

JOHN DIES AT THE END

Screenplay by
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Based on the novel by
David Wong

Breakdown Services - Casting - Partial Draft

April 20, 2010

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BLACK

DAVID V.O
Solving the following riddle will
reveal the awful secret behind the
universe, assuming you do not go
utterly mad in the attempt. If you
already happen to know the awful
secret behind the universe, feel
free to fast-forward ahead.

CU HANDS unwrap a shiny new wooden-handled HAND AX.

DAVID V.O (CONT'D)
Let's say you have an ax. Just a
cheap one, from Home Depot.

1 EXT. SNOW YARD - DAY

1

The camera pans across a snow covered yard as a brutal,
winter wind whips through. A strong arm is swinging the ax,
chopping SOMETHING in the snow.

DAVID V.O
On one bitter winter day, you use
said ax to behead a man. Don't
worry, the man is already dead. Or
maybe you should worry, because
you're the one who shot him.

A hand swings the axe while the other hand firmly grasps a
HEAD by the hair.

DAVID V.O (CONT'D)
He had been a big, twitchy guy with
veiny skin stretched over swollen
biceps, a tattoo of a swastika
on...

CU - A SWASTIKA tattoo on a blue, swollen tongue poking out
of the dead mouth.

DAVID V.O (CONT'D)
Teeth filed into razor-sharp fangs,
you know the type. And you're
chopping off his head because, even
with eight bullet holes in him,
you're pretty sure he's about to
spring back to his feet and eat the
look of terror right off your face.

The ax swings through one last time and on impact, the wooden
handle snaps in a spray of splinters.

DAVID V.O (CONT'D)

You now have a broken ax. So, after a long night of looking for a place to dump the man and his head, you take a trip into town with your ax. You go to the hardware store, explaining away the dark reddish stains on the broken handle as barbecue sauce.

2 INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

2

CU - DOLLAR BILLS go into a cash drawer and a brown BAG with the end of an AX HANDLE sticking out is handed across the counter.

DAVID V.O

The repaired ax sits undisturbed in your house until the next spring when, on one rainy morning, you find in your kitchen ...

3 INT. DAVE'S KITCHEN - DAY

3

CU - The newly-reconstituted ax sits in the corner of the kitchen window - a driving rain lashes the window outside. Suddenly we swish pan to...

A CREATURE that appears to be a foot-long SLUG with a BULGING EGG SAC on its tail. Its jaws bite a nearby FORK in half with what seems like very little effort. A hand grabs the ax and...

DAVID V.O

You grab your trusty ax and chop the thing into several pieces. On the last blow, however...

The ax strikes a METAL LEG of the overturned kitchen table and chips out a NOTCH right in the middle of the blade.

DAVID V.O (CONT'D)

Of course, a chipped head means yet another trip to the hardware store.

4 INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

4

We reprise the previous visit to the hardware store, but instead of an ax handle, we are handed a shiny new AX HEAD.

DAVID V.O

As soon as you get home with your newly-headed ax, though...

5 INT. DAVE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

5

BAM! The front door blows open to reveal..

The REANIMATED BODY OF THE DEAD GUY standing there.

DAVID V.O

You meet the reanimated body of the guy you beheaded last year. Only he's got a new head, stitched on with what looks like plastic weed trimmer line, and wears that unique expression of "you're the man who killed me last winter" resentment that one so rarely encounters in everyday life. So you brandish your ax.

The dead guy takes a long look at the weapon with his squishy, rotting eyes and in a gargly voice he screams...

DEAD GUY

That's the same ax that slayed me!

DAVID V.O

Is he right?

CUT TO:

6 EXT. DAVE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

6

DAVID WONG is fast asleep, sprawled on the couch in his small living room. Dave is twenty-something, Caucasian, casually dressed in "slacker-ware," with dark, long hair. Across from him is a TELEVISION.

THE TV SWITCHES ON by itself - static and white noise. Dave continues to sleep.

On the TV, an oddly-shaped FACE coalesces out of the static. A Michael Jackson face, a face like a mask, features that are human but off. Wide, too-large eyes, a nose not quite centered. Looking right out at Dave. Watching him.

Suddenly, a CELL PHONE screeches. Instantly, the TV changes channels and a DVD sales infomercial for "psychic" Dr. Albert Marconi appears on screen.

Dave wakes, oblivious to the TV. He digs the phone from his pocket, glances at the number. A little twinge of fear crosses his face. He disconnects the call without answering.

The world is silent again, save for the infomercial which shows cosmic imagery, with a "new-age" music soundtrack.

We see an image of the dapper and handsome DR. ALBERT MARCONI with slicked back silver hair. A deep-voiced narrator intones solemnly:

INFOMERCIAL NARRATOR
He's a seeker of truth, in an age
of fear. Dr. Albert Marconi.
Unafraid of unseen forces swirling
around us...

The phone rings again. Dave closes his eyes and answers.

DAVE
Hello?

JOHN (O.S.)
Dave? This is John. Your pimp says
bring the crack shipment tonight,
or he'll be forced to stick you.
Meet him where we buried the Korean
whore. The one without the goatee.

DAVE V.O.
That was John's code. It meant
"Bring your gear and come to my
place as soon as you can, it's
important."

DAVE
John, it's three in the-

JOHN (O.S.)
-Oh, and don't forget, tomorrow is
the day we kill the President.

Click. Dave realizes John is gone and closes his phone.

DAVE V.O.
That last part was code for, "Stop
and pick me up some cigarettes on
the way."

7 EXT. DAVE'S SHED - NIGHT

7

Dave's BLACK 1973 FORD BRONCO is parked next to a wooden SHED beside his house. Dave humps a duffle bag of GEAR and throws it into the back of the Bronco.

Dave moves back inside the shed and we can see in the dim glow that it's got a "Clubhouse of the Living Dead" vibe with an array of strange, oddball paraphernalia displayed... a STUFFED CAT with six legs, two large MASON JARS containing a hideous slug-like CREATURE and a huge yellow-striped SPIDER, and a rack of odd WEAPONRY, including swords and crossbows. Dave finds what he is looking for, a medieval-style TORCH and some heavy RUBBER GLOVES.

Dave tosses the stuff in the Bronco, pulls a nickel-plated 9mm COLT from the gear bag and slides it into his pocket. He slams the door shut.

8

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

8

JOHN, 24, with a head of curly long hair like a deflated Afro, opens the door to his apartment and immediately gestures toward a cute and frightened-looking YOUNG WOMAN (Shelly) on his sofa.

JOHN

Dave, this is Shelly. She needs our help.

Shelly is 19, blank powder-blue eyes, chestnut curls in a ponytail. She has a WHITE BANDAGE on her temple. John steps into his kitchen and returns to place a cup of coffee in her hands.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Shelly, tell us your story.

SHELLY

It's my boyfriend. He... he won't leave me alone. He's been harassing me for about a week. My parents are gone, on vacation and I'm... I'm terrified to go home.

She shakes her head, apparently out of words.

DAVE

Miss-

SHELLY

(barely audible)
Morris.

DAVE

Ms. Morris, I strongly recommend a women's shelter. They can help you get a restraining order, keep you safe, whatever. There are three in this city, and I'll be happy to make the call-

SHELLY

-He, my boyfriend, I mean, he's been dead for two months.

Dave lets out a long sigh and sees John cast a little gleeful glance his way, as if to say "see how I deliver for you, Dave?"

SHELLY (CONT'D)

I-I didn't know where else to go. I heard, you know, through a friend of mine that you two handle, um, unusual problems. They say you're the best.

DAVE

Whoever calls us "the best" has pretty low standards.

JOHN

Okay. When he comes, you can see him?

SHELLY

Yes. I can hear him, too. And he, uh...

She brushes the bandage on the side of her skull.

DAVE

He hits you?

SHELLY

Yes.

DAVE

With his fist?

SHELLY

Yes.

John looks up from his coffee indignantly.

JOHN

Man, what a dick!

Dave rolls his eyes and glares at John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(turning professorial)

From our experience, spiritual beings that can manipulate objects in the physical world are rare and extremely powerful.

DAVE

Look, Miss, I don't want to-

JOHN

Dave, I told her we would look into it tonight. I thought you and I could head over there and show this bastard what's what.

9 INT. FORD BRONCO DRIVING - NIGHT

9

Shelly sits in the passenger seat as the Bronco races down a dark road, hugging herself, looking blankly out the windshield.

SHELLY

So, do you guys, like, do this a lot?

JOHN

Sometimes. Been doing it for a couple years now.

SHELLY

How does somebody get into this?

JOHN

There was an incident. A series of incidents, I guess. A dead guy, another dead guy. Some drugs. It's kind of a long story. Now, we can see things. Sometimes. I have a dead cat that follows me around, wondering why I never feed it. Oh, and I had one hamburger that started mooing when I ate it.

(glances at Dave)

You remember that?

Dave grunts, says nothing.

DAVE V.O

It wasn't mooing, John. It was screaming.

10 EXT. SHELLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

10

The Bronco stops in front of a simple two-story farmhouse. From the back of the Bronco, Dave grabs the unlit torch and tosses John a wide LEATHER STRAP, which John slings over his shoulder like a bandolero. The strap carries a HOLSTER which fits neatly across John's chest, containing a SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN PISTOL.

John steps up on the porch and pushes open the front door.

11 INT. SHELLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

11

They step into the dark living room. Shelly moves to flip on a light, but Dave stops her with a hand motion. John hefts the torch and touches his lighter to it. A foot-tall FLAME erupts from the head and they slowly creep through the dark house by its flickering light.

JOHN
Where do you see him, mostly?

SHELLY
(nervously)
The basement. And once I saw him in
the bathroom. His hand, it, uh,
came up through the toilet while I-

DAVE
Okay. Just show us the basement
door.

SHELLY
It's in the kitchen, but I-guys, I
don't wanna go down there.

JOHN
It's cool, stay here. We'll go down
and scope it out.

John and Dave clomp down the stairs, torchlight pooling down
the stairwell.

12 INT. SHELLY'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

12

It's a nice, modern basement. Washer and dryer, one of those
waist-deep floor freezers, a hot water heater making a soft
ticking sound.

JOHN
Well, he's not here.

DAVE
Big surprise.

They stand around for a moment. John uses the torch to light
a cigarette.

JOHN
She seems like a nice girl, doesn't
she? You know, she reminds me of
Amber. Amy's friend. When she came
to my door, for a second I actually
thought it was her. By the way, I
wanna thank you for comin' along,
Dave, sort of being my wingman on
this. I'm not saying I'm going to
take advantage of her distress or
anything, but...

Dave ruefully shakes his head then stops. He has tuned John
out. Something is off here. Dave turns to the large floor
FREEZER. He moves over and opens the lid.

DAVE

Oh, geez.

It is a TONGUE, rubbery and purplish and not quite human. It is longer, animal-like, twisted inside a ziplock bag and coated in frost. And it isn't alone; the freezer is filled with HUNKS OF FLESH, some in clear bags, some bigger chunks in pink-stained butcher paper.

JOHN

Well, I think it's obvious. Those stories of UFO's that go around mutilating cows? I think we just solved it, my friend.

DAVE

(sighs)

It's a deer, you jackass. Her boyfriend hunts, apparently. That's what hunters do; they keep the meat.

Dave nudges around and finds other painfully normal freezer stuff underneath including a FROZEN TURKEY, some SAUSAGES. Dave suddenly drops the lid, turns and stares at John.

DAVE (CONT'D)

John, did I hear you say you thought she looked like Amber?

JOHN

Yeah.

DAVE

John, Amber's almost as tall as me, just under six feet. Blonde hair, kind of top-heavy.

JOHN

Yeah, cute as hell. I mean-

DAVE

And you think Shelly looks like her? The girl sitting upstairs?

JOHN

Yeah.

John turns to face Dave, already getting it.

DAVE

John, Shelly is short. Short with dark hair. Blue eyes.

John sighs, plucks out his cigarette and flings it to the floor.

JOHN

God Dammit. I knew she was too good
to be true.

They turn to the stairs, and freeze. Shelly is suddenly there, behind them, sitting halfway up the stairs--looking innocent, playing the part, wary eyes reflecting torchlight.

DAVE

So Shelly...John and I are having a
problem here. We're both seeing
completely different versions of
you.

As Dave speaks, his hand casually drifts toward the gun in his pocket.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Now, John has eyesight problems
because of his constant
masturbation, but I don't think-

SHELLY BURSTS INTO SNAKES. That's right. One second she's a girl, then the next, her body spills out of itself, falling into a dark, writhing puddle on the ground. It's a tangle of long, black serpents, rolling over each other and down the steps. Dave and John leap out of the way as the snakes slither off into the darkness. They get their bearings and Dave strides up the stairs toward the exit door -- reaches for the knob.

At that instant the DOORKNOB begins to melt and transform, turning pink and finally taking the shape of a FLACCID PENIS. It flops softly against the door, as if a man was cramming it through the knob hole from the other side. Dave recoils and looks back to John in horror.

JOHN

That door cannot be opened.

They stumble back down the stairs, John jumping the last five, shoes smacking on the concrete. The snakes flee from the firelight and disappear under shelves and between cardboard boxes.

JOHN (CONT'D)

They love to play games, don't
they?

DAVE

It's all they have time for.

John stops cold. Dave looks at what he's seeing.

Meat. Dozens of the wrapped and now partially-unwrapped hunks from the freezer, lay neatly on the floor in an almost ceremonial fashion, the objects arranged in the rough shape of a man. John moves the torch toward the head area, where he finds a FROZEN TURKEY still in the Butterball wrapper. Under it, wedged between turkey and torso, is the disembodied deer tongue, FLAPPING AROUND on its own accord.

JOHN

Hmmmm. That's different.

They both jump back as the turkey, the tongue, and a slab of ribs LEVITATE OFF THE FLOOR. Suddenly the man-shaped arrangement of meat becomes animated, raising up on two arms made of game hens and country bacon, planting two hands with sausage link fingers on the floor. The thing stands upright. It's about seven feet tall, its turkey head swiveling side to side to survey the room, the tongue swaying uselessly below.

Without warning, it flings out a CHAIN OF LINK SAUSAGES from its "arm" and the sausage cord cinches tight around Dave's neck. John's shotgun is out of his holster in a flash, he cocks both barrels and draws down on the meatstrosity.

MEAT MONSTER

You disappoint me. All those times we have dueled. In the desert. In the city. You thought you had vanquished me in Venice. You'll never defeat me, Marconi! I have sealed this house with my powers. You cannot escape!

Dave chokes, unable to breathe as John looks up at the thing with incredulity.

JOHN

Marconi? As in, Doctor Albert Marconi? The guy who hosts Magical Mysteries on the Discovery Channel?

John steps up combatively and glares at the thing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You dumbass. Marconi is fifty years old. He has white hair. Dave and I aren't that old combined. We're not your nemesis. Your nemesis is probably off giving some seminar, standing waist-deep in a pile of his own money.

The thing turns its turkey at John, releasing Dave.

JOHN (CONT'D)

OK. Tell ya what, if we can get you in touch with Marconi so you two can work out your little differences, will you release us?

MEAT MONSTER

You lie!

DAVE

(catching his breath)

No, we know him. We're in the same business, we have a direct line. Now, we can't get him down here, but surely a being as superhumanly powerful as you can destroy him at a distance, right? Here.

The thing watches Dave fish out his cell phone and dial.

13

INT. CONVENTION HALL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

13

The camera follows behind a MYSTERIOUS MAN in a slick, black Armani suit and two hot FEMALE ASSISTANTS, clad in black leather, as they stride down a backstage corridor. A cell phone beeps and one of the assistants answers it. Behind the assistant we can see into the dark convention hall. Visible inside is a LARGE SCREEN which illuminates a rapt AUDIENCE. On the screen a VIDEO begins to play. It's the same cosmic imagery and "new-age" music from the infomercial we saw earlier. The deep-voiced narrator intones solemnly:

INTRO VIDEO NARRATOR

He's a seeker of truth, in an age of fear. Unafraid of unseen forces swirling around us. Willing to face down the legions of evil and helping his fellow man to find a path from darkness into the light. From sold out engagements in Rome, Tel Aviv, Madison Square Garden and Las Vegas...

