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Because, of course, *Dune* is largely a story about a young

man proving himself. Villeneuve presents this tale as an unapologetically poker-faced futuristic parable. There are characters with names like Duncan Idaho (who happens to be played, charmingly, by Jason Momoa), and everyone is waiting for someone known as the Kwisatz Haderach to show up. Villeneuve lays it out before us without smirking or



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winking; his go-for-broke earnestness feels honest and clean. And the effects, while lavish, also have a tasteful, polished quality. Particularly impressive is the massive Arrakis predator known as the sandworm, a fearsome creature that first makes its presence known as a giant ripple of action beneath the sand, before poking its lamprey-like head

aboveground to sweep its prey—machinery, people, whatever—into its toothy gob. The sandworm is the stuff of nightmares, but Villeneuve’s vision of it has a shivery elegance. *Dune* is sluggish in places—my eyes glazed over during one or two or maybe three of the battle scenes—but Villeneuve’s conviction counts for a lot. I would probably sit through *Dune Part Deux* willingly—though Herbert’s book, I’m afraid, will remain forever unread.

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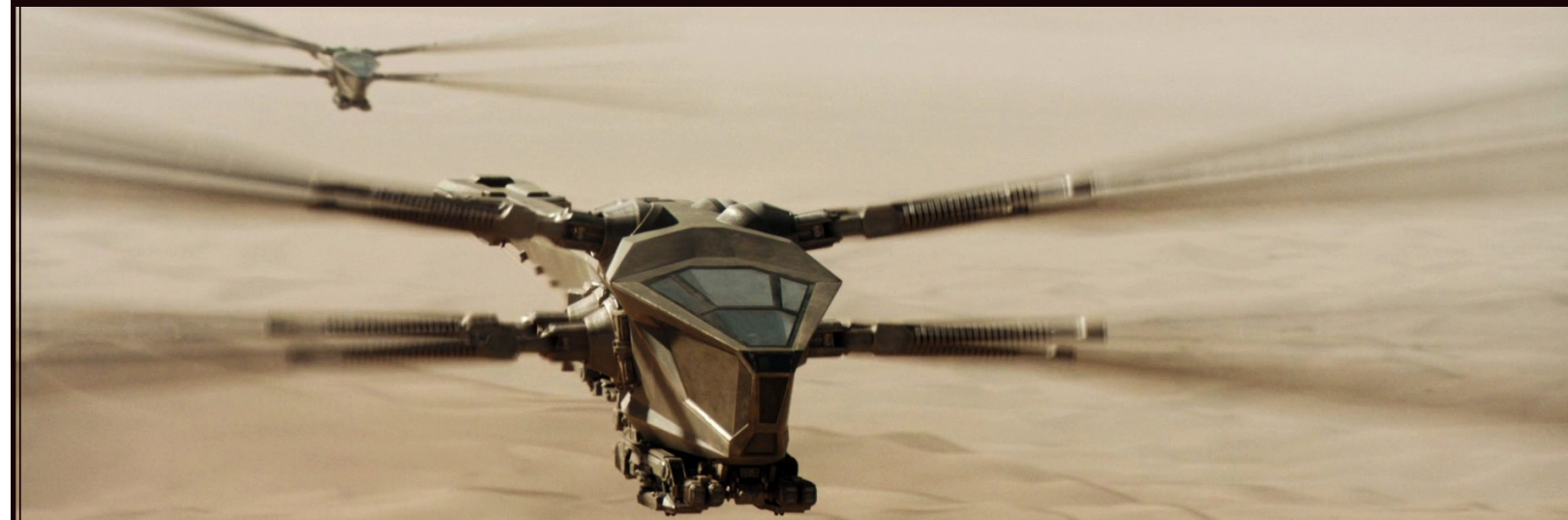
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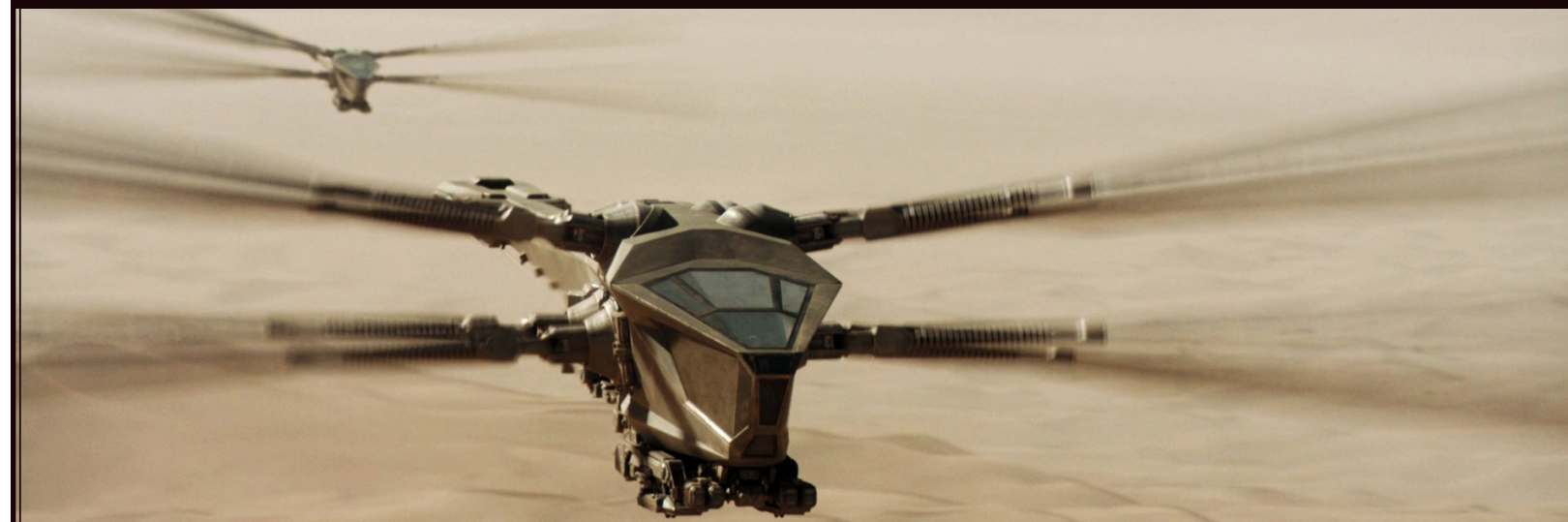
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