cuts to Washington DC, where army intelligence officers thank Jones for his service and attempt to dismiss him. Martin, likewise at the table, demands to know where the Ark is, but the officials only say that it is somewhere very safe and that top men are working on it. Jones leaves the meeting angry and meets Marion outside. He calls the officers fools and says the Ark belongs in a museum. Marion says she'll buy him a drink and the two walk away together, arm-in-arm. Elsewhere, the Ark is again boxed and labeled "top secret." A man wheels it down a line of similar boxes before stowing it neatly away.