FEMALE ASSISTANT

Sir.

She holds out the cell phone and the man takes it.

14

INT. SHELLY'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

14

DAVE

Hello, Doctor. Yes, John's feeling better. Thank you for asking. I'm afraid we have a Situation 53 here.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Would you be willing to speak
 directly to, er... the
 manifestation? Yes, I will.

Dave offers up the phone to Meaty.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Do we have a deal?

The meat monster hesitates, then finally nods its turkey up
 and down. Dave hands it the phone.

MEAT MONSTER
 So! We meat again, Marconi. You
 thought you had vanquished me but
 I-

The beast SPONTANEOUSLY COMBUSTS into a ball of unholy blue
 light. With a shriek, it leaves our world. The lifeless cuts
 of meat slap to the floor piece by piece, the cell phone
 clattering next to the pile. John and Dave stare in silence.

JOHN
 Damn, he's good.

15 INT. CONVENTION HALL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

15

Dr. Albert Marconi snaps the cell phone shut and hands it to
 his assistant. Concurrently, inside the convention hall, his
 dramatic entrance music swells and, as the audience bursts
 into applause, Marconi strides inside.

CUT TO BLACK:

Main Title up:

JOHN DIES

At the End

FADE IN:

16 AERIAL SHOT -

16

A bird's eye POV as the camera emerges from dusky clouds to
 reveal a small, nondescript MIDWEST TOWN below. SUPERIMPOSE
 CARD which reads:

TWO YEARS EARLIER

17 EXT. THEY CHINA FOOD! - NIGHT

17

The camera glides down Main Street and moves in toward a small storefront window in which a sign reads: **They China Food!**

18

INT. THEY CHINA FOOD! RESTAURANT - EVENING

18

The camera zeros in on David Wong sitting alone at a window booth of a small run-down Chinese restaurant.

DAVE V.O

My name is David Wong. I once saw a man's kidney grow tentacles, tear itself out of a ragged hole in his back and go slapping across my kitchen floor, but that's another story.

David stares blankly out of the window, occasionally glancing across the street at the credit union CLOCK SIGN that flashes **5:32 PM**. Dave compares the time with his watch.

In a doorway across the street Dave notices something. A DARK SHAPE emerges from an alcove. It has the outline of a man, but is pitch black. This is a Shadow Man. Dave watches as the thing floats up like a plume of smoke and slips soundlessly off into the night.

Dave starts to get up, but sweating and overwhelmed by a dizzy spell, falls back into the booth. He looks down at his trembling hand.

DAVE V.O (CONT'D)

More side effects. It's always like this when I'm on the Sauce. I dosed six hours ago.

Dave takes slow deep breaths, trying to chill out. He turns to watch a small ASIAN WAITRESS deliver a PLATE of chicken-fried rice to a bearded GUY on the other side of the room. Dave squints intently at the rice plate.

DAVE V.O (CONT'D)

My count had 5,829 grains of rice on her plate. The rice was grown in Arkansas. The guy who ran the John Deere harvester was nicknamed Cooter. I'm not a genius, I'm not psychic, either. Just side effects, that's all.

Dave gets the shakes again, wills himself to stop and begins unwrapping the napkin off the flatware set in front of him. Close on the FORK as Dave clutches it.

DAVE V.O (CONT'D)

This fork was manufactured in Pennsylvania six years ago, on a Thursday. A guy once used it to scrape a dog turd from his shoe.

Dave drops the fork and takes a deep breath and closes his eyes. He opens them, and jerks back in shock. A MAN is now sitting across from him in the booth.

ARNIE

David Wong? Did you doze off there?

DAVE

Hey, uh...you're Arnie, right?

He nods and shakes Dave's hand.

ARNIE

Sorry I'm late.

ARNIE BLONDESTONE is in his late forties, uneven haircut and a bad mustache. He wears a shabby gray suit and tie with a fat Windsor knot. There is an awkward moment as Arnie stares at Dave, noticing the pale skin and beads of sweat on his forehead.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

You don't look Asian, Mr. Wong.

DAVE

I'm not. I was born right here. Had my last name changed. Thought it would make me harder to find. You know Wong is the most common surname in the world?

Arnie gets right to it and produces a little NOTEBOOK.

ARNIE

Your family is still around?

DAVE

I was adopted. Never knew my real dad. You could be my dad, for all I know. Are you my dad?

Arnie shifts in his seat.

ARNIE

Eh, I don't think so.

DAVE

Anyway. My adopted family moved away, I won't tell you where they are.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
But get out your pen because you'll
want to write this down. My
biological mom? She was
institutionalized.

ARNIE
That must have been hard. What was
the-

DAVE
-She was a strung-out, crank-
addicted cannibal, dabbled in
vampirism and necromancy. Blew her
welfare check every month on black
candles. Sure, Satan would do her
favours now and then, but there's
always a catch with the Devil.
Always a catch.

Arnie looks up from his note-taking.

ARNIE
Really? And I thought my mom was
bad because she wouldn't let me
watch Space Ghost. Are you pulling
my leg?

DAVE
No. This is what I do when I'm
nervous. She was bipolar, that's
all. Couldn't keep a house. Isn't
the other story better, though?
You should use it.

Arnie shoots Dave a practiced look of reporterly sincerity.

ARNIE
I thought you wanted to get the
truth out, your side of it. If
not, then why are we even here, Mr.
Wong?

DAVE
You're right. Sorry.

Arnie eyes Dave, sizing him up. He moves his gaze to the
other OBJECT on the table. Dave rests his fingers on it. It
is a small CANNISTER, about the size and shape of a spool of
thread, made of flat, brushed metal.

DAVE V.O
I could blow your world away,
Arnie. If I show you what's in
this container, you'd never sleep
another full night, never feel at
one with the human race until the
day you died. But we're not ready
for that, not yet.

ARNIE

Tell me about your friend John.

DAVE

Like what? We went to school together? That's not his real name, either.

ARNIE

You guys already got a little bit of a following, don't you? I found a couple of discussion boards on the web devoted to you and your friend, your...hobby, I guess. So, you're, what, sort of spiritualists? Exorcists? Something like that?

The camera moves in on Dave's eyes.

DAVE V.O

Okay, enough farting around.

DAVE

You have eighty-three cents in your front pocket, Arnie. Three quarters, a nickel, three pennies. The three pennies are dated 1983, 1993 and 1999.

Arnie grins the superior grin of the "I'm the smartest man in the room" skeptic, then scoops his coins out of his pocket. He examines them, confirms Dave is right. Arnie gulps, coughs out a laugh.

ARNIE

Well I'll be damned! That's a neat trick, Mr. Wong.

DAVE

If you flip the nickel ten times, you'll get heads, heads, tails, heads, tails, tails, tails, heads, tails, tails.

ARNIE

I'm not sure I wanna take the time to-

DAVE

-Last night you had a dream, Arnie. You were being chased through a forest by your mother. She was lashing you with a whip made of... knotted... penises.

Arnie's face falls, like an imploded building.

DAVE V.O
That's right, Arnie. Everything
you know is wrong.

Arnie croaks out a whisper.

ARNIE
You got my attention, Mr. Wong.

DAVE
Oh, it gets better. A lot better.

The camera slowly moves into Dave's face.

DAVE V.O
Bullshit. What it gets is worse.
A lot worse.

Dave breathes deep and begins spinning his tale to Arnie who
grabs his pen and begins taking notes.

DAVE
It started a couple years ago. We
were just a year or two out of high
school. Just kids. So that friend
of mine, John, he had a band...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON - a KICK DRUM SKIN - scrawled in a bloody font are
the words: **THREE-ARM SALLY**. A thumping backbeat kicks in as a
blistering guitar riff cuts through the air.

19

EXT. MUDDY FIELD - NIGHT

19

John is at the mike, playing guitar and leading his 4 piece
band on vocals. He wears a T-shirt with a logo that reads:
Vista Pines Facility for the Criminally Insane.

JOHN
(sings)
Hair! Hair! Haaairrr! Camel
Holocaust! Camel Holocaust!

In the middle of a muddy field, Dave stands watching the band
among a crowd of a hundred or so high school and college-age
PARTY-GOERS. The stage is just a grid of wooden crate pallets
and car headlights illuminate the place.

DAVE V.O
Telling the story now, I'm tempted
to say something like, "Who would
have thought that my friend John
would help bring about the end of
the world?"

20

EXT. MUDDY FIELD BY PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

20

Dave turns and wanders away. As he passes a BEER KEG hanging off the bed of a pickup truck, Dave sees a friend, FRED CHU. Fred is a little, wiry young man with shoulder-length hair and a goatee.

DAVE

Hey, Fred.

Fred hands Dave a cup of beer. Dave grabs it as Fred offers up a toast.

FRED

Here's to all the kisses I've
snatched...and vice versa.

DAVE

Amen.

They clink cups.

A few yards behind them, they can hear a GIRL(Amy) pleading with an older TEENAGE BOY(Justin White) who wears a "Limp Bizkit" T-shirt.

AMY

Dammit, Justin. Please, give it
back to me.

JUSTIN

What 'chew thinkin' girl? Git yo'
hand off me!

Back at the keg, Dave brings the beer to his lips and THWACK! An object slams into his drink, his cup is knocked out of his hand and beer sprays everywhere. Dave looks up to see Justin and his TEENAGE FRIENDS laughing at him. Dave flips Justin the bird and then looks down at the truck bed and, in the center of a pool of beer, lies a PROSTHETIC HAND, soaked in brew! Dave gingerly picks up the plastic hand and examines it.

AMY

Could I have that back?

Dave looks up to find Amy standing beside him, face flushed, eyes brimming with tears. She's about 19, long reddish hair.

DAVE

I bet this comes in hand...y.

Dave gives the prosthesis back to the unsmiling Amy. She gulps and, as inconspicuously as possible, slides the prosthetic over the stump on her left forearm.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Amy, right? Hey, I'm sorry about
 the joke. Really. Want a beer?

His charm offensive is not working.

AMY
 No! My dog just bit some Jamaican
 guy and I've got to find her.

FRED
 Wow, man. My uncle lost his foot in
 his riding mower. Says he can still
 feel it. What's it called "Fantasy
 Leg Situation" or something like
 that?

AMY
 (sarcastic)
 Not that you deserve an intelligent
 answer, but, yeah, it's "phantom
 limb syndrome." Every amputee goes
 through it. And it goes away.
 Asshole.

Amy glares at them and leaves.

DAVE
 Good one, Fred.

Dave pours himself another beer, then hears giggling from a
 group of GIRLS.

21 EXT. MUDDY FIELD BY RASTAFARIAN - NIGHT

21

He wanders over, finds them surrounding a BLACK GUY (ROBERT)
 with dreadlocks, an overcoat and Rastafarian beret. The girls
 have their hands over their mouths, eyes bulging, screaming
 for the guy to do it again.

DAVE
 What's up? Is this man exposing
 himself?

One girl looks pale, on the verge of tears. Another throws up
 her hands and walks away, head shaking.

GIRL
 Oh my gawd! This guy just
 levitated! Right off the ground.

DAVE
 (asks blandly)
 How high?

ROBERT
You gotta love the skeptic, mon.

Robert speaks in a lilting Rastafarian patois.

GIRLS
Show him! Show him!

DAVE
What, about six inches above the
grass, right? Balducci levitation?
Made famous by that magic hack
David Blaine in his television
special?

The man's gaze freezes on Dave. Big, white, toothy smile.
Dave recoils a bit from his penetrating stare and then
notices a BANDAGE wrapped around his left hand.

ROBERT
Let's see...what can I do to
impress Mr. Skeptic mon? Ah, lookee
there. You didn't wash behind your
ears, did ya?

Dave lets out a loud, sarcastic, theatrical sigh as the man
reaches out to the side of Dave's head, presumably to pull
out a shiny quarter from behind his ear.

DAVE
A quarter. Right?

Robert suddenly yanks back his closed fist and opens it to
reveal a long, wriggling BLACK CENTIPEDE. One of the girls
squeals. Robert holds the wriggling thing up for everyone to
see. The Rastafarian passes his hand in front of the bug and
in a blink, THE CENTIPEDE IS GONE. The girls gasp. Dave
checks his watch, feigning boredom.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Well, the bug's a nice touch.

ROBERT
You wanna know where it went, mon?

DAVE
No. But, you know, don't get me
wrong. I am one entertained son of
a bitch.

ROBERT
I got other talents, you know.

DAVE
Yeah, but I bet all your really
good tricks are back at your
apartment, right?
(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)

And you'd be happy to show them to me, if only I were sixteen and female?

ROBERT

Do you dream, mon? I interpret dreams for beer.

DAVE

Well, I don't have any beer so I guess I'm outta luck.

ROBERT

I tell you what, Mister Skeptic Mon. I'll do it just like Daniel in the Old Testament. I'll tell you the last dream you had, then I'll break down its meaning for you. But if I'm right, you gotta buy me a beer. Okay, mon?

DAVE

Sure. I mean, you've obviously been blessed with supernatural gifts. What better way to use them than to fish for free beers at parties.

ROBERT

You had this one early this morning, in the middle of the thunderstorm. In the dream, you were back with your girl Tina...

DAVE V.O.

Whoa, how'd he know-

ROBERT

-and you come home, she's there with a big honkin' pile of dynamite and one of those big cartoon plunger detonators, ready to blow. You ask her what she's doin' and she says this, and shoves down the handle and, Boom! Your eyes snapped open. The explosion in your dream became the clap of thunder outside your window. So tell me, mon. Am I close?

DAVE V.O.

Ho. Lee. She. It.

Robert smiles. All eyes on Dave, the naked shock on his face.

DAVE

(holding up his hands)

Okay, okay. You made a lucky guess, somebody probably told you about-

ROBERT

You see, you gotta ask yourself, mon. You gotta be brave to ask the scary questions. How did your mind, David, know the thunder was coming?

DAVE

What? How'd you know my...you're full of-

ROBERT

The thunder came right as she hit the detonator in your dream. Your mind started the dream thirty seconds before the thunderclap. How did it know the thunder would be coming at that moment, to coincide with the explosion at the end? We've all had those dreams, mon. But how could your mind have known the thunder was coming? Because time is an ocean, not a garden hose. Space is a puff of smoke, a wisp of cloud. Your mind is a flying cornsnake, hovering through the-

This guy is getting to Dave. He grits his teeth, turns and walks away.

DAVE

Whatever. Whatever.

ROBERT

Want me to tell you where your daddy really was when you were in the hospital with that broken leg?

Dave stops in his tracks, turns and locks eyes with Robert.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Want me to tell you the name of your soulmate? Or how she'll die?

Dave tries to take a step back but he's rooted, almost dizzy.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Do you want to know when the first nuclear bomb will go off on American soil? And which city?

Dave awkwardly mumbles, makes a dismissive motion and stumbles away into the crowd.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Hey! You owe me a beer, mon! Hey!

Dave looks over his shoulder fearfully as he hurries away.

Back on stage, John and his band bring their final song to a crashing conclusion. The crowd hoots in appreciation.

22

EXT. MUDDY FIELD - BY VAN - NIGHT

22

A last piece of drum kit is loaded into a van. Dave walks up.

JOHN

Dave! Look! Can you believe how much sweat I have on this shirt?

DAVE

That's... really...somethin', John.

JOHN

We're all meeting at the One Ball. You comin'?

DAVE

No. But John, you know that one-handed girl, Amy?

JOHN

She's coming with us. Robert told her Fred Chu found her dog and he's waiting over at the One Ball. Why don't you come with?

DAVE

No. I gotta go to work in like seven hours.

JOHN

Yeah, me too. But I gotta buy Robert a beer first.

DAVE

Who?

JOHN

Uh, that Rasta dude.

John gestures toward a group of girls and guys and, sure enough, Robert is standing there laughing among them, rainbow beret and dreadlocks. Amy, too. Dave looks over just in time to make eye contact with the Jamaican, who shouts:

ROBERT

You owe me a beer, mon!

JOHN

The man likes his beer. Hey, I heard there was somebody from a record company out there tonight.

DAVE

I don't like the guy, John. There's something not right about him.

JOHN

You like so few people, Dave. He's cool. He bet me a beer he could guess my weight. Got it on the first try. Amazing stuff. So, you comin' to the One Ball, or what?

Dave shakes his head 'no' while the group piles into the van and drives away. Alone, Dave turns and walks over to where his Bronco is parked.

At the Bronco, Dave is surprised to find a YELLOW LABRADOR DOG sniffing at his door. Dave looks back to the van, but it's gone. He shrugs, unlocks the door and, without an invitation, the dog leaps into the passenger seat.

DAVE

Help yourself.

Dave reaches over and grabs the dog's tag which reads: **I'm MOLLY. Please return me to Amy Larking (413) 555-1201.**

DAVE (CONT'D)

Okay, Molly. Tomorrow you and me'll go visit Amy. See if we can't get back in her good graces.

Dave digs into his pocket for the car keys. Suddenly he lets out a yelp of pain and yanks his hand back out of his pocket. He looks at his hand.

CLOSE ON the palm of Dave's hand, etched into the skin, is the phrase, **YOU OWE ME ONE BEER.**

Dave sits there, in the dark, staring at his hand in horror as Molly barks at his hand. He suddenly jerks open the door leans out and retches in the weeds. Dave spits and opens his eyes... sees MOVEMENT in the puddle. Something long and black and wriggling.

It's the CENTIPEDE!!

CUT TO BLACK:

23

INT. DAVE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

23

Dave is sprawled on his living room couch asleep in front of the TV. THE TV SWITCHES ON by itself - static and white noise. The strange FACE of the "Static Man" coalesces out of the static. It watches Dave.

Dave's cell phone screeches. He peels his eyes open and finds himself on his living room couch. The TV is on but filled only with static. Dave squints at his clock. Quarter after 2 a.m.

DAVE
Huh, hello?

JOHN
David? It's John. Where are you?

Voice scratchy, breathing heavier than he should be. Like a man just after a fist fight.

DAVE
I'm home. Where am I supposed to be?

Long pause.

JOHN
Is this the first time I've called tonight?

Dave sits straight up, fully awake now.

DAVE
John? What's going on?

JOHN
I can't get out of my apartment.

DAVE
What?

JOHN
I'm scared, Dave. I mean it. It can't be real. It can't. The way it moves, the way it's made... this is not a product of any kind of evolution or anything. But it still managed to bite me.

DAVE
What?!?

JOHN
Can you come over?

DAVE
I'll be there in twelve minutes.

Dave hangs up, pulls on some clothes and as he exits the room almost kills himself tripping over Molly the dog who is curled up in the doorway.

24 INT. BRONCO DRIVING - NIGHT

24

Fat drops of rain slap the windshield. Molly is in the passenger seat. Dave's cell phone rings. Close-on phone. John's number pops up on the glowing display.

DAVE

Yeah, John. You okay?

JOHN

Dave, I'm sorry to wake you up. I got a problem and I need you to listen-

DAVE

John, I'm on my way over. You called me five minutes ago, remember?

JOHN

What? No, David. Stay away. There's somethin' in here with me. I can't explain it. I don't think it'll kill me, it seems to just want to keep me here. Now, I need you to get out to the mall on highway 59. Find a cop there named-

DAVE

Just calm down. You're not making sense. Look, John, we've been friends since kindergarten, but these phone calls are starting to freak me out. I want you to sit down somewhere, try to chill out. Nothin' you're seeing is real.

A pause.

JOHN

How do I know this is really you?

DAVE

You'll know in just a few minutes. I'm comin' up on your block now. Just chill, like I said. John?

Nobody there. Dave accelerates, rain drumming the windshield.

25 EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

25

Dave pounds on the door to John's apartment. No answer. He pounds again. He tries the knob and realizes the door has been unlocked the whole time. It is dark inside.

DAVE

John?

Nothing.

26 INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

26

Dave tries a tentative step into the apartment.

DAVE

John? Can you hear me? I'm going to
call the-oomfff!!!Dave is hammered by a flying body tackle and lands hard on
the carpet, pounding the breath from his lungs.

JOHN

(screams)

It almost killed you!

John screams, inches from Dave's face.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're an idiot, you know that?
You're an idiot for coming here.
We're both gonna die now. You could
have brought help but now we're
both gonna die in this room.He sits up off Dave and in the darkness John's head whips
back and forth, as if searching for a sniper. He puts a
finger up to Dave's face.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Shhhhhh. I don't see it. When I say
'go,' we're goin' to the other side
of the room as fast as physically
possible. You can clear it in three
steps, dive at the end. Move like
the devil himself were after you.
Ready?

DAVE

John, listen to me. If you let me
take you to the hospital, we'll
tell them you've been poisoned or
something.

JOHN

Ready, Go!

John pushes to his feet, sprints across the room and flings
himself over an overturned sofa next to the wall. He sails
over it, smacking into the wall behind it with a heavy thud.

Dave calmly stands, walks over and turns up the floor lamp. He sees John fearfully peering from behind the overturned sofa. Next to it is an arm chair, on the other side a capsized coffee table, a furniture fort.

DAVE

John...

John stands up, eyes wide. He put his hands out to Dave, fingers splayed.

JOHN

(low and dead serious)

Dave, do not move.

DAVE

What?

JOHN

(whispers)

I'm begging you. I know you don't believe me. But when you turn around, you will. But do not scream. If you do, you're dead. Now. Very slowly, turn around.

Very slowly, as asked, Dave turns. Nothing is there. He faces John again, his expression telling him that he saw nothing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It moved. There.

John points to the corner, near the ceiling. Very slowly, Dave turns and, craning his neck, follows John's pointed finger to the spot on the wall he so desperately needs Dave to see. Still nothing. He turns back to John, and now revealed to us, floating just above Dave's head is...

A HIDEOUS CREATURE that seems to be assembled from spare parts. It has a barbed tail like a scorpion, seven dangling legs, each ending in a pink infantile hand. Its lizard-like head has a bank of a dozen mismatched eyes over a sharp, black beak.

Dave does not see the creature.

DAVE

John, you can either come with me to the hospital, or I'm calling an ambulance. But what I'm not going to do is-

JOHN

The door! Go!

John hurdles the sofa, then runs and throws himself through the open door. Dave sighs and looks around John's apartment.

The creature hovers and watches as Dave finds and pockets John's keys, then pokes around some more and finds his jacket on the floor. Dave grabs for it, then yanks his hand back in pain. Something has jabbed his finger.

Close on finger as a DOT OF BLOOD wells to the surface of the skin. Dave gingerly reaches into the jacket's front pocket, and pulls out...a cheap, plastic SYRINGE. There is BLACK RESIDUE inside, like used motor oil.

Dave searches the jacket's pockets and finds a FEDEX RECEIPT. Close on receipt - destination **Old Mall Road, Hwy 59.**

27 EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT PARKING LOT - NIGHT 27

Dave finds John pacing back and forth in the parking lot, rain pelting him, fists clenched. He tosses John his jacket.

DAVE
Get in the car!

John opens the Bronco door and climbs in.

28 INT. BRONCO IN JOHN'S APARTMENT PARKING LOT - NIGHT 28

Dave ducks into the car but doesn't start it. Molly is in the back seat.

JOHN
(climbing in)
Just tell me you could see it. At least that.

DAVE
I didn't see it. Tell me what this is.

Dave holds up the syringe. John rubs his eyes, a man exhausted.

JOHN
You don't wanna touch that. What time is it?

DAVE
Just past three in the morning.

JOHN
What day?

DAVE
Friday night. I mean, Saturday morning. It feels like Friday night because I've barely slept yet. And we got work today, remember?

JOHN
You shouldn't have come here.

DAVE
You called me. You begged me.

John leans back, closes his eyes and mumbles.

JOHN
I did? When?

DAVE
Tell me what this stuff is, John.
They're gonna ask me. Tell me
before you fall asleep.

JOHN
I remember now. Calling you. It's
hard, everything's running
together. I called and called and
called. Like a shotgun, firing in
every direction hoping to hit
somethin'. I bet I called you
twenty times.

DAVE
Twice. You called me twice. John,
answer my question.

JOHN
Really? You kept getting weird on
me. You know what I think? I think
you'll be getting calls from me for
the next eight or nine years. All
from tonight. I couldn't help it,
couldn't get oriented. Kept
slipping out of the time... you've
got a voice mail message three
years from now that's freaking
hilarious.

Dave carefully puts the syringe into his pocket and starts
the car. John reaches over, grabs his wrist. John's eyes are
open and alarmed.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Wait. Where are we gonna go? Where
are we gonna be safe from this
thing?

DAVE
Emergency room, John. I'm not
playing this game with you. I don't
know what else to do. You're on a
bad trip, or whatever they call it.
Maybe you can just sleep shit like
this off. I don't know because I'm
not a dope fiend or a doctor.

JOHN
 No. The hospital's no good. We'll
 go to your place, or somewhere.
 Anywhere but here. Someplace safe.

29 EXT. DENNY'S COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT 29

The yellow sign of the deserted restaurant shines like a
 beacon in the black rainy night.

30 INT. DENNY'S COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT 30

Dave sips a coffee as John smokes a cigarette and shoots
 furtive glances out the front window.

DAVE
 Well? How are you doin'? Any
 better?

JOHN
 Dave. I saw things...

His voice trails off, sucks on his cigarette instead.

DAVE
 Okay. Back up. You don't know the
 name of the drug?

JOHN
 Robert called it the "Soy Sauce."
 But I'm thinking now that was just
 a nickname and that it wasn't, you
 know, actual soy sauce.

DAVE
 Robert? Oh, right. The Fake Magical
 Jamaican. What's his last name?

JOHN
 Marley.

DAVE
 Of course. Robert Marley. And he
 gave you the-

Dave's cell phone chirps. He ignores it.

JOHN
 Yes. He did. We were in the One
 Ball parking lot. Passing around a
 joint and the Jamaican guy pulls
 out the Sauce. "It be openin' doors
 to other worlds, mon," he says. We
 made him do it first, saw that he
 didn't die.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

It seemed to make him pretty happy and then Dave, well, the guy, I know it sounds unbelievable, but the guy shrunk himself, made himself three feet tall. We all laughed our asses off, then he was back to normal size again.

DAVE

And you still actually tried that shit?

JOHN

Are you kidding? How could I not?

The phone sings its electronic ditty again.

DAVE

Did anybody else do it?

JOHN

Are you gonna get that?

DAVE

John, you avoid my question one more time and I will come over this table and punch you right in the face.

JOHN

It's not that easy, Dave. Everything's mixed up, like if somebody made you watch ten movies at once and then quizzed you a year later on what happened in one of 'em. That stuff... Dave, I'm remembering things that haven't happened yet-I mean, that didn't happen. Even right now, all that stuff at the Mall. Did we go to the Mall? You and me?

The phone chirps a third time.

DAVE

No, John. We've never been to the "Mall" together. Are you the only one who took this "sauce?"

JOHN

I don't know, that's what I'm tryin' to say. We went to Robert's trailer, but Head and the guys didn't come. I think they got nervous when they saw a needle come out. Now please, please, please get your phone or turn it off.

DAVE
All right, all right.

Annoyed, Dave pulls out the phone, and answers it.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Yeah.

JOHN O.S.
David? It's me.

The voice is John's. Dave's eyes go wide as he glances at John seated in front of him.

DAVE
Is this a recording?

JOHN O.S.
What? No. I don't know if we've talked tonight, but we don't have much time. I think I called you and told you to come here. If so, don't do it. If I haven't called, then obviously you should still stay away regardless.

DAVE
Who is this?

John, in the booth there with Dave, shoots him a look.

JOHN O.S.
It's John. Can you hear me?

DAVE
(voice trembling)
I can hear you and I can see you. You're sitting right here next to me.

JOHN O.S.
Well, just talk to me in person, then. Oh, wait. Do I look like I'm injured in any way?

DAVE
What?

JOHN O.S.
Sorry, I gotta go. Say hello to me.

Click. He is gone. Dave sits there, stunned, the phone still pressed to his ear.

JOHN
Was that me? That was me, wasn't it?

Dave snaps the phone shut and stares into his coffee.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Dave. I really am. For messin' up your sleep cycle and for everything that's about to happen, the people that are going to, uh, explode.

Dave is already up, walking out.

31 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT 31

The Bronco drives through the rain.

32 INT. BRONCO DRIVING - NIGHT 32

Dave drives, anguished and pissed. Molly is in the back seat and John is sprawled in the passenger seat.

DAVE
John? You need to wake up. We gotta go to work. John? John? John? I can see you breathing, so I know you ain't dead. Are you awake? John?

Dave pulls the car over, and grabs John by the arm.

33 INT. BRONCO BY SIDE OF ROAD - NIGHT 33

John's head lolls over and Dave can see that John's eyes are wide open, staring blankly out the window. Dave puts his hand on John's chest, checks him out.

DAVE
(mutters)
Still breathing...

Molly whimpers, pokes her head out of the back seat and nudges him. He grabs Molly by the collar and sees her tag again: "I'm Molly, I belong to Amy..." Dave reaches under his own collar and pulls out a ST. CHRISTOPHER MEDALLION on a silver chain. Close-on the image of St. Christopher. Dave flips the medallion over and engraved in the silver surface it reads:

**In deep? Call St. Dom's parish. Any time.
492-555-5555.**

DAVE (CONT'D)
Fuck it.

He flips open his cell and dials. The phone rings twice and a groggy voice answers:

VOICE (FATHER SHELNUT)
St. Dom's.

DAVE
Yeah, uh, I need a priest.

FATHER SHELNUT
Well, this is Father Shelnut. What can I do for you?

DAVE
Um, hi. Do you have any experience with, like, demon...ism? Demonology, I guess. Like possession and hauntings and all that?

FATHER SHELNUT
Welllllll... I can't say that I've personally dealt with anything like that. Look, people that say they've seen things or, say, hear voices in their head, well we usually refer them to a counselor or, you understand, a lot of times medication can-

DAVE
No, no, no. I'm not crazy.

Dave glances over at John, still catatonic.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Other people have-

FATHER SHELNUT
No, no, I didn't mean to imply that. Look, why don't you come talk to me. And even if you need to talk to a professional I got a brother-in-law who's real good.

Dave thinks it over for a moment, lets out an anguished sigh and rubs his temple with his free hand.

DAVE
What do you think it's like, Father?

FATHER SHELNUT
What what's like?

DAVE
Being crazy. Mentally ill.

FATHER SHELNUT

Well, they never know they're ill,
do they? You can't diagnose
yourself with the same organ that
has the disease, just like you
can't see your own eyeball. So, I
suppose you just feel regular and
the rest of the world seems to go
crazy around you.

DAVE

Okay, but let's just suppose I
honestly, I mean, in reality, ran
into something from beyond the-OW!!

Dave suddenly flings himself upright in the car seat,
dropping the phone. Dave shoves his hand into his pocket,
tries to pull out the syringe but can't. His eyes are
watering as he frantically tears the syringe free and out of
his pants, turning out the white pocket with it. There is a
DIME-SIZED HOLE in the white fabric, STAINED BLOOD RED.

A DROP OF THE BLACK GOO is now hanging out of the end of the
syringe. Molly barks at the Soy Sauce.

DAVE V.O

I'll try to explain this without
cursing, but the black shit from
Planet X that came out from that
motherfucker looked like it had
grown hair. Little fine, stiff
hairs. No, not hairs. Fucking
spines. Like a fucking cactus. Did
I mention that the stuff was
moving? Twitching?

Dave opens the window and considers tossing the syringe.
Instead he pulls a lighter from the console and holds the
butane flame to the squirming blob. It burns, (is that a
scream!?) curling up and around like an earthworm. The end of
the syringe browns and melts. Dave hurls it out the window.
Dave roots around the car floor and finds the phone.

DAVE

Uh, are you still there? Hello?

FATHER SHELNUT

Yes, son. Just calm down, okay?
Nothing you're seeing is real.

Dave takes a deep breath trying to calm himself. Reality
begins to bend.(Visual Effect) Is time beginning to distort??

DAVE V.O

I could feel it. That strange,
venomous warmth spreading through
my thigh.

DAVE

Look, I appreciate your time but
I'm really starting to think
there's nothing you can-

FATHER SHELNUT

Son, I'm going to be honest with
you. We both know you're fucked.

DAVE

Uh, excuse me?

FATHER SHELNUT

Your Mom writes on the wall with
her own shit. Big changes are
coming to Deadworld, my son. Waves
of maggots over oceans of rot.
You'll see it, David. You'll see it
with your own eyes. Do you
understand?

Dave jerks the phone away from his ear, looks at it like it
might bite. He flips it shut. He takes a deep breath, trying
to calm himself. He starts up the car again and pulls out
onto the road.

34 INT. BRONCO DRIVING - NIGHT

34

Suddenly...

...from the darkness behind Dave, a very cold and very BONY
HAND reaches up and closes around his mouth. Before Dave can
react, SOMETHING long and cold and wet and twitching slides
across his neck and down his shirt. Dave cranks the wheel and
claws at the hand.

The Bronco skids across the road. The thing on his neck
continues to writhe -- it's the texture of a slug or a leech
but with a long tail. Dave screams. The Bronco blows through
an intersection blinking yellow lights, he stomps on the
brake and it goes into a powerslide, the rear of the truck
trading places with the front.

VOICE (ROGER NORTH)

No, no. Keep driving, she will not
bite if you keep driving.

Dave stomps the brake and the car skids to a stop. He screams
and grabs at the monster on his chest. Another hand reaches
around and snatches his wrist with a quick, clean move.

VOICE (ROGER NORTH) (CONT'D)

Be calm. Drive. Just drive. She
will leave you alone. If you drive.

Dave gets his other hand into his pocket and claws free the pistol. The creature bites, Dave gasps and his limbs stop in protest. A hand reaches up from the back seat and very slowly takes the Smith from his hand.

VOICE (ROGER NORTH) (CONT'D)
Drive. Just drive.

The pain relents. Dave gasps and eases his foot onto the accelerator. He tries to look down at the thing that has him, its tail sticking out of the neck of his shirt. It has inch-long STALKS all along its back, each ending in what looks like a SMALL BLACK EYE. Several of the stalks tickle his chin as it worms its way around, the end of the creature resting over his shoulder, squirming gently back and forth on the leather of his jacket.

DAVE
(shrill warble)
"WANNA YOU WANNA AARGH?"

VOICE (ROGER NORTH)
You're doing fine. Now tell me what you were doing before I made myself known.

DAVE
J..J..John, wake up!

John, still slumped in the passenger seat, does not stir. Dave grimaces and turns his attention back to the intruder in the back seat.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Who-who the fuck are you?

ROGER NORTH
My name is Roger North.

DAVE
Congratulations. Now who are you and what's this fucking thing you-

ROGER NORTH
Please answer my question. Where were you going in such a hurry?

DAVE
The emergency room. Why? What's it to you? What's happening tonight?

Dave reaches up and adjusts the REARVIEW MIRROR to see in the back seat. He sees a MAN, thin, in his thirties, brown hair, buggy eyes and a beak-like nose. He speaks robotically, with difficulty. He is wearing a white, furry woman's hat, what looks like a blue Wal-Mart vest with a little plastic toy SHERIFF'S BADGE tacked to the breast.

The man is holding Dave's gun by the barrel, glancing at it with detached curiosity.

DAVE (CONT'D)

You're...you're not from around here, are you? Do you know me? Can you tell me that? Or where you're from or who sent you?

ROGER NORTH

I'm from right here, so far as you know it. Who sent me means very little. My interest is only in you and in your desperation not to answer my question. It is said out of genuine concern for your safety... the very important role you must play. Korrok is a powerful adversary. Things are in motion, Mr. Wong.

The slug-creature on Dave's chest begins pulsing gently, making gulping twitches. Dave very slowly and non-threateningly reaches out and adjusts the heat, then casually punches in the CIGARETTE LIGHTER. In the rearview mirror he sees North, with a very grave expression, staring out the window as shadows and street lights flicker across his face.

ROGER NORTH (CONT'D)

Fascinating.

DAVE

What?

Dave glances down at the lighter. The slug on his chest slowly curls its tail around, coming to rest along his neck and earlobe.

ROGER NORTH

They harvest insects here, do they not? For their honey? Do the bees know they make the honey for you? Or do they work tirelessly because they think it is their own choice? Have you never noticed that, after hearing a new word for the first time in your life, you'll hear it again within twenty-four hours? Do you ever wonder why sometimes you'll see a single shoe lying along the road?

A single tear rolls down North's cheek. The lighter clicks.

ROGER NORTH (CONT'D)

I am at a loss. I have been watching you for some time, but there are great gaps in my knowledge. You know, I observed a man who masturbated until he bled. Did he want to do that? And you, when you are alone you-

Dave yanks the lighter free, the COILS ORANGE with heat. Dave slams on the brakes and racks the steering wheel. He jams the lighter onto the lump in his shirt where he estimates the creature's head will be.

The truck spins and tilts up on two tires for a sickening moment, just as the slug thing shrieks and thrashes wildly inside his shirt. The truck falls back down on four wheels with a thud.

35

INT. BRONCO STOPPED BY ROAD - NIGHT

35

A small yellow flame dances around a hole in Dave's shirt. Dave grabs around for the slug thing and wrestles it free. Dave holds up the creature and sees its CIRCLE OF TINY TEETH, each curled and needle-sharp. A thin, straw-like APPENDAGE emerges from the center, about as long as a finger and whips around, flecking little droplets of blood. Dave opens the driver's side door and flings the flopping thing out into the middle of the street.

Dave spins around in his seat and sees North pawing around the floorboard for the gun. Dave throws a wild punch at North's face, misses. Dave grabs the pistol off the floor, gets the drop on him and jams the barrel under North's chin. They sit like that for a long moment, both breathing out puffs of steam.

DAVE

Okay, okay. This thing I've got pointed at you, you know what it does?

ROGER NORTH

I believe I have an idea, yes.

DAVE

And have you ever heard the old human saying, 'I want to shoot you so bad, my dick's hard?'

ROGER NORTH

I don't believe I-

DAVE

Maybe you'll hear it again in the next 24 hours if you don't try to fuck with me. Shut up and don't move.

Dave slowly takes the gun off North and crawls out the side door and stands up into the wind. He turns and looks around the empty street and sees the squirming monster crawling to the sidewalk. Dave stalks over toward the creature, lifts his boot and stomps on it.

Dave grunts random curses under his breath as he pounds the thing, again and again, hammering with his boot heel. The SLUG EXPLODES in a spray of brown and red. Dave keeps stomping, flecks of blood spraying with each impact, until the monster is a wet, twisted stain.

DAVE (CONT'D)

"Things are in motion," huh?

He kicks the shredded remains into a sewer grate nearby, then moves back toward the truck.

The back door of the truck is open now and as he approaches he sees that NORTH IS GONE. Dave gets in, slams the door and reaches for the keys.

VOICE

David Wong?

Startled, Dave practically jumps out of his skin and spins to his left to find a BALD BLACK GUY in a suit standing at his driver side of the car.

DAVE

Uh, yeah...

The man flashes a BADGE.

DETECTIVE

Detective Lawrence Appleton. Please step out of the car. Your friend too.

DAVE

(weakly)

He's... resting.

DETECTIVE

Get the fuck out of the car.

36

EXT. VISTA OF DAVE'S TOWN - SUNRISE

36

The pre-dawn twilight fades as the bloody sun rises.

37

INT. POLICE STATION INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

37

Dave is alone in the "interview" room at the Police Station; the one-way mirror is to his left. In the reflection we see Dave slumped in the chair, disorganized black hair, beard stubble.

The police detective steps in, lays a thick MANILA FOLDER loaded with photos on the table. The detective sports a goatee and shaved head. A white COP follows him. His white partner has a crew cut with a mustache. Almost a G. Gordon Liddy, a cookie-cutter cop from central casting.

DETECTIVE

I want to thank you for coming down, Mr. Wong. I bet it's been quite a night for you. Been a long night for me, too, as a matter of fact.

DAVE

Okay. Where's John?

DETECTIVE

He's fine. He's talking to another officer just a few rooms from here.

DAVE

John is talking? Really?

DETECTIVE

Don't worry, man. Since you're both gonna tell the unvarnished truth, you don't gotta worry about your stories matching, do you? Just tell me what you did last night.

DAVE

Went to a party out by the lake. I came home just after midnight. I was asleep by two.

DETECTIVE

You sure about that? You sure you didn't go over to the One Ball Inn down on Grand Avenue for a nightcap? Your buddies were all there.

DAVE V.O

Well, Officer, I really only have the one friend...

DAVE

No, I had work this morning. I went straight home.

The camera moves in on Dave.

DAVE V.O

As I spoke, a strange, jittery energy began to rise up in me, radiating from the chest out. At that moment things began to clarify, to become simple. All of a sudden I was startled to find I could see the cop's next question coming before he spoke it, word-for-word... "Have you heard the name..."

DETECTIVE

Have you heard the name Nathan Curry? Guy your age, parents own a body shop here in town?

DAVE

No.

DAVE V.O

How about Shelby Winder?

DETECTIVE

How about Shelby Winder? Heavy girl, senior at East Side High? Ring a bell?

DAVE

No. Sorry. What happened?

The camera moves into Dave's darting, beady eyes.

DAVE V.O

Everything was obvious now, all the walls of the maze turned to glass. I immediately knew two things: this list of people had all been at the party last night and they were all now dead or heading there. Now how do you know that? How do you know any of this? Magic? You know damn well why. That black shit John took made blood contact with you. Now you're getting high, partner. On the Soy Sauce. It's got you.

DETECTIVE

We don't know. That's why I got four hours of overtime already today. At least nine people were at the One Ball at closing time, twelve hours ago. Three of them are missing. Your friend is here. The rest are dead.

The detective pauses for effect.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Your friend is the only known survivor of the "One Ball Nine" and now don't take offense at this but he ain't lookin' too healthy right about now. Did he say anything this morning?

The white cop across the room puts his hands on his hips. The Detective keeps his gaze on Dave.

DAVE

John called me last night, talking crazy. Paranoia, hallucinations, the whole "Monsters in his apartment" bit. Said he couldn't remember how he got where he was, like that.

DETECTIVE

Did he say what he was on?

DAVE

No.

DETECTIVE

You know we can find out anyway, right? We're not interested in booking a bunch of your raver friends for poppin' pills. To somebody like me, the dead bodies are what matters. And if somebody's sellin' poison, right now, as we talk-

DAVE

I'd tell you if I knew. So, what, that's how everybody died? Overdose?

The Detective says nothing and flips open the manila envelope. He fans out FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS. One is a mug shot of a young black guy. Dreadlocks. The others are a collage of red. He points to the mugshot.

DETECTIVE

What about that guy? You know him?

DAVE

He was there. Whatever John was on, this guy gave it to him. John told me.

DETECTIVE

That's Bruce Matthews. Runs an amateur unlicensed pharmaceuticals operation on the corner of 30th and Lexington.

Dave nods toward the red photos. The first picture is just LUMPS on the floor, on carpet, a wet, purplish black. It looks like somebody has tossed down a bucket of raw steaks and chicken bones. The next picture is a close-up of one wall, deep red splatters over half the surface area, occasional bits of meat stuck here and there.

DAVE
And those?

The detective points to the mug shot of the "Jamaican."

DETECTIVE
Before.

He points to the red-drenched pictures.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
After.

Dave turns his eyes away, suddenly sweating heavily as the Detective stares him down.

DAVE
What could even do that to a person? A bomb? Some kind of-

DETECTIVE
Nothing you know how to do, I'm sure of that. Maybe somethin' not, uh, not within our bounds of familiarity. What I need from you is-

The door slams open and the detective's words trail off as a heavy-set COP rushes in and whispers in his ear. The Detective's eyebrows shoot up and the two of them quickly exit the room. Outside the door we can hear a commotion, hurried SHOUTS and feet shuffling on floor tile.

The Detective storms back into the room, eyes wide.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
Your friend is dead.

We hear a sound...CLICK! A voice recorder, clicking off.

38

INT. THEY CHINA FOOD! RESTAURANT - NIGHT

38

Arnie grumbles an apology, fishes out a NEW BATTERY and goes about changing it. Dave glances over at Arnie's discarded notebook, notices that he has abandoned his note-taking just after the words "Three-Arm Sally."

ARNIE
...got your cell phone bill, did it
list the call you got at Denny's?

DAVE
What? I'm sorry.

ARNIE
The call you got from your friend
at Denny's when your friend was
sitting there next to you without a
phone. Was that call on your cell
phone bill?

DAVE
Not that kind of service plan.

Arnie scratches his head, knits a question with his eyebrows.

ARNIE
So the black stuff, this "Soy
Sauce," it's a drug, right?

DAVE
Well, I'll get to that.

ARNIE
And it makes you smarter? When you
take it, it lets you read minds and
all that?

DAVE
Not really. It heightens your
senses. I think. I don't know. When
you're on it, it's like overload,
like if you hooked your car radio
up to one of those interplanetary
SETI antennas. You get shit from
all over the place, can see things
you shouldn't be able to, but I
don't think it would help you do
your taxes.

ARNIE
And you still got some of this
stuff?

Arnie glances furtively down at the silver cannister.

DAVE
I'm getting to that.

ARNIE
You're on it right now? That's how
you did the thing with the, uh,
with the coins and the dream and
all that earlier?

DAVE

Yeah. I took some today. It's fading though.

ARNIE

So the effects don't last that long.

DAVE

The side effects don't last that long. The effects will last the rest of my life, I think.

Close on Dave.

DAVE V.O

Maybe longer.

Arnie scratches his forehead.

ARNIE

So, the kids that died, this is that rave overdose, right? I remember all that a couple years ago, seein' it in the news. They thought they had gotten ahold of some tainted Ecstasy or somethin' like that? So you were the guy that--

DAVE

--something like that.

ARNIE

And if I contact this Detective Appleton, he'll remember talking to you?

DAVE

Good luck finding him.

Arnie scribbles some notes, then pauses.

DAVE (CONT'D)

So? What do you think?

ARNIE

I think you've probably got a book here, if you flesh it out a little.

DAVE

A book?! Meaning a work of fiction? Meaning it's all bullshit?

Arnie shrugs.

ARNIE

A story is a story. I'm just a feature reporter, so the fact that you think it happened is my story. You know, I don't remember leaving the house with any change in my pocket. You could have slipped those coins to me.

DAVE

Without you feeling it? And the thing with your dream? Come on, Arnie.

DAVE V.O

Gotta love the skeptic, mon.

ARNIE

I think you're trying to be one of those mentalists, like that Dr. Albert Marconi on TV.

DAVE

Dr. Marconi may be theatrical...but believe me, he's not an act.

ARNIE

Well I saw Marconi's show in Vegas and your story seems to be a lot of the same kind of hocus pocus to me. And, you know, one time I saw this other guy, a sleight-of-hand artist who, as part of his show, would call somebody out of the audience and steal the glasses right off their face. No kidding. He'd send the poor sap back to their seat and they'd be squinting around, tryin' to figure out why they couldn't see all of a sudden.

Arnie looks Dave directly in the eye.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

There's no magic, Mr. Wong. Just knowing tricks the other guy doesn't know about. I can make myself invisible just by standin' behind ya.

Dave stands up.

DAVE

Come with me. I wanna show you somethin'.

ARNIE

Where are we going?

DAVE
Just out to my truck.

Dave gets up and moves to the door. They make their way out to Dave's Bronco in the parking lot.

39 EXT. THEY CHINA FOOD! PARKING LOT - NIGHT

39

Dave approaches the rear and drops the tailgate, revealing a white sheet covering a LARGE BOX the size of one of those plastic portable dog carriers.

DAVE
What's the weirdest thing you've
ever seen, Arnie?

Arnie grins, looking over the box. Like a damn kid at Christmas.

ARNIE
Well, one time I was down in my
basement and there's just a bare
light bulb and out of the corner of
my eye, you know, it sort of looked
like my shadow back there was
movin' without me. It was just for
a second and like I said, it was
just one of those tricks of light
you get out the corner of your eye.
But I tell ya, I didn't go back
down there until it was broad
daylight out.

DAVE
I need you to get in that mindset,
Arnie. We're out here, in public
with lights on and the whole
world's solid and lined up real
neat. But down in that basement, in
the dark, alone, you believed in
things. Dark things. I need you to
open yourself up like that. Okay?
Ready?

Arnie nods and Dave throws back the sheet. Long pause.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Do you see it?

ARNIE
No. Or, you know, it's an empty
cage.

DAVE
Turn your head, so you're looking
at me.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
You should see the box out the
corner of your eye, just like the
shadow in the basement.

ARNIE
Okay.

Arnie's grin is fading. He is losing patience fast.

DAVE
You ever go in the bathroom at
night, Arnie, and for a second, you
glimpse something in the mirror
other than your reflection?

ARNIE
Let's go back inside, okay? Your
story was more interesting.

Dave grabs Arnie by the lapels of his coat and gets in his
face.

DAVE
You're going to die, Arnie. Some
day, you will face that moment. And
at that moment either you will face
complete non-existence, or you will
face something even stranger.

Arnie's face stiffens as Dave's words sink in.

DAVE (CONT'D)
On an actual day in the future, you
will be in the unimaginable, Arnie.
It is physically impossible to
avoid it. Think about that, right
now. Set your mind on it.

Silence, for a few seconds. Arnie nods a little, takes a deep
breath.

ARNIE
Okay.

DAVE
Now, without turning your head,
look at the box.

Arnie does and instantly recoils, yelps, stumbles and finally
falls on his ass.

ARNIE
(gasps)
Oh, shit! Shit!! What the shit is
that? Sh-shit! Shit!

Dave throws the sheet back over the box, closes up the Bronco. Arnie scrambles to his feet and quickly backs up pointing at the Bronco.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
How did you do that? And what the fuck was that thing? What the fuck?

DAVE
There's no name for it in this world. Pretty freaky, isn't it?

ARNIE
You-you made me see something. Something out of my own head. You freaked me out so I would see something.

DAVE
No, it's really there. I'm surprised you saw it so easy. You must have an open mind. Most people don't see it that fast, unless they're stoned or drunk.

Arnie keeps stepping back, muttering.

DAVE (CONT'D)
I want to tell the rest of the story, Arnie. I need to. I need to get it out. But you need to take it for what it is. The truth. Are you ready to do that?

Arnie looks at Dave with uncertainty, then nods.

ARNIE
Okay. Until I figure it out for real, okay.

DAVE
Eh, that'll have to do. Come on.

Arnie takes a deep breath as Dave leads him back toward the restaurant. (Breakdown Services - Casting - Partial Draft)

DAVE (CONT'D)
Anyway, so the cop comes in and tells me John is dead...

40 INT. POLICE STATION INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

40

Dave is out of his chair and halfway to the door.

DAVE
"Wha-how??!"

The cop stops him cold with a stiff-arm to the chest.

DETECTIVE

Now calm down. He went into a convulsion or somethin' and his pulse stopped but-now listen to me here-we got ambulances, they'll be here in thirty seconds. We got Vinny doin' CPR on him. Vinny's a lifeguard in his off hours. That boy's in the hands of people who know what they're doin'.

Dave knocks the hand away from his chest. The white cop drops his arms and steps toward them. The Detective's lips peel back slightly to reveal gritted teeth.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Here's what you're gonna do, son, you're gonna wait here. I'll be back in five minutes and you are gonna start telling me the truth. I am gonna get to the bottom of this case and if you obstruct me you will live the rest of your days wishing you had not.

The Detective turns and exits the room. Dave stands there, lost, listening to the confusion of SHOUTS and controlled panic outside. The SIREN of an ambulance can be heard. A tear rolls down his cheek.

Dave's cell phone chirps. Dave looks toward Officer Liddy, now standing placidly in the middle of the room blocking his path to the door. He gestures toward his pocket as if to ask if he minds. The cop says nothing. Dave answers the phone.

DAVE

Yeah.

JOHN

Dave? This is John.

DAVE

What?! Did you get out?

JOHN

Yes and no. Are you still at the police station?

DAVE

Yeah. We were both-

JOHN

Have I died yet?

A long pause from Dave's end.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Dave? Can you hear me?

DAVE
Um, yeah. I-everybody ran out of
the room. They said you had-

JOHN
No, there's no time to explain all
this. Leave the police station,
right now, during the commotion.
They'll have EMT's hauling my body
out, lots of people will be
standing around, looking. Just walk
out. Don't run, that'll attract
attention. Just calmly walk out,
like your business is done there.
Nobody will stop you. Trust me.
Also, is there any way you can
steal my body? No, probably not.
Never mind. We'll have to work
around that. Okay, have you reached
the sidewalk yet?

DAVE
No, I'm still standing in the room.
I can't leave.

Dave lowers his voice to a whisper.

DAVE (CONT'D)
There's a guy still in here with
me, another cop.

JOHN
No, there's not. Check the mirror.

Dave hangs there in utter confusion for a few seconds, then
looks to his left. In the mirror, Dave is standing there
talking on his cell, COMPLETELY ALONE. Dave looks directly at
the cop, then in the mirror, back to the cop. The cop
suddenly moves in his direction.

DAVE
I don't get it.

JOHN
He's not real, Dave. Not in the,
uh, traditional sense.

DAVE
(backing up)
He's coming toward me.

JOHN

Just go. Just walk out. You're gonna start seeing things like this from time to time. It's important that you not freak out.

The cop is just one step away now. His mustache twitches, as if he is starting to grin underneath it.

DAVE

So he, uh, can't hurt me?

JOHN

Oh, I'm pretty sure he can.

A hand darts out and clenches Dave's face. The cop's fingers dig into Dave's cheeks, squeezing. He shoves Dave back and slams him hard against the wall. Dave claws at the cop's arm, then hauls off and smacks him across the nose with his cell phone.

The cop keeps his grip on Dave and jerks him in close. Face-to-face, Dave notices the COP'S MUSTACHE TWITCHES again as if this amuses him greatly. To Dave's horror, the mustache keeps twitching and then one end of it begins to CURL UP AND PEEL OFF. Finally the MUSTACHE DETACHES completely, leaving a patch of PINK, SHREDDED SKIN.

The MUSTACHE THING flaps its halves like bat wings- flies over and lands right on Dave's face. G. Gordon Liddy's mustache bites Dave above the right eyebrow!

Dave howls and slaps at the thing with his left hand, then, with all his strength, shoves a knee into the detective's guts just below the ribs.

The mustache bat flitters over to Dave's ear and clamps down. Dave yelps and slaps at it again. The cop still has hold of Dave by the neck so Dave lifts his knee and puts his boot on the guy's neck. With all his strength Dave kicks down and yanks at the same time, when suddenly, to his amazement...

THE COP'S ARM TEARS OFF AT THE SHOULDER!!

The cop has a six-inch BLOODY HOLE on one shoulder now.

The DETACHED ARM, on its own, suddenly WHIPS around Dave's neck and coils around it like a python. No hint of bone in there now! The arm makes two muscular loops around until the ragged stump hangs under his chin like a meat scarf.

Dave thrashes around, tries to pry the thing off. The armsnake is all muscle, tensed and wiry, slowly constricting off his windpipe. The mustache bat flits around Dave's head, taking stinging little bites here and there.

Relentlessly, the cop stands up from the floor, reaches for Dave with his remaining arm. Dave opens the door and flings himself out of the room-

41 INT. POLICE STATION HALLWAY - DAY 41

-and it is over! The thick bundle of armsnake has vanished from Dave's neck, as has the flying mustache!

Dave stands up shakily, sees four GUYS hustling down the hall with an EMPTY STRETCHER. Dave sticks his finger in his mouth, it comes out BLOODY. His cell phone is still in his hand but cracked with a busted mouthpiece from its tour as a nose club.

As people rush past him, Dave gets it together and strolls back through the police station, finally walking right out the front door.

42 EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY 42

Dave walks, heart pounding. A FAT MAN in a shiny business suit strides by and time begins to DISTORT as Dave looks at him.

DAVE V.O

I realized that this man would die
in just two weeks, a heart attack
while trying to knock his cat out
of a tree with a broomstick.

Time still distorted, Dave watches a 1998 Trans-Am gleam past in the street with two YOUNG MEN driving.

DAVE V.O (CONT'D)

I could tell from the posture of
the driver that the car was stolen
and that its owner was dead. The
fan belt would break in 26,931
miles.

Dave rubs his temple.

DAVE

Man, I gotta focus on one thing at
a time or my brain's gonna melt and
run out of my ears like strawberry
jam.

Dave takes a deep breath and time comes back to normal. He is startled as his cell phone rings. He puts the broken thing to his ear.

JOHN (ON PHONE)

Dave? It's me. Where are you right now, Dave?

DAVE

I'm on the sidewalk outside the cop shop, walking. Where are you? Heaven?

JOHN

When you hear a song on the radio, where is the song?

DAVE

What? What? John...

JOHN

Just keep walking. Go toward the park. Don't freak out. Are you freaking out?

DAVE

I don't know. I can't believe this phone still works.

JOHN

The hot dog guy should be just ahead, maybe half a block. See him?

Dave walks a dozen steps and sees a CART with a yellow and orange UMBRELLA hanging over it. The HOT DOG GUY is painfully thin, looks about a hundred and sixty years old.

DAVE

Okay.

JOHN

Buy a bratwurst from him.

Dave steps up and buys a brat wrapped in a hot dog bun with a sheet of wax paper for \$3.15. Dave continues walking along the sidewalk toward the park.

DAVE

Okay. I have the bratwurst.

JOHN

Put it up to your head.

Pause.

DAVE

I'm going to have to ask you why, John.

JOHN

I have to show you something.

Dave shrugs, glances around, and trying to be as inconspicuous as possible, lays the sausage against his ear.

JOHN

Dave? Can you hear me?

John's voice, comes clear as day through the tube of seasoned meat. Dave glances down at the cell phone and gets the point. The cell phone display is black, the GLASS BUSTED out of it. A green circuit board is poking out of one side.

DAVE

All right, all right. I'm hearing you through some kind of psychic vibration or whatever and not the phone. I get it. You could have just told me that.

JOHN

I can't get you through the cell any more. You have to talk through the bratwurst from now on. Sorry.

Dave rubs his eyes, exhausted.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The only reason you can hear me is because you got some of the Soy Sauce into your system, from the syringe. But it's not very much and it won't last long.

DAVE

What is that stuff, John? The Sauce...it was alive. I swear it-

JOHN

Listen. You gotta get over to Robert's place. There aren't any cops there now, but there will be. We have sort of a narrow window here. Take a cab to Wally's and get your car, then go to Shire Village on Lathrop Avenue. It's a trailer park, south of town.

DAVE

I don't have any cash. I had five bucks and I just spent three of it on the bratwurst.

JOHN

That bratwurst cost three bucks? Holy crap. Okay. Give me a second. All right. Check between the sausage and the bun.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)
 You'll find a hundred dollar bill
 folded up in there.

Dave examines the bratwurst bun, finds nothing.

DAVE
 There's no money in the bratwurst.
 Just a piece of lettuce.

JOHN
 Oh, okay. Do you have your ATM
 card?

CUT TO:

43 EXT. SHIRE VILLAGE TRAILER PARK - DAY - LATER 43

Dave's Bronco pulls into a run-down trailer park.

44 INT. BRONCO - DAY 44

Dave puts the bratwurst to his head.

DAVE
 John?

Dave is greeted with a burst of static, but then John's voice
 comes in, fainter than before.

JOHN
 Dave?

DAVE
 Yeah.

JOHN
 What, did you drive under a bridge
 just now?

DAVE
 No. We're at the trailer park.
 Finally. Which one is Robert's?

Static again. Then:

JOHN
 It's wearing off. Don't talk, just
 listen. Go inside and-

Static.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 -and as long as you absolutely
 remember not to do that, you'll be
 fine. Good luck.

DAVE

What? John, I didn't catch the-

Dead. The voice is gone, the static is gone. Up ahead one TRAILER stands out. YELLOW POLICE TAPE all around it.

45 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - DAY

45

Dave is in the doorway as the trailer door swings open. He cautiously enters. The blood and guts have been cleaned up. The carpet is still discolored and the walls are forever stained a faded reddish-brown. There is a sofa and a chair pocked with cigarette burns. Dave glances into the open kitchenette, then turns and walks to the other end. He reaches the bedroom and pushes open the door.

It's dark and empty. All the windows are covered with foil. Against the wall is a TELEVISION and what looks like yard compost with something like twigs sticking out. Dave is startled to see the TV click on.

ONSCREEN - Static...and then a shot of the interior of the empty trailer. Dave looks closely at it. Suddenly a FIGURE appears walking into the trailer living room. Dave looks intently and suddenly realizes the figure is HIMSELF!!

Dave investigates the back of the TV, looking for a tape or DVD player. He finds the power cord but it's just hanging off the ground - THE TV IS NOT PLUGGED IN!!

As Dave pokes around the back of the TV, we can see the screen go to static and the bizarre image of the "Static Man" watching him appears! Oblivious, Dave notices that the back panel of the TV has been removed and a strip of what looks like RED SEAWEED leads out of it and into a large, DEAD FISH. The gut of the fish has been slit open and bulging out of it is a pink, WET MASS. Close to it is an AQUARIUM TANK filled with a thick, yellowish substance and at the bottom is a wrinkled GRAYISH MASS that could be a human brain or possibly a meatloaf. It is all connected, everything in the pile, by tendons and tissue. It's some kind of MEAT MACHINE!

45A ON TV SCREEN

45A

As Dave looks back at the TV screen the image is back to a shot of the living room again, only now onscreen Dave is in a conversation with another figure who SUDDENLY DRAWS A GUN AND SHOOTS ONSCREEN DAVE! Onscreen Dave slumps to the ground.

Dave is stunned watching these events unfold when suddenly...Thump. A faint sound, from the other end of the trailer. Dave steps into the hall. Nothing. THUMP. A heavy sound, violent. Dave moves toward the kitchen. He looks around the counter, floor and appliances. Nothing. Dead silence.

Dave gently reaches for a kitchen KNIFE on the butcher's block when- THUMP. The refrigerator. THUMP. No. The freezer section at the top. The little door up there rattles with the sound, like it was bumped- THUMP.

With one last thump, the freezer door flies open. A round, frosty LUMP the size of a coffee can tumbles out of the freezer, falls to the floor, and rolls to a stop in front of Dave. He suddenly bolts for the exit. As Dave reaches for the front door knob he glances out the window and sees...

45B

POV - OUT TRAILER WINDOW OF TRAILER PARK

45B

... a SEDAN parked out there where none had been before. Plain white, but too many antennas. Cop car. Somebody getting out. The Detective.

Dave spins around, searching for a back exit and sees a SLIM DOOR leading out of the kitchen. However, it means stepping over the possessed Jar which is now sitting on the linoleum, steaming faintly, rocking back and forth. Dave can now see that the thing is a bundle of duct tape, something wrapped in frosty layer after layer of the stuff.

A look back outside. His cop friend is surveying the exterior of the trailer. Dave drops to the floor.

Pock! A hollow snapping sound, from the freezer Jar. The thing hops an inch off the floor and so does Dave when he hears the sound. It does it again, jumps higher. Something trying to punch its way out from inside- Snap. Ka-chunk. POCK! POCK!! POCK!!! There is a bulge now on the side of the container, strands of duct tape fibers popping out in the center. Fear keeps Dave's ass velcroed to the carpet. The Jar convulses, and...

FOONT! The Jar erupts, ejaculates, gives birth in a cloud of stringy tape bits. A shotgun-hole blows out from the guts of the can and a little blur of an object zips out and bounces off the paneled wall above Dave. This offspring falls to the carpet, bounces and lands next to his shoe. A little shiny METAL CANISTER, the size of a pill bottle. Not moving or growling or glowing. Just sitting. Waiting.

Dave looks at the little metal vial. Dave raises his foot to kick the vial away, then reconsiders.

DAVE V.O.

You know what's in there, right?
Nope. No idea. You know Robert had a stash of the shit, and if he had a stash, he couldn't just cram it under his bed. That black shit moves. It has a will, an attitude. It bites. And then I realized, all at once, what I had come here for. John led me here, of course.

(MORE)

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 When I was on the stuff, that
 little hit in my thigh, I could
 communicate with the dead, with
 John. When it wore off, I could
 not. My one chance to save John lay
 inside this bottle. It was decided,
 then. Just like that.

Dave picks up the bottle, it's cold as an ice cube. He finds
 a seam and twists the top half off. Out tumble two tiny, COLD
 PEBBLES. Perfect and black in his palm, like two coal-
 flavored Tic-Tacs.

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 And what is it you're doing,
 exactly? For all you know, this
 stuff oozed out of a crashed
 meteorite. You've found it in the
 home of a dead man, after following
 a trail of dead bodies to get here.
 So go ahead, put it right in your
 mouth, dipshit.

Dave sees the capsules sitting innocently in the palm of his
 hand and then-SEES THEM MOVE, wriggling in his hand like a
 couple of fat, black maggots! Dave flings them to the carpet.
 He stumbles to his feet.

45C ON THE CARPET

45C

- the things twist, change, grow tiny little black LIMBS. Two
 flat appendages grow out of one of them, begin to twitch,
 move, flap. A blur now. Wings. The thing makes a terrible,
 insectile fluttering sound against the carpet. Then, the Tic-
 Tac launches itself at Dave, a faint, dark streak. Dave
 doesn't realize his mouth is hanging open until ...WHAP! In
 an instant the thing has shot into his mouth! Dave coughs,
 hacks, convulses and swallows!

Dave opens his eyes, looks desperately for the other one.
 Hard to spot on the dark carpet- There! It buzzes, it flies.
 So fast it vanishes from sight. Dave clamps his lips shut,
 slaps his hand over his mouth for good measure. The thing
 lands on his left cheek and Dave swats it with his free hand.
 He suppresses a scream, brings his hand away from his face
 and finds it bloody.

DAVE V.O.
 OH SON OF A MOTHERFUCK THE FUCKING
 SOY SAUCE IS DIGGING A FUCKING HOLE
 INTO MY FUCKING FACE!

Dave falls flat on the floor, thrashing and rolling like a
 seizure. His face and shirt are wet and sticky with blood.

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 I'll throw myself at the cop and
 beg him to take me to the emergency
 room, to pump my stomach, to bring
 in an exorcist, to call in the Air
 Force to nuke this whole town into
 radioactive dust and bury it under
 sixty feet of concrete.

Footsteps can be heard, footsteps just outside the door. CU
 Dave's eyes.

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 And then... calm. Almost Zen.
 That's what came next, a complete,
 leveling inner cool...that Soy
 Sauce feeling.

The doorknob begins to turn.

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 I wanted to run, to duck, to act.
 But the body is a slow, wet
 mechanism of muscle and bone that
 crept even as my mind flew. And
 so, just like that, I stepped
 outside of it.

ECU on Dave's eyes as time stops. The second hand on the wall
 clock stops!

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 I had a full 1.78 seconds before
 the detective would step through
 the door. A supercomputer can do
 over a trillion mathematical
 equations in one second. To that
 machine, one second is an eternity.
 OK. Think.

Dave is pinned to the floor. A massive rushing sound is
 heard. Is it the blood flowing through him or...?

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 You are standing on the thin, cool
 crust of a gigantic ball of molten
 rock hurtling through frozen space.
 You're in a situation that could
 threaten the nature of said
 existence on said molten ball,
 depending on which decision you
 make. But wait.

Visual Effect - Dave's body, the entire trailer seems to be
 moving at an impossible speed, as if a tornado is blowing
 through.

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)

There are a shitload of subatomic particles in the universe, each set into outward motion at the moment of the Big Bang. Thus, whether or not you move your right arm now, or nod your head, or choose to eat Fruity Pebbles or Cornflakes next Thursday morning, was all decided at the moment the universe crashed into existence seventeen billion years ago. Thus it is physically impossible for you to deviate- I never finished this thought, as I suddenly realized I was no longer in the trailer.

46 EXT. DESERT - DAY

46

Sun. Sand. The desert. Dave looks around, sees desert spanning from horizon to horizon. God's sandbox.

DAVE V.O.

Was I dead?

A chain link fence. Brown, dead grass. People around Dave, in ash-coated rags like refugees. Dave sees a LITTLE GIRL approach. She is deformed, filthy, a good chunk of her face missing. One eye. Dave looks away and...

47 INT. FACTORY - NIGHT

47

White. And noise. Mechanical sounds, like being inside a car engine. Dave is now in a large building, very clean, and a MAN stands in front of him wearing a blue uniform, watching a small computer screen near an assembly line of small CARTRIDGES. A massive red sign reads "NO SMOKING OR OPEN FLAME ON THE PRODUCTION FLOOR" with a cartoon explosion underneath it. Dave steps forward toward the man.

DAVE

Uh, hey.

The guy stirs, turns. His eyes meet Dave's. From the guy's POV we see that Dave is NOT THERE, just a phantasm. The man shrugs and turns back to his monitor.

Dave scans the large room full of people at various machines. None of them can see him.

DAVE V.O.

I was there, but I was not there. I looked down and could not see my feet.

(MORE)

DAVE V.O. (CONT'D)
 You're out of your body, my friend,
 floating in the breeze. Your feet
 are still in the trailer.

48 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - DAY

48

And in a blink, Dave is back in the trailer, on the floor. He breathes a sigh of relief, as...

The cop steps through the door and stops cold at the sight of Dave. Dave climbs awkwardly to his feet with his hand on his bloody face. Dave notices the man holds two red plastic GASOLINE CANS. The Detective sets the gas cans at his feet, lights a cigarette and smokes in silence.

DAVE
 So, I suppose you're wondering why
 I'm here.

He shakes his head slightly.

DETECTIVE
 Same as everybody. You're trying to
 figure out what in the name of
 Elvis is going on. Everybody 'cept
 me. Me, I don't even wanna know no
 more. I bet you're wondering what
 I'm doing with these here gas cans.

He studies Dave's bleeding face, then reaches into his pocket and hands him a handkerchief. Dave presses it to his cheek.

DAVE
 Thank you. I, uh, fell. On
 a...drill.

The Detective picks up a gas can, unscrews the cap, and starts splashing the orange liquid around the living room. Dave watches, then takes a tentative step toward the door. In a blur the Detective whips his hand out of his jacket and suddenly there is a REVOLVER aimed right at Dave's face.

DETECTIVE
 You leavin' already?

Dave puts his hands up in surrender and the Detective nods down toward the other gas can.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
 Help me.

DAVE
 I'll be glad to. But first I want
 you to tell me what happened to my
 friend John.

DETECTIVE
Well, you know he's gone, right?

DAVE
Meaning?

DETECTIVE
Just gone.

Dave very slowly picks up the gas can and removes the cap.
The Detective puts his gun away. Dave soaks the couch.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
You know a kid named Justin White,
Mr. Wong? High school kid?

DAVE
You asked me that back at the
police station. I remember now. The
Limp Bizkit kid - talks like he's
some kind of junior gangster. He's
one of the missing, right?

DETECTIVE
He's the guy who called in the-the
whatever happened here about four
in the morning.

48A REALITY PEELS AWAY 48A

CLOSE ON - Dave - (Visual Effect) as he can see reality peel
away to reveal what's in the cop's mind...

49 EXT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - PREVIOUS NIGHT 49

The Detective exits his car and sees YOUNG PEOPLE running
away, peeling out in their cars. The Detective approaches the
open trailer door.

50 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - PREVIOUS NIGHT 50

He moves into the doorway and sees the BLOODY MESS and the
PINK PILE of what's left of the Rastafarian Drug Dealer.
Wailing on the floor, on his hands and knees, is Justin
White.

DETECTIVE V.O.
I thought he was stabbed in the gut
or somethin' but I looked closer
and there was something on him. All
over Justin, his arms and his face.

Justin appears to be covered in THICK WHITE HAIRS, all over
him, like little twisted bits of fishing line.

Justin is screaming in agony. Justin's got his hands on the floor and the hairs are crawling up his fingers and wrists and up under his sleeves.

DETECTIVE V.O. (CONT'D)
And this stuff, whatever it is,
it's movin', it's alive. On one
side of the room I got a guy
sprayed all over the walls like he
stepped on a land mine and then
there's this. I notice real fast
that this swarm is oozing out from
the pile of dead guy next to us.

The Detective turns and bolts out of the trailer.

51 EXT. TRAILER - COP CAR - PREVIOUS NIGHT 51

The Detective runs out to his car and frantically grabs a CAN OF PEPPER SPRAY and then races back toward the trailer.

52 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - PREVIOUS NIGHT 52

The Detective sprints through the front door and stops in his tracks. Justin is standing there, perfectly fine - no sign of any infestation. He's checking his hair in the mirror.

JUSTIN
What up 5-0?

DETECTIVE V.O.
Just like that. He's standing
there, no sign of these things
nowhere, the bugs or whatever.

53 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - BACK TO PRESENT - NIGHT 53

Back to present - Dave stares at the Detective.

DAVE
But you're still gonna burn this
place down?

DETECTIVE
That's right.

DAVE
And you're not gonna let me go.

The Detective is silent for a moment.

DETECTIVE

So, you understand my mood. You understand why I'm out committin' felonies today. There are dark things happenin' and I got the real lonely feeling like I'm the only one who knows, the only one who can do anything about it.

The Detective moves toward the door, blocking Dave's exit. He sets the gas can down, almost empty now, and gestures to it.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Pick it up, and toss it out the door, in the yard.

Dave hesitates and the detective puts his gun on him again. Dave does as he is asked. The Detective pulls out his lighter and flips the igniter. Standing there, a little yellow flame flickering in his hand, he says...

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

You know, everybody's got a ghost story, a UFO or a bigfoot story.

The Detective gazes into the lighter flame as he speaks, as if mesmerized. With a soft double-click his thumb pulls back the HAMMER of the gun.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Now what I think, is that stuff is both real and not real at the same time. I ain't no Star Trek fan and I don't know about other dimensions and all that. But I am an old school Catholic and I do believe in Hell. I believe it ain't just rapists and murderers down there; I believe its demons and worms and vile things, the grease trap of the universe. And the more I think of it, the more I think it's not some place 'down there' at all, that it's here, all around us. We just don't perceive it. Just like how the country music radio station is out there, in the air, even if you ain't tuned to it. But I think somehow, through some chemistry or magic or some voodoo, that Jamaican S.O.B. tuned into it, into Hell itself. With that, he opened the door. He became the door.

Dave nods, opens his mouth, then closes it again.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

And me, I intend to close it.

The Detective raises his gun, takes point blank aim at Dave and SHOOTs.

VISUAL EFFECT - ECU - slow motion - the BULLET exits the barrel of the gun.

ECU - Dave's eyes - As the bullet travels toward him at 620 feet per second, Dave steps out of time and can see...

54 INT. FACTORY - NIGHT

54

--- A shot of a production line as THOUSANDS OF .38 CARTRIDGES are fabricated. The camera pans by a sign which reads: **Worthington Munitions**. We focus on a SINGLE CARTRIDGE as it moves down the fabrication line. It passes the massive red sign we saw before which reads "NO SMOKING OR OPEN FLAME ON THE PRODUCTION FLOOR" with a cartoon explosion underneath it. 4

Suddenly, we see the SAME MAN IN THE SAME BLUE UNIFORM at the same factory from earlier. As previously, Dave calls to the man.

DAVE V.O.

Uh, hey.

As the man turns to look for "phantom" Dave...our cartridge passes into the machine that adds its pinch of gunpowder, and a HOUSEFLY crawls into the casing a split-second before the lead bullet is rammed into it.

--- The now-defective bullet is dropped into a box, packaged and sealed.

55 INT. POLICE STATION ROOM - DAY

55

--- At the Police Station the Detective opens the new ammo box and slides the defective shell into his revolver, slaps the cylinder shut.

56 INT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - DAY

56

We cut back to the slow motion bullet as it streaks across the room and punches hard into Dave's sternum. Still in slow motion, the impact knocks Dave backward - but the defective bullet, unable to penetrate his sternum, ricochets off the bone, bounces off the wall and tumbles to the floor by Dave.

Black. And then a FLUMPH sound, like a lit gas grill. Dave's eyes blink open. How much time has passed?

Dave feels a wet bloody patch right in the middle of his shirt, winces with the pain. Dave coughs and rolls over on his side.

He fingers the hole in his shirt and realizes there is no hole in his sternum. Dave raises his head and sees the COUCH IS A BONFIRE, the entire living room in flames.

Dave looks over and sees the TV. The "STATIC MAN" PEERS OUT of the tube, watching him.

Dave bolts, crawling on hands and knees. The smoke is filling up the room fast. He scrambles down the hall. The place is like an oven, a blast furnace. He crawls into the kitchen, looks back and sees the fire racing toward him. He lowers his head to the linoleum, a few inches of fresh air down there.

A low sound. Wailing? From outside. Getting louder. A car coming. A dog barking. **Get back. Get back!** Who said that? A thunderous, terrible sound. Glass shattering, metal screaming, wood snapping. The kitchen explodes around him.

Dave is flung backward and finds himself looking at the grill of a car, his car, Ford Bronco symbol inches from his face. The car reverses itself and wrenches free of the wreckage that had been the kitchen wall. There is now a rupture, frayed with tufts of insulation and shredded aluminum siding. Dave flings himself out of the hole, falls onto the cool grass outside.

57 EXT. ROBERT MARLEY'S TRAILER - DAY

57

Dave coughs and starts to pass out, the trailer a roiling fireball behind him. Dave hears a DOG BARK.

VOICE
David? You alive?

That voice again, from nowhere. Dave struggles to his feet, sees his Bronco sitting about twenty feet away, and to his amazement, at the wheel is Molly the Dog!! Dave stares at this for a good moment. He staggers to his feet and stumbles to the car, gets in.

58 INT. DAVE'S BRONCO IN TRAILER PARK - DAY

58

He shoves the dog over and sits behind the wheel. Dave throws the car into gear and burns rubber out of there. He powers out onto the highway, loses control, then veers over to the shoulder and stops behind some trees. Dave collects himself, checking his extremities for injuries.

DAVE
Okay, I know for a fact you didn't drive my car just now, cause if you did, then I am officially certifiable.

Molly whimpers and Dave pets her. She nuzzles him affectionately. Somewhat delirious, Dave talks to Molly.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 You know, if you and I could find your owner, we'd score some real points. Girls love it when you return their lost pets to 'em. Amy's pretty cute and I think I'm kind of into her. I'm not even freaked about her stump...it's sorta cool in a weird way. I remember the injury, when she lost her hand in junior high school. I never should have made that joke at the party.

Dave starts up the car again, drives.

59 INT. BRONCO DRIVING - DAY

59

Molly suddenly barks. Dave looks over at the dog and suddenly realizes with mild, exhausted amusement that with a little attention he can understand Molly.

DOG
 Woof!
Meat!

Dave notices the bratwurst still on the dash.

DOG (CONT'D)
 Woof! Woof!
Meat! Tube meat!

Dave grabs the bratwurst and sets it on the seat next to her. She sniffs it, barks. Dave turns and her big brown eyes are looking right into his.

DOG (CONT'D)
 Woof!
David!
 Woof! Woof!
You understand me? This is John.

Dave decides to roll with it.

DAVE
 Uh... hello.

DOG
 Woof!
We're in big fuckin' trouble, Dave.

DAVE
No shit, fluffy. How did you work
the pedals?

DOG
Woof!
**You can hear me so I guess you took
the Soy Sauce. Why? Didn't I tell
you not to? And what happened to
your face?**

DAVE
Your second question answers your
first. So. What up, dog?

The dog stares at Dave for several seconds before replying,

DOG
Rrrrruff!
**Here's what I know. There are two
people still alive from last night
other than me. Fred Chu and your
girlfriend Amy - yeah I know you
like her. But I don't know a whole
lot else because my own body ain't
workin' so well. I know we're all
together, he's got us, and we're on
the move. I do know that once we
get where we're goin', something
bad is gonna happen.**

DAVE
Wait. You're with Amy? And who's
got you?

DOG
Arrr-oof!
**Justin White, or the thing that
used to be Justin. He stole a
vehicle, some kind of truck.**

DAVE
So that's four still alive,
including Justin.

DOG
Woof!
**Justin White ain't alive. He's a
walking... hive or whatever.
There's nothin' left of Justin
inside him. In a couple days,
Justin will hatch just like the
Jamaican did.**

Visual Effect of clouds of white fuzz swarming out of the
exploded Jamaican's corpse.

DOG (CONT'D)

Anybody in the vicinity when that happens will become a spawning pod thing. Dave, the last world these things showed up in was saturated within one hundred days. Don't ask me how I know that, neither, because I don't know.

DAVE

I got another question. Everybody who took the Soy Sauce is dead or comatose. Except me.

DOG

"Grr...Woof! Ruff..."
You got a little taste of it before getting a full dose, so you were probably able to adjust. But you should have figured out by now, Dave... you don't choose the Soy Sauce. The Soy Sauce chooses you. If it can't use you, it kills you. But from what I hear, it plays with you first. Meat! Meatmeatmeat!

Molly starts wolfing the bratwurst off the seat.

CUT TO:

60

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

60

Dave pushes through his front door, heads for his bedroom. He finds an old nylon duffel bag and tosses an armload of clothes and stuff into it. He throws on a clean shirt, turns and moves quickly back down the hall and stops cold. Standing in the living room, blocking his path is Justin White. Their eyes meet and Justin smiles.

DAVE

Justin?

Justin opens his mouth and emits a RUMBLING SOUND, like something boiling up from his lungs. He closes it again, gathers himself and says brightly...

JUSTIN

Dude. I need ya to come roll with me, yo. Know what I'm sayin'?

DAVE

Where uh, are we going, Justin?

Dave casually reaches his hand back toward his waistband, where his gun is waiting.

JUSTIN

Why you frontin' here, bro? You know what time it is. Stop callin' me Justin like nothin's changed, yo.

DAVE

What should I call you, homey?

JUSTIN

Just call me 'Shitload.' Because there's a shitload of us in here. Now I know you strapped. But before you think about pullin' that nine mill I think you better hear what I gots to...

The left side of Justin's scalp disappears in a SPRAY OF PINK BRAIN MATTER. Justin is thrown backwards, Dave's finger squeezing the trigger as fast as it can twitch, gunshots shattering the air. Bursts of blood flick out from Justin's chest and thighs and gut, shots landing and backing him across the room. He stumbles and falls against a wall, but never goes down. The gun clicks dry, but Dave squeezes the trigger about twenty more times just to be sure. Justin rights himself, looks down at his wounds, sighs like a man who has dropped his pie in his lap.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

As I was sayin' yo, your little nine is useless against-

His words are cut off when the empty gun Dave hurls at him smacks off his cheek, knocking him backwards once more.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch. Cut that shit out. Listen to me.

As he speaks, Dave looks around for something else to throw, finds nothing.

DAVE

Okay. I'm listening, Shitload.

JUSTIN

We're takin' a trip, dude.

Dave can't take his eyes off Shitload's GAPING HEAD WOUND. We can see movement there, a crawling white fuzz over the exposed meat, like his innards are growing gray hair.

DAVE

Uh, I don't think that's gonna happen.

Justin moves toward Dave. Dave can see now that the WHITE HAIRS are stitching up each of Justin's wounds.

Dave throws a flailing punch that misses by a foot. The Justinmonster fires out a low punch, the impact exploding in Dave's groin. Dave doubles over and collapses to the carpet. Dave then quickly pushes himself back to his feet. Dave takes another swing at him, misses-Justin punches Dave again. In the crotch. Dave falls backward, catches himself on a kitchen chair, then picks it up and swings it. Dave cracks the chair over Justin's shoulder. Justin shrugs it off and in a blur throws three more rabbit punches that each landed solidly on Dave's balls. Dave goes down and stays down.

Darkness, barking and footsteps. Dave comes to consciousness to find Molly's wet nose in his face.

61 INT. BEER TRUCK - NIGHT

61

A door clangs shut, a latch clicks into place. Dave opens his eyes, to see stacked cardboard boxes bearing beer logos. Sitting on one stack is a very pale and shaky Amy, scratched and dirty, wearing the same outfit from the party. Molly is curled up on the floor beside her. Sitting across a row of green Heineken cases is Fred Chu.

The engine starts and they are jolted into motion. Dave raises his head and looks around the dim cargo area. Sitting in the corner, cross-legged and wearing hospital pajamas, is John! He stares intently at the wall, not blinking.

FRED

We heard the shots. Are you the one who hurt him? I saw his head.

DAVE

I was aiming for his heart but, yeah, I did get him.

AMY

Good.

FRED

Can he be killed?

DAVE

Look, I don't know-

FRED

I mean, you gotta understand what's happenin' here. The guy who attacked you, he ain't no man, okay? He's been invaded by body snatchers.

Dave shakily gets to his feet.

DAVE
Yeah, I pieced that together. Where
the hell is he taking us?

Amy peeks out a crack in the wall of the truck.

AMY
We're on Highway 59 - he said
something about the old Mall.

FRED
Christ, the Mall of the Dead? Why
there?

Dave turns his attention to John.

DAVE
How long has John been like this? I
mean, does he ever say anything?

AMY
He mumbles. But he hasn't moved
since he was brought in.

Dave shuffles over to John.

DAVE
Wake up.

Nothing. Dave nudges John with his foot.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Wake up, asshole. Look, you started
this. Now wake up.

A soft voice comes from behind Dave.

AMY
Hey.

Dave turns and Amy's eyes meet his. He tries to come up with
something clever.

DAVE
Uh, I found your dog.

AMY
I know. Thanks.

Dave decides to "man up" and gently puts his arm around Amy.

DAVE
Listen, I'll get us out of here.
Don't worry. John's got a plan.

Shot of catatonic John.

AMY

Was that before he fell into the coma, or after. Or did I miss something?

DAVE

Well, uh..

Dave notices Molly nuzzling John's frozen body and sees John's hand reach over to pet the dog. There is a JOLT through John's body, like an electrical shock. Suddenly John is on his feet, confused, looking at his hands like he was surprised to have them. He spots Dave.

JOHN

Dave, where are we?

DAVE

On our way to that abandoned mall on Highway 59.

JOHN

Yeah, that's the place. Man, I thought I was a dog. And Amy, Dave's really into you. I think he told me, or he told the dog.

Dave punches John hard in the shoulder.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ow! Did you say we were going to the mall or that we were coming back from it?

DAVE

Going.

JOHN

Oh, yeah, that's right, cause Fred's alive.

FRED

What!?

JOHN

Oh, nuthin'. Nevermind. Oh, have I got a headache.

DAVE

Look, John, cut the shit. That thing up there in the cockpit is real, real as any of us--and it can make us really dead. Now does anyone understand what it wants with us?

FRED

Well, we were talking about that. Amy thinks he eats human flesh to survive. I believe he's making a suit of human skin, using the best parts from each of us.

JOHN

Holy crap. He'll be gorgeous.

Dave sighs, rubs his forehead with both hands.

DAVE

Nooooo. It's none of that. Look, you know the story of the Trojan horse? A few soldiers get inside the enemy camp riding in this big horse statue? Well, that drug the Jamaican was on, it let something through. Robert became the horse. And those things, the white flying wormy things, they came through. Now they're in Justin and now he's looking to open the gate and let their buddies in.

AMY

How do you possibly know that?

DAVE

I pieced it together through inductive reasoning and information relayed to me by John whilst talking through the dog there.

Amy nods, as if this answer was proper and expected.

DAVE (CONT'D)

John, how much alcohol does liquor have to have in it before it'll burn?

JOHN

Anything over eighty proof. Those two boxes over there and that white box in the corner will make nice firebombs. Fred's flannel shirt should make good wicks.

AMY

What have you got in mind?

JOHN

When that Jusin-thing opens this door, I say we set his bitch ass on fire.

Later - Half a dozen full MOLOTOV COCKTAILS are lined up near the rear door, each with a fuse of wet cloth jutting out. John finishes the last one.

JOHN (CONT'D)
If I die, I want you to tell
everybody I died in the coolest way
possible.

AMY
Um, yeah, if I don't come back,
there's a loose floorboard under my
bed. There's a diary I need
retrieved and burned so my mom
doesn't find it.

DAVE
Consider it done.

John and Amy look to Fred.

FRED
Bring it on. I got no regrets.

John then looks to Dave.

JOHN
Dave, you got any final requests,
in case this don't end well?

DAVE
Yeah. Avenge my death.

62 EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD - NIGHT

62

The truck pulls through the entrance to the weed-choked parking lot surrounding the looming ABANDONED SHOPPING MALL. The place has been empty for a decade. Trash is strewn everywhere, a couple rusted-out car hulks are there. Windows are boarded up on the deteriorating brick structure, as are the front doors.

63 INT. BEER TRUCK - NIGHT

63

As the truck pulls up to a stop, John whispers...

JOHN
Okay, it's go time. You're gonna
have to throw the bottles hard,
really rear back and wing the
things at him.

They take positions in a circle by the door, each holding a high-proof cocktail. John, with his lighter, lights all the wicks. The latch clicks and scrapes.

The door slowly grinds open. A band of pale moonlight appears at the floor as the door slides upward. Surprisingly, Justin looks mostly normal, skin pale under the moonlight, blonde hair rustling in the stiff breeze.

Only now both of HIS EYEBALLS ARE PROTRUDING about six inches from his skull. The pupils at the end of their new white and pink stalks twist horribly in their direction, staring at the foursome for a very long and terrible moment.

They are so caught off guard by this image that it kills the momentum, all of them frozen, jaws hanging open, expecting the person next to them to make the first move.

Amy breaks the paralysis by weakly tossing a flaming bottle at Justin/Shitload. The Justin monster watches as it misses and bounces harmlessly to the ground, rolling to a stop. The wick flickers and goes out. Shitload curls his twin optical skull-erections down and looks at the sad bottle draining its contents into the dirt.

JUSTIN

Put that shit down, leave the dog
and come with me, fools.

They stand there a moment, then comply. Justin, seeming to realize his eyes are dangling from his skull, in a series of sickening, jerky neck movements, sucks them back in.

64 EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD ENTRANCE - NIGHT

64

Justin leads them across the dusty lot to the main mall entrance. One of the front doors is ajar. Propped next to the door is a FEDEX BOX which almost certainly was a delivery mistake. Justin pushes in through the door, indifferently kicking the box inside as he passes.

65 INT. MALL OF THE DEAD - NIGHT

65

Justin leads them through the dark concourse, boarded up and broken out mall shops on either side. The floor is a mess of trash and pools of water from the collapsing ceiling above. Justin turns and stops at a BLANK WALL.

John catches Dave's eye and, as they both stare hard at the wall, they can see an ILLUSORY IMAGE OF A LARGE DECORATIVE DOORWAY.

JOHN

(to Amy)

You see that door?

AMY

I see a wall. No door.

JOHN

(nods to Dave)

I feel like we should look for a
save point.

Justin grabs Amy by the collar.

JUSTIN

Yo, she'll be allowed to walk up
outta here if you all cooperate. I
need her to open the ghost door.
You know, she gives me a feeling I
enjoy in my pants. But if you give
me static or try to play the
motherfuckin' fool, when she's done
what I need, you'll watch as I melt
her body from the feet up. Bit at a
time, first the skin, then muscle,
then bone, joint by joint, over the
next twelve hours. You feel me,
dude?

FRED

Yeah, but what happens to us? I
mean, either way?

JUSTIN

That's a stupid-ass question. The
same thing happens to all you
people, regardless of what you do.
Now sit your white asses down.

One by one they sit, forming a circle.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

This world is shit, yo. How do you
people be gettin' around in this,
all in these bodies and shit? You
act all scared that I'm gonna kill
ya, when it's the best thing I
could do for you, yo. Deadworld,
man, it's alternating layers of rot
and shit and shit like that.

DAVE

Deadworld? Is that where you're
from?

JUSTIN

No, dude. That's where you're from.
It's where we are now. This place,
it's a horror show. If the guy next
to you decides to knock you out of
this world forever, he can do it
with just a piece of metal or,
hell, even his bare hand.

(MORE)

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

You blobs, you sit there, chillin' in this room and I can smell the rot of dead animals soaking in the acid of your guts. You suck the life from the innocent creatures of this world just so you can clock another day. You're machines that run on the terror and pain and mutilation of other lives. You'll scrape the world clean of every green and living thing until starvation goes 1-8-7 on every one of your sorry asses, your desperation to put off death leadin' to the ultimate death of everybody and everything. Dude, I can't believe you ain't all paralyzed by the pure, naked horror of this place.

There's silence as they all take this in.

JOHN

Uh, thank you.

John's eyes never move as he speaks, and suddenly Dave can see a look there, a confidence. Dave follows his gaze, back toward the front doors and sees what John is seeing. Dave quickly looks away again.

Suddenly there is a burst of movement, shuffling feet and shouts. John makes his move, on his feet, running and then diving. He skids on the floor and seizes the white FedEx box.

Shitload is on him fast, Bruce Lee-fast. He delivers a kick to John's gut that actually knocks him back a couple of feet and wrenches the box from his arms. Shitload looks baffled, moves to throw the box aside but stops cold. He looks at the label, then at John, then at Dave, then at the label again.

JUSTIN

What's in here?

John says nothing. Shitload stiffens his arm toward John in a 'Heil Hitler' motion. This confuses them for a second-before a SLIT APPEARS in Justin's palm and something like a MOUTH puckers there. A thin stream of thick, yellow ACID drips onto the floor, gathering in a small, smoking puddle that quickly eats through the tile floor with a soft hiss.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Tell me.

Dave looks at the label on the box. The package is addressed to "Care of John," to this mall on Highway 59.

DAVE FLASHES BACK: seeing the receipt for this package back in John's apartment.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)
 Tell me, or I'll melt your face,
 yo. What is it, like, a bomb?

JOHN
 Why don't you open it and we'll
 both find out?

JUSTIN
 Take it outside.

JOHN
 Okay.

John bends over to pick it up.

JUSTIN
 Stop! Leave it where it is.

JOHN
 Okay.

Justin tears open the box, roots around inside with his hand and then pulls out a sheet of wrinkled NOTEBOOK PAPER. Justin examines the big ink pen letters which read:

"JOHN LOOK OUTSIDE BY THE TRASH CAN NEAR THE FRONT DOORS"

Justin turns to John.

JUSTIN
 What's out there? A weapon? You
 tryin' to gank me?

John doesn't answer. Justin tosses aside the note and strides out the front doors. Through the doors they can indeed see a TRASH CAN out there. Justin walks out to it, looks down, kicks around at the base of it with his feet. He stands there for a moment, hands on his hips, when suddenly a THUNDEROUS BOOM echoes through the mall-

Justin is blown clear off his feet out onto the sidewalk. A mechanical ka-chunk of a pump shotgun is heard and a second shot sounds, then a third.

Seen through the doorway, a figure hurls a BUCKET OF LIQUID onto Justin's still moving corpse. Suddenly Justin's body erupts in a BALL OF FLAME.

From the darkness, in steps the Detective, loading shells into a pistol-grip RIOT GUN. He looks right at Dave, training the gun on him.

DETECTIVE
 I guess there's no gettin' rid of
 you.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
 (points gun away)
 There any more of 'em?

DAVE
 No, I don't think so.

DETECTIVE
 Come on. All of you. Let's get to my car.

As they scramble to their feet, John leans over and picks up his FedEx box. A PACK OF CIGARETTES and a LIGHTER slide out into his hand. He plucks one cigarette out, lights it.

66

INT. DETECTIVE'S SUV - NIGHT

66

Thirty seconds later they are all piled into an SUV. The Detective and Dave in front, John, Amy and Fred are in the back.

DAVE
 Those things you saw take over Justin-they're looking for hosts, okay? Now there was a drug that the guy, the one who exploded, was-

DETECTIVE
 Stuff is black, right?

DAVE
 Oh. You're, uh, familiar with it?

DETECTIVE
 Sounds like you and I both got long stories to tell. So anybody that takes this stuff is a potential host for those flying worm things?

DAVE
 Actually, I dunno.

The Detective rubs his eyes and jams the key into the ignition.

DETECTIVE
 I've been up 48 hours straight and this case ain't gettin' any clearer.

The Detective starts up the car and accelerates through the deserted mall parking lot.

DAVE
 Me too. Adrenaline keeps me goin'.

DETECTIVE

Yeah. That, and those loud,
piercing voices in my head.

DAVE

What kind of-

The cop's EYES EXPLODE. He shrieks as TWO SPRAYS OF BLOOD
fleck over the windshield. Amy screams. John and Fred bellow
"OH, FUCK," simultaneously.

LITTLE WHITE RODS POUR DOWN the cop's face, swirl around
inside the SUV. He lets go of the steering wheel. Dave grabs
for it.

67 EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

67

The SUV careens out of control, and with a shriek of tearing
metal, HITS A MALL PARKING LOT RAMP and FLIPS THROUGH THE
AIR. In a hellacious crash the vehicle finally bangs to a
stop in the middle of the parking lot. Silence.

68 INT. SUV - UPSIDE DOWN - NIGHT

68

Dave is hanging upside down by his seat belt. He gets his
bearings and cranes his neck over and sees HUNKS OF MEAT
flying off what had been the Detective in juicy ragged pink
and yellow layers. Out from the meaty shreds come rushing
masses of the TINY WHITE DEMON ROD THINGS, swirling around
the interior of the truck like rice in a blender. The swarm
makes a sound that's a kind of shrill electricity of madness,
screeches and howls.

Dave is frantic, patting around for the clasp to the seat
belt. The little white streaks are buzzing around his face
now, past his ears, skipping over his skin. Glass shatters in
the back seat as the others fight their way out. Dave runs
his hand over his forearm and a thousand of the rods scatter
off into the air. Suddenly, hands are grabbing Dave, pulling
at the seat belt. A hand comes into view and with a flick
there is suddenly a switchblade there, cutting at the strap.
John cuts Dave free and drags him out of the wreckage.

69 EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

69

Everybody is yelling, panicking at the sight of the cloud of
white insects blowing around Dave like pillow feathers. The
things now settle on Dave's arm again and are landing on his
neck and face. Dave brushes the things off, swats at them in
the air.

John comes running from the direction of the parked beer
truck, carrying one of their home-made Molotov cocktails.

69A EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

69A

He cracks the bottle, seizes Dave's arm by the wrist, and douses his arm with it. John then produces his lighter, and before Dave can react, sets Dave's arm on fire. Dave howls and John forces him down, rolling his arm in the dust, patting out the flames.

Dave sits up, tries to focus his eyes, tries to get to his feet, falls back down on his ass. He sees Amy on her knees in the dirt, bruised and battered. Molly is there, licking Amy's face.

Dave notices Fred, off by himself, thrashing around like he is on fire. The swarm has found him and the rush of the things pours out of the wrecked SUV like a kicked hornet's nest. They are pouring into Fred. He is coughing, choking, the rods gushing into his wide-open mouth. In seconds it is over and Fred collapses as if dead.

John and Dave stare toward Fred in dull shock, a silence settling over the scene. Only Amy moves. She sprints toward the upended SUV, roots around in there and grabs something.

Fred twitches, then flops onto his back, then clumsily gets to his feet. John and Dave flinch and scramble to their feet. Fred-if it is still Fred- looks confused for a moment, then brushes himself off.

FRED

It's okay, guys. I'm okay. I'm okay.

Amy comes back from the truck holding the detective's RIOT SHOTGUN and pushes it into Dave's hands.

FRED (CONT'D)

Whoa, guys. Guys, we're all shook up here. Okay?

AMY

(whispers)

That's not Fred. Not anymore.

FRED

Guys, look, I don't know what you think you saw but I'm still Fred in here. Ask me anything, I'm me. We were all in that car when the cop exploded. Any of us could be infected or whatever, but we gotta hang together. We're like, the good guys here. Right?

Dave looks down as if deferring to the shotgun. Molly lets out a low growl. Dave closes his eyes, lets out a long breath and relaxes the gun.

DAVE

Fred, go out to the highway and
flag down a car.

69B EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

69B

Relieved, Fred turns toward the highway. Dave waits for about five seconds, then steps forward, jerks up the shotgun and blows Fred's head off his shoulders. John sprints up toward Fred's prone body, begins dragging it.

JOHN

Get him to the wreck! These things
are starting to come out of him!

Amy sprints to help him and together with Dave's help they drag Fred's body back to the wreckage of the SUV and lay him against the rear door. A familiar FUZZY CLOUD is emerging from the ragged stump that had been Fred Chu's head.

69C EXT. MALL OF THE DEAD PARKING LOT - NIGHT

69C

Dave looks at it, stunned, until Amy rips the shotgun from his hands, turns and, one-handed, fires into the gas tank of the SUV. Fred Chu's corpse goes up in a massive fireball of flames, sending the three friends flopping to the ground. They all stumble to their feet, watching thousands of these little particles swarm out of Fred, burning like sparks over a stirred campfire. They back away from the fire, in the general direction of the mall.

JOHN

Do you think that's all of them?
The worms, whatever they are? Do
you think we got all of 'em?
Because I got a feeling that if
just a few of them get away, hell,
if just one of them gets out and
gets into a body, they'll multiply.
Lay eggs and do what they do.

As they pass the beer truck, John jumps onto the open tailgate. He grabs his GEAR BAG and begins rummaging through it. John pulls on a flannel shirt and a down vest.

DAVE

John, what're you doing now?

JOHN

I'm not gonna stand by while some
white fuzz from another dimension
invades our world and infects every
last man, woman and child. We're
gonna go through that ghost door
and clean house.

He tosses Dave an automatic PISTOL.

DAVE
What? Why?

JOHN
Cause we're the only ones who can.
We were chosen. By the Soy Sauce.
You in?

Dave sighs.

DAVE
Yeah. I guess so.

John holds out a BASEBALL BAT from his duffle. The head of the bat is wrapped with glued-on PAGES FROM THE BIBLE. Four large NAILS form spikes on the end. Dave slings it over his shoulder.

John pulls on a welder's FACE MASK with a wicked skull illustration on it, flips it up. He brandishes a cool PAINTBALL RIFLE, jacks in an AIR TANK which compresses with a soft whoosh. John displays a stickfeed TUBE filled with PAINTBALLS.

JOHN
Modified for spray or shoot. Filled
my balls with gasoline and holy
water. Dealer's choice. Come on.

John jumps down from the truck and leads them toward the mall.

70 INT. MALL OF THE DEAD - NIGHT

70

They move down the desolate dark corridor and arrive at the mysterious wall. The glimmering "ghost door" awaits them. John looks at Amy and nods.

JOHN
Ghost Door.

AMY
All I see is a wall.

John digs into his bag and hands Amy an old pair of cardboard 3D GLASSES. She puts them on and the door becomes visible.

AMY (CONT'D)
Oh. Cool.

John reaches for the ghost door knob and his hand passes right through it.

JOHN
Shit. It's a Ghost Knob.

With her good hand Amy reaches for the door knob and, like John, her hand passes right through the Ghost Knob.

DAVE
Doesn't make any sense. Justin,
Shitload, whatever his name was,
said he needed Amy to open it.

A look of determination crosses Amy's face.

AMY
I know why he wanted me.

Very deliberately, she loosens her prosthetic hand and drops it to the floor. Amy takes a deep breath and then reaches out with her stump toward the "ghost knob." As her stump nears the knob, an illusory PHANTOM HAND becomes visible. She flexes the phantom fingers, grabs hold of the knob and turns.

With a rumble, a VERTICAL SLIT forms in the wall and then tears open, widening. The wall MELTS and peels back like a curtain until there is a door-sized opening before them. Beyond it is a tiny, round room the size of an elevator. John steps through the door. Molly trots into the open doorway. Dave turns, puts his hands on Amy's shoulders.

DAVE
Go.

AMY
What? No.

DAVE
John and I are the only one's left
who know, the only ones who can do
anything about it. But you can get
out of here. Wait someplace safe.
Give us an hour. Then if we're not
back take my truck and-

AMY
David, I can't even drive.

Dave presses his cell phone into her hand.

DAVE
Then call a cab. I'm dead serious.
If we're not back in an hour. Take
the cab straight to the airport and
fly away, anywhere. Stay far away
from this town and forget you ever
knew me.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
 We've gone this far and you're
 still okay and I want to do this
 one good thing while I've got the
 chance.

Amy blinks back tears and gives Dave a quick kiss on the
 cheek. A bit surprised, Dave steps inside the round room.

AMY
 Wait, what about my dog?!

Instantly the wall FOLDS CLOSED.

71 INT. ROUND ROOM ELEVATOR - NIGHT 71

Suddenly Dave, John and Molly are thrown to the ceiling as
 their room plummets downward. They both howl in terror. Just
 as quickly, it comes to a smooth stop and the door opens.

72 INT. CYLINDER CAVERN - NIGHT 72

Dave, John and Molly move out into a large, domed cavern. In
 the center of the space is a large CYLINDER OF BLACK GLASS
 that disappears all the way up to the ceiling. They look
 around, but there appear to be no exits. From the darkness a
 FIGURE steps out. It is Roger North. Dave draws the pistol.

ROGER NORTH
 I have a thousand questions to ask
 but no time to ask them.

DAVE
 (to John)
 This is the guy, the one with the
 slug in my truck last night.

JOHN
 Okay Slug Man. Can you explain just
 what the fuck this place is?

Roger turns and looks at the black cylinder.

ROGER NORTH
 What do you think you're looking at
 there?

JOHN
 You're gonna be looking at my fist,
 and then Dave's dick, if you don't-

ROGER NORTH
 -Take a moment and try to
 understand what you're seeing.
 Imagine a garment, woven from a
 single thread.
 (MORE)

ROGER NORTH (CONT'D)
And imagine that same continuing thread was used to weave another garment similar to the first. So you have a thread that is simultaneously part of two garments, but at some point the thread stops being part of one garment and becomes part of the other.

John waves his hand impatiently.

JOHN
Who gives a shit?

North gestures toward the column.

ROGER NORTH
This is the thread. The key to ending this, is through here.

DAVE
You want us to go through what exactly? What's in there? Hell? Is that what happened, this thing opened up and a bunch of you monstrous fuckers came crawling in? That's why we've got so much weird shit in this town?

ROGER NORTH
The opening has always been here, you just needed the drug to see it. This is the reason sentient life began on your world. But no man has been able to travel back through this portal.

DAVE
(screams)
Then what the fuck are you talking about?

ROGER NORTH
The only ones who can travel back and forth are the Shadow Men. The ones who lived but have been torn from their bodies through death. They are unrestricted by matter and as such, can exist in one dimension and then the next. The column you see here is a containment that was built, but not by men. It's up to you two to pass through.

DAVE
You just said no one could-

ROGER NORTH

There is a reason why you have drawn so much interest, Mr. Wong. The others have devoted more time and resources than you can imagine to developing an ability to pass from one side to the next with no success. But now we realize that you and John here apparently can.

DAVE

Who's "we"?

ROGER NORTH

I have enlisted an ally from your world.

North turns away and from the darkness appear THREE SHADOWY FIGURES. Striding forward is Dr. Albert Marconi and his two black-clad female assistants!

DAVE

(scoffs)

You trusted this guy? He's just an infomercial dude.

JOHN

Don't be so hasty Dave. Dr. Marconi brings a lot to the table. I've listened to his discs. The guy knows his stuff.

DR. MARCONI

Thank you, John. The source of our current manifestation is on the other side of this portal. The entity is called Korrok.

DAVE

And what does this "Korrok" look like?

DR. MARCONI

No one in our current dimension can possibly know that.

DAVE

Great. That's specific.

DR. MARCONI

You'll know him when you see him. Believe me. He can't be destroyed by conventional means. But I do have a plan.

Marconi takes a small BACKPACK from his assistant and neatly slides out a small CHROME CYLINDER.

DR. MARCONI (CONT'D)
They call it the "Tripper."

DAVE
And it came from where, exactly?

DR. MARCONI
I have followers in the military.
This is an experimental Cold War
weapon designed to take down a city
the size of Moscow. Contained
inside this detonator is a block of
C-4 explosive, surrounded by a
highly-potent, military-grade
hallucinogenic. Obviously, it was
never used- but it should work. If
you get the opportunity, detonate
it...like this.

Marconi demonstrates the detonating sequence of the device.

DR. MARCONI (CONT'D)
It may not kill this Korrok. But
it'll certainly fuck up his shit.
Severely.

John takes the backpack.

JOHN
I like the concept, Doctor.

Dave looks to John, who nods with steely expression.

DAVE
Fine. How do we get in?

ROGER NORTH
Just decide that you want to, and
you will.

Dave steps up to the cylinder, reaches out a hand and touches
the surface. It's like cut black onyx. The column is as solid
as stone, but then suddenly Dave sees his fingers push into
it, like it was made of warm wax. His hand vanishes up to the
wrist and then elbow and then he disappears into blackness.

73

EXT. GREEN FIELDS - DAY

73

Dave falls into a beautiful field of tall grass. He gathers
his senses and climbs to his feet to find himself in an
immense expanse of sunny greenery with low grassy foothills
in the distance. John, Molly and their gear bag tumble to a
stop beside him.

A distance below a CROWD OF PEOPLE are moving uphill toward
their position.

There are a hundred, all wearing hoods, and otherwise NAKED, except for large cod-pieces. Dave notices that they are holding up a large, colorful BANNER on a pole. John gets to his feet and scans the hooded nakedness.

DAVE
(points to hills)
Look. It's the valley our town is
built in, but there's no town.

JOHN
(ogling the bare bodies)
Yeah, we're in an alternate
universe. And this is "Eyes Wide
Shut" world.

The crowd silently surrounds them. Molly sniffs the air.

From the crowd, a LARGE MAN emerges, no hood, wearing a suit, black with wide pinstripes, and a short, red tie. He spreads his arms.

LARGEMAN
Gentlemen. Welcome.

His face is human, but off. This is the face from Dave's TV. The man wears some kind of latex mask with wig.

LARGEMAN (CONT'D)
Come.

The man gestures in a direction and the crowd clears a path for them. Largeman leads the way through the naked crowd. Dave and John can now see the large banner clearly. It is a CARTOONISH PAINTING of Dave, depicted as a muscular warrior, Molly at his feet, teeth bared with the flesh of some slain enemy in her jaws. John is shown bearing a fistful of flame and with an enormously exaggerated crotch bulge.

LARGEMAN (CONT'D)
A select few interested parties
were allowed to come and observe
your arrival. Our style of dress
here is quite different, so we
thought removing the garments would
lessen your discomfort.

JOHN
Yes. It's a nice touch.

They are led down the gauntlet of nudity to a grassy hill. They reach a DOOR cut into the side of the hill, leading to an underground building. The door slides open and they are led down a hall to a large, round cathedral-type chamber.

FINAL SEQUENCES EXCLUDED AT REQUEST OF PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR.