

MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE

by
Stephen King

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
RE: SCRIPT CHANGES

PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGES. SCRIPT REVISIONS WILL NOT BE ISSUED FOR THESE AMENDMENTS. THEREFORE, NOTE CHANGES IN YOUR PRESENT SCRIPT.

1. The Patrons now have character names which do not appear in the script.

They are as follows:

- a. 1ST PATRON: BRAD
- b. 2ND PATRON: HARRY
- c. 3RD PATRON: MAX
- d. 4TH PATRON: ROLF
- e. 5TH PATRON: FRANK
- f. 6TH PATRON: HANDY

2. Other changes are as follows:

Appears as Change to Scene Page

Little League baseball 35 7
(per Hilton) 11 15
155 29
173 33

Space Invaders video game 68 15

Pepsi (machine) Soda Time
(machine) 74 16
82 17
89 17
90 18
Street Washing Steam Roller 83 17
Machine 85 17
86 17
Semi/18 Wheeler Killer
Tow Truck 350-F 68
352,353 69
355 69

FADE IN ON:

EXT. THE PLANET EARTH. FROM SPACE

It hangs in the center of the screen, enveloped in a gauzy film of atmosphere. Beyond that, nothing but black unwelcoming Space.

These words appear:

"On June 19th, 1987, at 9:47 A.M. EST, the Earth passed into the extraordinarily diffuse tail of Rhea-M, a rogue comet."

And although the darkness of space does not change, the envelope of atmosphere surrounding the earth begins to glow very faintly.

"According to astronomical calculations, the planet would remain in the tail of the comet for the next eight days, five hours, twenty-nine minutes, and twenty-three seconds."

The words FADE. CAMERA HOLDS ON THE EARTH, with its faintly glowing cloud of atmosphere.

SOUND, UP: TRUCKS, passing over the drawbridge grate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BENEATH THE WILMINGTON DRAWBRIDGE. DAY

We are looking up at MONTAGE of shots under the bridge. Darker Shapes -- cars and trucks -- pass back and forth overhead.

THE CAMERA PANS UP, through the drawbridge (via dissolve) and we see the grilled surface of the bridge. Cars and trucks rush back and forth around THE CAMERA.

During all this, CREDITS ROLL.

Final TITLE CARD:

WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA/9:47 A.M.

EXT. FIRST BANK OF WILMINGTON. DAY

There's one of those TIME and TEMPERATURE digital clocks on top of the bank. It is flashing 9:48 A.M. and 79 degrees. It does that twice... and then, instead of 9:48 the clock flashes FUCK. Instead of 79 it flashes YOU.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE BANK, WITH 1ST MAN AND 1ST WOMAN

They've been approaching the Automatic Teller. The 1ST MAN has a newspaper under his arm. On it we can read part of the headline about the comet. The 1ST MAN is looking up.

The 1ST WOMAN looks UP, following his gaze.

EXT. THE TIME AND TEMP SIGN. SIDEWALK POV

EXT. 1ST MAN AND WOMAN

WOMAN

Oh my goodness!

MAN

It's the comet. Everyone's got a case of the terminal sillies.

He approaches the Automatic Teller, takes out his wallet, and sticks his MoneyCard into the slot. The 1ST WOMAN -- his wife, I guess -- is still looking up at the sign, shading her eyes.

EXT. AUTO-TELLER VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL AND KEYBOARD

ENTER MONEYCARD NUMBER, PLEASE, the VCD display says.

MAN punches 2133 and EXECUTE. The screen blanks for a moment and then a new display comes up:

THANK YOU MR. REGINALD SPEAKES
249 CEDAR ST.
WILMINGTON NC.

MENU OF APPROVED TRANSACTIONS:

1. MAKE DEPOSIT TO SAVINGS ACCT.
2. MAKE DEPOSIT TO CHECKING ACCT.
3. MAKE WITHDRAWAL FROM SAVINGS ACCT.
4. MAKE WITHDRAWAL FROM CHECKING ACCT.
5. PERFORM OTHER TRANSACTION -

PLEASE PUSH APPROPRIATE BUTTON, ASSHOLE

EXT. 1ST MAN AND 1ST WOMAN

The 1ST MAN is absolutely stunned.

MAN
Honey, come here.

WOMAN (LOOKING AT SIGN)
If they catch whoever is
responsible for that, he will lose
his job.

MAN
This machine just called me an
asshole.

EXT. THE VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL, CU

The display changes to read: YOU ARE AN ASSHOLE.

EXT. 1ST MAN

His mouth drops open. He thumps the machine, and from the
slot below the VDT, it spews hundreds of blank checking
account receipts and wads of currency into his face.

1ST MAN AND WOMAN, MEDIUM SHOT, REVERSE

He's staring at the machine, which is still spewing money and deposit slips. The woman is scavenging money wildly. Others come and begin to grab at the dough.

THE SIGN

This shot is so close we can barely pick up the word for the dots.

DIE...DIE... DIE... over and over.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. ANGLE ON THE DRAWBRIDGE

Cars are passing back and forth on the bridge, as they do every day.

INT. DRAWBRIDGE OFFICE, WITH THE BRIDGEMASTER AND HELPER

The two of them are playing knock gin. The BRIDGEMASTER has his back to the drawbridge. The HELPER, who looks about as bright as your average two-pound can of Crisco, is facing it.

BRIDGEMASTER

I knock.

HELPER

Huh?

BRIDGEMASTER

Jesus! Do you know how to play this game?

HELPER

Sure.

BRIDGEMASTER

Then make your last draw.

THE CAMERA PANS LEFT, to the control panel. Suddenly all the controls start to run themselves.

EXT. DRAWBRIDGE APPROACH

Vehicles approach the bridge including the Dump Truck, Produce Truck a motorcycle and cars that will be models.

INT. THE BRIDGE MOTOR-ROOM

All at once, the huge motors which raise and lower the drawbridge spin into life.

INT. THE CONTROL PANEL IN THE BRIDGE OFFICE

Slowly, the lever marked BRIDGE goes down all by itself, as if pulled by an invisible hand.

EXT. THE WILMINGTON DRAWBRIDGE, MEDIUM SHOT

The drawbridge is starting to go up... and the traffic is still passing back and forth.

THE MOTORCYCLE DRIVER AND THE REAR OF THE TRUCK, 3/4 ANGLE

Were using the real bridge here, closed -- we've already sold the fact that its starting to open.

INT. A CAR ON THE BRIDGE APPROACH, WITH 2ND MAN AND WOMAN

WOMAN

The bridge is going up.

MAN

Can't be. The lights are green.

WOMAN

Yes, but it's going up.. stop,
John! Stop the car!

EXT. BRIDGE MONTAGE

JANGLES and BANGS as fenders are crimped. Horns blast the air.

Intercut here are shots of the stopped traffic, close-ups of cars and trucks trying to hold their places as the angle of the road steepens beneath them, longer shots of our model opening.

People are getting out of their cars and running.

Directly in front of the 2ND MAN and WOMAN'S car is a big truck loaded with produce. As the angle steepens, the truck's back doors swing open and watermelons start to roll out of the truck onto the 2ND MAN and WOMAN'S car.

As the bridge rises at a steeper and steeper angle, the cars skid backwards, crushing those which were behind and are now below. There are screams -- both human and metallic. People are going to be killed.

At the very top, a big dump-truck has been caught at the place where the bridge is splitting open.

EXT. BRIDGE

The motorcycle is in front of the produce truck. As the bridge goes up, the MOTORCYCLIST will abandon his vehicle. It will slide into the produce truck. The MOTORCYCLIST reaches the rail, then falls.

EXT. THE MOTORCYCLIST. FROM THE TOP OF THE BRIDGE

He slides down and out of sight along the side of the produce truck just like a kid down a slide.

INT. THE DUMP TRUCK, WITH THE DUMP TRUCK DRIVER

He is scared crapless, and who could blame him? The river is opening up underneath him.

SOUND, MAGNIFIED: The bridge going up.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE SPLITTING DRAWBRIDGE. WITH THE DUMP TRUCK

The Wilmington side rises out from under the rear of the truck. It shifts backwards. The rising tongue of the bridge peels off the back of the truck-bed as if it were paper.

INT. THE DUMP TRUCK

The DUMP TRUCK DRIVER SCREAMS as the cab tilts backwards and upwards.

In a last despairing effort, he shifts and floors the gas.

EXT. THE DUMP TRUCKS REAR WHEELS, CU

EXT. THE DRAWBRIDGE AND THE DUMP TRUCK

The dump truck plunges down into the river.

SOUND: The driver. SCREAMING.

Splash!

EXT. THE BRIDGE

It stops, all the way up. At the foot of both slopes are big bloody piles of Detroit rolling iron.

EXT. THE BRIDGEMASTER AND HIS HELPER

The BRIDGEMASTER is badly shocked. Tears are streaming slowly down his face. Hopeless SCREAMS fill the air from the twin accident sites.

BRIDGEMASTER

That's impossible. Light's green...
crossbars never went down...

HELPER

Huh?

The BRIDGEMASTER turns and slugs him, knocking him on his butt.

BRIDGEMASTER (SCREAMS)
SHUT UP! SHUT UP, YA FUCKIN IGNATS
ASSHOLE! CAN'T YOU SEE WE GOT A
SITUATION HERE?

HELPER
Huh?

EXT. THE DRAWBRIDGE, WIDE

It stands serenely open with carnage and bloodshed at each of its feet.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY TRUCK STOP. DAY

This truck stop, set in wide turn-out at one side of a rather elderly divided highway, about a mile from the turnpike, will be one of our major settings.

The left-hand section of the long low building is a restaurant. One of the signs in the window says GOOD EATS. BEST HUSH PUPPIES IN THE SOUTH, says another; TRY' EM AND JUST TELL US WE'RE WRONG!

The fuel stations are in front, the garage behind. There is parking on either side of the back lot. Several are parked in either location.

STEVE GAYTON is fueling two trucks in front of the Dixie Boy.

The signs by the road say DIXIE-BOY TRUCK STOP and VIDEO GAMES and SHOWER FACILITIES.

SOUND: Clattering plates, frying eggs, and the electronic poosh-poosh-poosh of the Spice Invaders game.

EXT. THE FUEL OFFICE, WITH DUNCAN AND JOE

DUNCAN is the fuel-station manager. Both men are wearing coveralls with their names on them in gold thread.

JOE

You get Mickey Mantle to his Little League Game?

DUNCAN

Yeah. You can joke all you want. He put three shots over the fence. One of 'em must have gone 250 feet.

EXT. THE FUEL ISLANOS

A new truck pulls in. HAPPYTOYZ. The cheerful trailer says; Here Comes Another Load Of Joy!

This is our lead villain truck, a black Freightliner long-nose conventional with a nasty vapid face.

The driver, HANDY MCKAY, turns off the engine when he gets to the pumps and opens the door.

EXT. THE FUEL OFFICE, WITH DUNCAN AND JOE

JOE starts for the pumps

DUNCAN

No, I'll get him -- if I look at those numbers in there any longer I'll go nuts.

EXT. BY THE FUEL OFFICE

DUNCAN

Handy, you son of a bitch! Thought you was down in Texas!

HANDY

That was last week. You like that huh?

DUNCAN

Yeah, that's some rig all right.

HANDY

Give her a big drink, will you?
I gotta have some coffee.

DUNCAN

Right.

HANDY heads for the Dixie-Boy Restaurant.

INT. THE DIXIE-BOY RESTAURANT

It's not very crowded right now -- the clock on the wall says 9:50. It's too late for breakfast and a little too early for a coffee break.

A big plate-glass window runs the length of the restaurant, giving a view on the parking lot, some of the pumps, and the highway.

Booths run along this wall of windows, so presumably the truckers consider all this a more or less scenic view.

There are a couple of guys in the booths. A couple more are at the counter.

To the left is an alcove with a sign above which reads THE VIDEO STOP -- NO PROFANITY OR LOITERING!

There are maybe 7 customers behind the counter.

WANDA JUNE, a waitress, is futilely trying to tune the radio.

Chalked on the SPECIALS blackboard: TRY OUR COMET-BURGER! IT IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!!

Behind the partition dividing the service area from the kitchen, we can see BILL ROBERTSON, the fry-cook, moving about

WANDA JUNE

Well this damn thang!

HANDY
What's the matter, hon?

INT. WANDA JUNE, CLOSER

WANDA JUNE
This thang was workin' just fine
a few minutes ago and now I cain't
get pea-turkey on it.

She goes on trying to tune the radio.

HANDY
You want to bring me a white coffee
when you get done jerkin' on that
thing, darlin?

INT. THE SHORT ORDER AREA, WITH BILL ROBERTSON

He's a good-looking young guy of maybe twenty-two. He's normally got a cheerful sort of "I'll bullshitya if I can" face, but now he looks thoughtful and a little sullen. He's got four eggs in his hands. He cracks them and there they are, frying on the grill, quick as a wink.

HENDERSHOT (VOICE)
Robertson!

BILL looks up, then looks down at his cooking again.

INT. THE HALLWAY TO THE OFFICE, WITH HENDERSHOT

The owner of the Dixie-Boy is a stocky cigar-smoker with a face simultaneously hard and sneaky-smooth. He looks like the kind of guy who could simultaneously pick your pocket, feel up your wife, and steal your silverware. He's holding a strip of buff-colored paper.

HENDERSHOT
Robertson! Git in here, boy!

INT. BILL

BILL
I got eggs on.

INT. HENDERSHOT

HENDERSHOT
I don't give a ladybug! Git in
here, boy!
(yells)
Wanda June, shut off that radio and
mind them aigs for Billy.

INT. WANDA JUNE

She shuts off the buzzing radio, walks down the counter,
flips up the partition, walks through.

WANDA JUNE
It was workin' fine before!

INT. THE VIDEO ALCOVE, WITH VIDEO CUSTOMER

He's playing one of three or four video games in the middle
of the room. The others are showing their "come-on" phases.

There are a couple of pinball machines along the back wall.

Along the left wall are vending machines plus two pay
telephones. Vending machines: cigarettes, snacks, coffee.

The VIDEO CUSTOMER is intent on his game. He's really into
it.

Suddenly, the game's normal pattern explodes in colors and
swirls.

All the games come alive.

VIDEO CUSTOMER
What the fuck!

He's stunned. All the machines are going crazy. The pinball machines spit out dozens of balls.

The cigarette machine spews pack of cigarettes and change; the coffee machine jets coffee onto the floor; the snacks came pouring out, along with more change; money falls out of the coin returns of the phones.

The VIDEO PATTRON stares at all of this, stunned.

EXT. AN ISLAND OF DIESEL PUMPS IN FRONT OF THE DIXLE-BOY

DUNCAN is filling HANDY'S truck. Suddenly there is a METALLIC SCREECHING SOUND. DUNCAN looks at his pump. The numbers have frozen.

He taps the glass. Nothing. He hammers on top of the pump. Nothing. He pulls the nozzle from the fill-pipe and looks into it. Diesel fuel sprays promptly into his face. DUNCAN falls to the gravel, shrieking.

DUNCAN

My eyes! My eyes! MY EYES!!

INT. HENDERSHOTS DESK, CU

The buff-colored time-card comes down. WILLIAM ROBERTSON is written across the top, and below are the usual time-clock punches. At the top right of the time-card is a small red stick-on star.

HENDERSHOT

You punched in at 6:58 this morning, mah friend.

INT. HENDERSHOT'S OFFICE, WITH HENDERSHOT AND BILLY

BILL

What's wrong with that?

HENDERSHOT

Ain't nothin' wrong with it. 'Cept that's also the time you came In

BILL

What are you talking about?

HENDERSHOT

You bein' ob-tuse, Billy-boy. Ain't no need for you t'be ob-tuse. Smart ole college boy like you.

He leans back and folds his hand on his paunch, he stares at BILLY.

HENDERSHOT

I'm gonna tell you this just once more, boy. You git in here at 5:45 and you have your cuppa coffee and then you dice up them taters for home fries and you squeeze the awange juice and you dump them last two dish-trucks from the night before and then maybe have you another cuppa coffee and a little smoke. Then it's gonna be seven o'clock an you can punch in an go to work. You--

A BUZZER sounds on HENDERSHOT'S intercom, he leans over and thumbs it.

HENDERSHOT

Yeah?

INT. THE FUEL AREA OFFICE

STEVE GAYTON is bent over the desk, speaking into the intercom. He looks freaked out. Behind him, JOE is bending over DUNCAN, who lies on a cot with his hands to his face.

STEVE

It's Steve Gayton, Mr. Hendershot, Duncan Kellers had an accident.

INT. HENDERSHOT

HENDERSHOT

Oh, shitty! What happened to him?

INT. THE FUEL OFFICE, WITH STEVE

STEVE

Got diesel in his eyes. I'll be damned if I know how.

INT. HENDERSHOT'S OFFICE

HENDERSHOT

Is that all? Flush his eyes and leave me alone! I got me some talkin' to do in here!

He flicks off the intercom and looks back at BILL

HENDERSHOT

I got to wipe everyone's ass around here. Its a shitty job, but I reckon somebody's got to do it, ain't that a fact, bubba?

BILL

You want me to work nine hours a day and clock for eight.

HENDERSHOT (ADMIRING)

Now I know you been to college!

BILL

I dont think so, Mr. Hendershot. Not this kid.

He stands up. HENDERSHOT taps the red star in the corner of BILL'S time card. He's still smiling, but there is an ugly cast to it now.

HENDERSHOT

You know what this star means, dont you? You ain't that ob-tuse, are you? On parole, boy! Your ass either b'longs to me or it b'longs to the state of North Carolina! You either spend forty-five hours a week dippin' dishes and fryin' aigs and get paid for forty, or YOU spend sixty a week cuttin' brush along the highways an byways in the hot sun and you don't get paid a cent! Now what you think?

BILL looks like he's going to walk out just the same.

HENDERSHOT

Go on. You walk out that door and I pick up this phone and call your parole officer.

BILL

This is one helluva racket, isn't it?

HENDERSHOT

You think we've reached an understandin' here, college boy?

BILL

I guess maybe we have.

HENDERSHOT

Well that's fahn! Put this back for me on your way by, would you?

He slides BILL'S time-card across the desk. After a moment BILL takes it and leaves, slamming the door. HENDERSHOT doesn't mind; he looks well-pleased.

ANGLE ON THE BOOTHS, FEATURING ROLF

He's sitting in a booth by himself. A couple of booths away, in the B.G. (to the right of the frame) we can see HARRY and BRAD in another booth, having coffee and Danish.

INT. SHORT ORDER AREA

CUSTOMER (VOICE)
Hey, those aigs comin' Pony
Express, or what?

WANDA JUNE (FLUSTERED)
Be right there, sir!
(over her shoulder)
Bill-eee!

BILL AT THE TIME CLOCK

There are twenty cards or so. Over half of them have those little red stars.

INT. BILL

BILL (AMAZED, DISGUSTED)
Jesus!

WANDA JUNE (CRZED VOICE)
Hurry up. Billy!

He starts toward her.

INT. WANDA JUNE

The electric knife has worked its way to the edge of the grill. The blade is pointing at WANDA JUNE. She reaches to get sausages to slap on the grill. The knife suddenly turns on and saws into her arm.

WANDA JUNE shrieks as blood sprays across the counter. She pushes the electric knife away exactly as a person would push away a wasp that has stung them.

It falls off the counter onto the floor. This knife, by the way, is not a plug-in job; it has batteries in the handle.

INT. THE FLOOR

The electric knife hits the floor, turns around twice, erratically, as if orienting itself, and then begins to chop at WANDA JUNE'S white waitress shoes.

INT. WANDA JUNE

She's holding her arm against her chest, smearing her uniform with blood. As the knife begins to nip at her feet she stumbles backward... and half-falls onto the hot grill. She screams, and BILL catches her, holds her, pulls her away.

WANDA JUNE (SHRIEKING)
IT'S BITING ME! MAKE IT STOP BITING
ME!

BILL (BEWILDERED)
What is?

WANDA JUNE
That knife! That knife!

As concerned counter-patrons come through the partition or lean over to see what's going on, WANDA JUNE points at:

INT. THE KNIFE, BILL'S AND WANDA JUNE'S POV

Just lying there on the floor, turned off. "Who, me?"

INT. THE GRILL AREA WITH BILL, WANDA JUNE, SOME PATRONS

PATRON
That knife go rabid on you sweet
thing?

WANDA JUNE (SOBBING)
It turned itself on... and it bit
me!

BRAD
Short circuit, maybe.

He bends over. THE CAMERA STAYS WITH HIM. He reaches toward the knife. The knife turns on, pivots on its white plastic handle, and saws off one of his fingers just as neat as you please.

He SCREAMS. The knife goes to work on someone's Georgia Giant workboot.

INT. BILL AND THE OTHERS

All of them draw away but BILL. The 1ST PATRON is screaming and clutching his spouting stump of his finger.

WANDA JUNE
There it goes again! Its doing it
again!

BILL edges forward. The electric knife spins and buzzes on the floor.

INT. THE HALL TO HENDERSHOTS OFFICE

HENDERSHOT comes out of his office and starts up the hall to the grill area.

HENDERSHOT (BAWLING)
What-in-the-name-of-sweet-Jesus-Is-
going-on-out-there?

INT. BILL AND THE RABID KNIFE

He kicks it. Hard. The knife flies against the wall. The battery cover pops off and the batteries fly out. The knife dies at once.

INT. THE VIDEO GAMES ROOM, WITH THE VIDEO PATRON

At first we can't see him. All the games have gone back to their previous "come-on" stages.

THE CAMERA COMES IN AND PANS LEFT. The VIDEO PATRON is down on his knees in front of the cigarette machine, grubbing for change. He's loaded all of his pockets (and with chino work-clothes he's got a lot of pockets) with cigarette packs, snacks, and change. He's even got three or four packs of cigarettes stuffed under his hat. When he gets up and starts for the door we can see patches of coffee on the knees of his pants.

He JINGLES as he walks.

His movements are furtive. He means to escape. Gets halfway to the door when all the phones start ringing. He turns, startled, and all the machines light up again. He is drawn to the one he was originally playing, as if hypnotized. He touches it and is enveloped in weird blue fire. He's being electrocuted before our very eyes. He JINGLES MADLY. He flies against the wall. Cigarettes fall out of his pockets, his hat, his shirt. He is dead.

INT. THE GRILL AREA, WITH BILL, HENDERSHOT, WANDA JUNE, OTHERS

SOUNDS: Bam! Ka-boom! and also Ba-ROOM!

HENDERSHOT

Now what?

BILL starts in the direction of the explosions, as a good hero should.

INT. THE RINGING TELEPHONES IN THE VIDEO ROOM

THE CAMERA holds on the phones, then moves to a wildly flashing video game, then to another, then to a pinball machine that is an orgasm of lights and bells.

Last, to the VIDEO PATRON. He is propped against the wall, dead, eyes open and starting from their sockets. His lap is full of cigarette packs. His skin is smoking.

INT. BILL, IN THE VIDEO ROOM DOORWAY

BILL (SOFT)
What in hell is going on here?

INT. THE FUEL OFFICE

DUNCAN is lying on the cot in the back, a wet cloth over his eyes. He's moaning. STEVE GAYTON hovers around him like a mother hen.

JOE comes out of the bathroom with a fresh cloth.

JOE
Is it any better, Dunc?

DUNCAN
Not yet, I dont think... Jesus, it hurts!

JOE swaps the rag over DUNCAN'S eyes for the one he's just brought.

THE CAMERA RACKS FOCUS to the smiling picture of DUNCAN'S son, DEKE, on his cluttered desk.

EXT. A SUBURBAN LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD

SOUND: The crack of a bat against a ball. Runners advance.

EXT. HOME PLATE AND THE THIRD BASE LINE

DEKE, the boy in the picture, comes tearing down the line. He slides as the catcher receives the ball. The catcher's fast, but DEKE slides under the tag attempt.

UMPIRE
Safe!

EXT. THE FIELD, A WIDER SHOT

The COACH makes his way through the mob, mock-scowling.

COACH

Who gave you the green light, boy?

DEKE (GRINNING)

My conscience, Coach.

They all laugh. The COACH finally grins.

COACH

Come on... sodas. I'm buying.

He leads them toward a soda machine by the backstop. In the b.g., along the first-base line, we see a pitching machine.

The COACH goes toward the Pepsi machine while DEKE and the other kids talk or pick up equipment. He drops a couple of quarters into it and pushes a button.

Cans suddenly spew out of all the delivery sockets. This is funny, but no joke. One of the cans hits a kid in the gut. He falls down, moaning. Another strikes the COACH in the balls, he collapses, screaming. The boys are stunned. A couple go toward the COACH.

EXT. THE PEPSI MACHINE

Spewing cans.

EXT. THE PITCHING MACHINE

It jerks into life and suddenly begins to throw fastballs at a rate only a bit slower than a Browning machine-gun.

EXT. THE BOYS

They are under attack. Several are hit, most glancingly, one or two severely -- one kid runs off, screaming, with blood pouring through the fingers he has pressed to his mouth.

DEKE lifts an arm and takes a ball on the arm.

BOY

What's happening?

DEKE
I dont know!

EXT. THE PITCHING MACHINE

Spitting out balls

EXT. THE BOYS

One is hit in the temple and drops like a stone. The others run... except for DEKE, he starts toward the COACH.

EXT. THE COACH

He gets to his knees.

COACH
No! Get away!

EXT. THE PEPSI MACHINE

It spits a can at supersonic speed.

EXT. DEKE AND THE COACH

COACH
Get --

The can hits him in the back of the head. He falls forward.

A baseball hits DEKE on the shoulder. He turns and heads toward the place where most of the others have gone: a chain-link fence at one side of the ball-field where bikes have been parked. A tall, rickety scoreboard stands nearby.

SOUND: A rising ENGINE SNARL.

A municipal street-washing machine comes crashing through the scoreboard and heads for two of the boys who are already pedaling away.

EXI. THE TWO ESCAPING BOYS

They look back, scream, swerve in different directions.

EXT. THE STREET-WASHER

It swerves after one of the boys... and runs him down.

EXT. DEKE

He winces away from this, horrified... and then, runs for the bikes.

He gets on his, mounts up, and pedals away, looking back over his shoulder to make sure the street-washer isn't following him. All the others have already left.

EXT. THE PITCHING MACHINE

It stops throwing.

THE BALL-FIELD

Thrown balls and cans of soda lie all over the infield, The COACH and several boys, are hit either by cans or balls, lie either dead or unconscious.

EXT. THE PEPSI MACHINE

EXT. HOME PLATE

The can hits in front of it... rolls onto it... and stops. First can of Pepsi in history to make a home run.

EXT. A STRETCH OF TWO-LANE HIGHWAY

This is the road which eventually goes past the Dixie-Boy Truck Stop. Here comes a red Cadillac. It rolls past THE CAMERA.

INT. THE CADDY

The driver is CAMP LOMAN, a traveling salesman. He's fat, wears an old-fashioned fedora, and looks like Lee J. Cobb. The back of the car is piled high with boxes of stuff. His sample case, which looks like a briefcase, is on the floor.

The passenger is BRETT BROOKS, a pretty young hitchhiker. BRETT looks tough but it's at least in part a pose; she's much sweeter than she would like us to believe at first. She's wearing scuffed boots and jeans faded almost white. There's a backpack sitting on her right knee. She's trying to tune the radio and getting nothing but static.

CAMP

Might as well give up on that,
sugar-pie. I guess I got a bust
antenna, or somethin'. Ain't been
able to get squat for the last half
hour or so.

He puts a friendly hand on her left thigh. BRETT breaks off trying to tune the radio and looks first at his hand, then at CAMP.

He smiles but doesn't take his hand away. So she does, picking it up and putting it back on his own leg.

CAMP

How far you going up the road sugar-
pie?

INT. BRETT, CU

As she bends toward the radio and starts tuning it again:

BRETT (LOW)

That depends on how long you can
keep your hands to yourself.

INT. THE CADILLAC, WITH CAMP AND BRETT

CAMP

I didn't quite catch that.

BRETT

I said I don't really know.

But what CAMP really wants to do is resume the story of his life, which he is always eager to tell. Since it's the best one he knows.

CAMP

Kinda driftin', huh? I know how it is. Been driftin all my life. I swanny! So when I come up here --

BRETT has found a voice on the radio.

BRETT

Shhh! I got something!

INT. RADIO

RADIO NEWSCASTER (VOICE)

"...all over the country and, as far as we can tell right now, all over the world. We will have further bulletins as they came in, but for the moment, let me repeat this urgent message: If you are on or near a major highway, get away at once.

INT. THE CADDY, WITH CAMP AND BRETT

BRETT reacts to this, but CAMP is far away, thinking about at the wonders of his life.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (VOICE CONTINUES)

"If you are in a motor vehicle, stop and get out, It appears that the comet, Rhea-M. has caused..."

Static overcomes the voice.

BRETT

Shit!

She begins to tune the radio again but there is nothing.

CAMP

Whats wrong, sweet thing?

He puts his hand on her thigh again, higher this time. They are coming up on the Dixie-Boy Truck Stop

BRETT

Pull in there. And if you dont get your hand off my leg, you're going to be wiping your ass with a hook the next time you have to take a dump.

Good ol' CAMP pulls his hand back as if it were hot -- the girls you picked up hitching never used to talk that way in his day. It looks for a moment or two as if he's going to drive right on by the Dixie-Boy.

BRETT grabs the wheel and yanks it.

CAMP

Hey! What are you doing?

EXT. THE PARKING AREA OF THE DIXIE-BOY

This whole area is crushed gravel. The Cadillac swerves in and stops on a slant about halfway between the lot where the semis are parked and the fueling area.

INT. THE CADILLAC, WITH CAMP AND BRETT

CAMP

You gone crazy, girl?

BRETT

Did you hear what that man said?

CAMP
Are you on something?

BRETT
Oh Jesus.

She gets out and strides toward the restaurant.

CAMP
Hey! Hey, dont you just walk away
from me like that!

He's good and mad. He grabs his sample case, gets out of the car, and goes after her.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY FUELING AREA

JOE, the fuel-jockey we last saw taking care of DUNCAN KELLER, is fueling HANDY'S HAPPYTOYZ truck.

INT./EXT. CAMP AND BRETT, TRUCKS POV

We are looking through a GREEN FILTER -- perhaps the truck's awakening mind, perhaps only the windshields polarized glass. Either way, we see BRETT headed for the restaurant taking no-nonsense strides.

INT. TRUCK DASHBOARD

There is no key in the ignition, but the ignition turns.

SOUND: MOTOR RUMBLES TO LIFE.

EXT. FUELING AREA, WITH JOE

JOE (REACTS)
Hey!

The truck begins to roll.

JOE
Hey, you ain't full yet! You --

The hose snaps and diesel fuel sprays as the truck keeps on going, gathering speed.

EXT. BRETT AND CAMP

They've almost reached the restaurant.

CAMP

Sometimes I think everyone in the whole damn world has forgot what good manners is! I give you a gol-dang ride and lookit all the garbage comin' out of your mouth! I swanny I dont know what the w--

SOUND: The oncoming truck.

BRETT hears it just as she reaches the restaurant door. She turns left. Her eyes widen in shock and fear as she sees:

EXT. THE ONCOMING TRUCK. BRETT'S POV

It's roaring straight into THE CAMERAS startled eye -- to the people in the first three rows of the theater, it's going to look like that truck is coming right down their throats.

EXT. BRETT AND CAMP

The girl is fast -- very fast. Before CAMP has the slightest idea what's going on, she yanks him out of the way. CAMP stumbles; he may actually fall down.

CAMP

What-the-hell --

The truck suddenly fills the place where they were standing less than two seconds ago.

EXT. THE TRUCK, A NEW ANGLE

It roars across the yard and stops by the little picnic area.

EXT. THE PUMP ISLANDS, WITH JOE

He's holding the shredded remains of the hose. It's still dribbling diesel fuel.

JOE

Shit! What a morning this turned
out to be!

EXT. THE TRUCK PARKING LOT

Once more THE CAMERA PANS the trucks. They stand shoulder to shoulder, seeming to frown down at us. They are silent... for now.

EXT. A STRETCH OF DESERTED ROAD WITH AN OLD PLYMOUTH FURY

The remains of crepe streamers flutter from the car. Someone has soaped JUST MARRIED on the rear window. THE CAMERA TRACKS THE CAR as it passes, and up ahead we see a rural station.

INT. THE PLYMOUTH FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE SPAULDING

They're both cute as kittens and look all of seventeen. She's cuddled up to her brand-new hubby so close that you couldn't even get a shoe-horn between them.

CURT

We got to get some gas.

CONNIE

Thats good, cause I got to
go to the ladies.

CURT

Can I come in and watch?

CONNIE (SLAPS AT HIM)

No you cannot come in an watch!

EXT. THE FURY

It passes an old junkyard, and in it the headlights of several junked cars wink and flash... as if to signal their arrival.

THE FURY - A NEW ANGLE

It crosses a railroad track and approaches a gas station. As it does, the signal-lights by the crossbars wink a baleful red.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE

CURT is looking up into the rear-view mirror thoughtfully. He knows damn well he's seen something, but what?

CURT

Did you see --

CONNIE

What, honey?

CURT

Nev' mind.

EXT. THE FURY

It turns into the gas station. On the corner is a plant in a pot.

Sticking out front behind is a bloody hand and arm... maybe part of a head.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE

They both see him at the same time.

CONNIE

Is that -- ?

CURT

Oh Jesus!

CONNIE screams and turns away, burying her face in her hands.
CURT stops the car and springs out.

EXT. CURT

He runs to the body of the ATTENDANT and looks. Urk. The ATTENDANT looks like Dinty Moore Beef Stew with a lot of ketchup mixed into it.

One look and CURT looks ready to blow some chunks.

CONNIE

Curt? Curtis? Is he daid?

He looks around at:

EXT. CONNIE, CURTS POV

Shes walking hesitantly toward him.

EXT. CURT

CURT

No, honey. Get back in the car.
You dont want to see this, and
the whole thing smells funny.

He walks slowly toward the office, not liking the creepy silence.

SOUND: Motor. Loud. And CURT turns toward:

EXT. THE GAS STATION

From around the corner, where it was hiding, comes a killer tow truck.

EXT. CONNIE

CONNIE (SCREAMS)

LOOK OUT!

EXT. THE GAS STATION TARMAC, WIDE

CURT manages to jump aside, more by good luck than by skill. The tow-truck hits the pump islands and jounces over them, knocking two of the pumps down. It squeals around in a power turn and stands still for a moment, its engine revving and idling down, revving and idling down.

CONNIE (SHRIEKS)
THERES NOBODY IN IT!

CURT glances briefly at her, then back at the tow-truck. His whole attention is focused on it. This is a good ole boy, and maybe he didn't do all that well in school, but he recognizes that he's in a life-or-death situation and is prepared to cope with that as it comes. He's like a toreador awaiting the charge of a bull.

The truck comes at him. CURT dives to the left and the truck heads that way. He leaps to the right instead, hitting the tarmac, rolling, and getting up at once.

The truck slues around in another power turn and faces him. The engine revs and idles down. It's the bull again, pawing the ground.

CURT speaks without taking his eyes off the grill of the truck.

CURT
Get behind the wheel.

CONNIE
Curt, what--

CURT
Get behind the wheel!

She does.

The truck charges again. CURT leaps aside again, and this time it almost gets him.

EXT. THE KILLER TOW-TRUCK

Racing across the tarmac. It brakes, but too late, It crashes into a litter of boards, discarded car doors and snarls of wire.

EXT. CURT AND CONNIES FURY

He throws himself into the passenger seat.

CURT
Go! Go! Go!

She pulls out onto the highway, fast.

EXT. THE FURY, A NEW ANGLE

It shoots back the way it came, toward the railroad tracks. The signal lights come on; the guard-posts come down all by themselves.

The Fury comes to a screeching halt.

INT. THE FURY

CONNIE screams.

CURT
The other way! Move it! Move it!

EXT. THE FURY

It skids around in a fast turn and starts off down the road toward the Dixie-Boy.

EXT. CLOSE ON THE DEAD GAS STATION ATTENDANT

SOUND: The tow-truck howling and roaring.

CAMERA PANS UP TO THE TRUCK as it finally pulls free, pulling wire and boards after it. It turns after the Fury, with wire and splintered boards sticking out of it's grille.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE

CONNIE (FREAKED OUT)

What was that all about? How could
that truck be driving itself? Whats
happening?

CURT

I dont know. I dont know.

THE DIXIE-BOY TRUCK STOP

The GARBAGE HAULER pulls in and heads for the transient
parking lot.

INT. HENDERSHOT AND JOE, IN THE DOORWAY OF THE VIDEO ROOM

HENDERSHOT

Stone the crows.

Puts a cigar in his mouth

INT. THE VIDEO ROOM, HENDERSHOT AND JOES POV, WIDE

A shambles. Machines burnt out. Litters of cigarettes,
cookies, snackin'cakes. etc. No body.

INT. HENDERSHOT AND JOE IN THE DOORWAY, MEDIUM

HENDERSHOT

Did you do like I said with him?

JOE

Got him, downstairs, sure. He was
pretty crispy. What happened, Mr.
Hendershot?

HENDERSHOT (LIGHTS CIGAR)

Fucked if I know.

INT. THE RESTAURANT

CAMP LOMAN and BRETT BROOKS are still recuperating from their close shave. The PATRONS -- about eight of them -- have gathered around.

WANDA JUNE is also there, the blood on her uniform now drying to a maroon color. And HENDERSHOT, lighting a cigar.

CAMP

What in the dickens is going on here?

BILL ROBERTSON

That's a good question, isn't it?

MAX

That was your rig wasn't it, HANDY?

HANDY

Yeah.

JOE

Then, who was driving it?

HANDY

I dunno. But he must have been a hot-wire champeen.

From his pocket he takes the keys to his rig and holds them up for the delectation of those foregathered here. Bill heads for the door.

BRETT

I wouldn't go out there, my friend. The radio says there's something wrong with a lot of trucks and cars this morning. It's the comet.

HENDERSHOT

Horsepucky!

CAMP

Amen!

BILL

I'll be all right.

He goes out.

EXT. THE GRAVEL LOT. FEATURING THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

It's sitting with its nose in the picnic area. It's not running.

EXT. ANGLE ON BILL ROBERTSON

He approaches the truck. He looks very small and very vulnerable walking beside this steel behemoth. He pauses by the drivers side door, then gets up on the running board and looks in.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK. BILL'S POV

Empty, of course. There's a pine air freshener hanging from the roof.

A crucifix on one sunvisor and a Playboy bunny on the other.

EXT./INT. BILL

BILL opens the door, gets in, looks in the sleeper. Nothing there, but a jack-in-the-box of the Green Goblin.

EXT. TUE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

BILL closes the door, gets down, and walks in back of the truck. He kneels down to look under it. We should feel about all of this the way we'd feel about a lion-tamer putting his head in the lions mouth.

INT. THE CONTROL PANEL OF THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

There is a click. Several lights come on.

EXT. BILL, CU

As he starts to get out from beneath, a hand falls on his shoulder.

He shoots to his feet and turns around. It's BRETT.

BILL

I thought you wouldnt come out here.

BRETT

I got curious.

Already we should feel a certain magnetism between these two.

BILL

You get curious a lot?

BRETT

From time to time.

(pause)

No one in there?

BILL

Not now, no.

They start back toward the restaurant. They're not thinking about the truck, but I imagine we are; if it decides to come alive and back up, they are directly in its line of fire, so to speak.

BRETT

I couldnt get much on the radio, and the motormouth who gave me a ride talked over most of what I could get, but it sounded serious.

BILL

Cars and trucks running by themselves?

BRETT

Yeah.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY TRUCK STOP, BILL'S AND BRETT'S POV

A couple of trucks are being fueled; a few cars are parked near the restaurant. From this angle we can't see the truck parking area.

Everything looks normal except for CAMP LOMAN'S car, parked askew on the gravel between the pumps and the road.

EXT. BILL AND BRETT

BILL

Not a cannibal car or truck in sight.

They resume walking again.

BRETT

Your'e cute.

He stops and looks at her, smiling.

BILL

Am I?

BRETT (LOOKS HIM OVER CAREFULLY)

Not that cute.

BILL

Well, maybe I'll grow on you.

They start walking again.

BRETT

Look at the road.

They do.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY, BILL'S AND BRETT'S PDV

It's totally deserted.

EXT. BILL AND BRETT

BRETT

Nothing. You usually have that
much nothing at ten-fifteen in
the morning, hero?

BILL

Name's Bill.

BRETT

Hi Bill, Brett.

BILL

Well, since the turnpike --

BRETT

Turnpike my ass. There's an
interchange not a mile down the
road. This place is easy to get to.
Its not even --

BILL (STOPS)

We got a man laying dead in the
cellar.

BRETT (STOPS WALKING)

Say what?

BILL

It was the video games. Some kind
of short circuit, I guess. And we
had an electric knife that went to
work on Wanda June and then...

BRETT

What about Wanda June?

BILL
Well... Wanda June could burn water
tryin' to boil it.

But he looks doubtfully back at:

EXT. THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

Silent. Dead. For now.

EXT. BILL AND BRETT

BRETT (QUIETLY)
Maybe they're waiting.

EXT. THE TRUCK PARKING LOT

Silent brooding, shoulder-to-shoulder. Several angles.

EXT. BILL

He runs back to the fueling office.

EXT. THE GARBAGE HAULER IN THE TRANSIENT PARKING LOT

It backs into it's place again.

INT. THE SERVICE STATION OFFICE, W/BILL AND GROUP

BRETT goes to BILL; he holds her.

BILL
No one. No one in the cab of
that motherfucker at all.

HENDERSHOT (SHAKEN)
HORSE-pucky!!

BRETT
What happens now?

BILL
I dont know.

THE FUEL OFFICE OF THE DIXIE-BOY. LATE AFTERNOON

Two men -- STEVE GAYTON and HANDY -- run out. THE CAMERA PANS WITH THEM as they reach the body of DUNCAN KELLER.

DUNCAN is face-down, a bloody mess.

Each of the men has a blanket.

STEVE

Spread yours on the ground next to him. And hurry up. He's starting to draw flies.

HANDY shakes out his blanket.

HENDERSHOT, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY OF THE FUEL OFFICE

STEVE AND HANDY, HENDERSHOT'S POV

HANDY AND STEVE roll DUNCAN onto the blanket -- one moves in front of the CAMERA, to spare us the sight of DUNCAN sunny-side-up, so to speak. They spread STEVE'S blanket over the top, pick him up, and bring him toward the fuel office, where the CAMERA is.

INT. FUEL OFFICE

HENDERSHOT is standing by the desk. His attitude toward all of this is not fear or horror, certainly not pity, but one of "Why does something always have to fuck up my day?"

STEVE and HANDY bring in the blanket-wrapped body; the blankets are already dripping blood.

They look at HENDERSHOT -- what do we do with him?

HENDERSHOT

Dont Just stand there, for Christs sake! He's drippin on the floor. Put him down cellar with the other one.

They go out into the hall.

HENDERSHOT stands by the desk watching them go, smoking sourly.

SOUND of many engines starting up; HENDERSHOT reacts with surprise and goes to the window.

EXT. THE PARKING LOT, MONTAGE

There is a RISING SYMPHONY of diesel engines as the trucks start up, one after the other. It sounds like the Indy Brickyard on Memorial Day, just after the guy says "Gentlemen, start your engines."

EXT. THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

It returns to the picnic area.

EXT. THE TWO PARKING LOTS

One by one the trucks pull out and fall into a nose-to-tail line.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, WIDE

The HappyToyz truck fills a gap the others have left for it, joining the parade. The trucks -- maybe twenty-five in all -- will eventually form a circle which goes almost all the way around the truck stop.

INT. THE RESTAURANT

There are maybe eight people in here -- WANDA JUNE plus seven patrons. All truckers -- staring out the long glass window at the front. Their faces are awestruck. Outside, the trucks continue to rumble past.

INT. THE SERVICE STATION OFFICE

HENDERSHOT

Most of those things got no goddamn
right to be running! They're dee-
po'ed!

BRETT

Theyre waking up.

She puts her arms around BILL. He holds her and they both
watch, he frightened, she terrified.

EXT. TRUCK MONTAGE

Wheels, taillights, grilles, mud-flaps. The SOUND is
deafening, unrelenting. The feel is scary. These things
really are dinosaurs.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, VERY WIDE

This might even be an a helicopter shot, looking down. The
trucks are circling the truck-stop like Indians circling a
wagon-train in an old western movie.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY, WITH THE FURY

This is the car which belongs to those cute little newlyweds,
CURT and CONNIE. It's really smoking -- doing seventy, eighty
miles an hour.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE

They're both scared and bewildered. CURT looks over at:

INT./EXT. THE OTHER HIGHWAY LANES, CURT'S POV

Another loooooooooong convoy of trucks, crusing along the
interstate.

INT. THE FURY

CONNIE

Where are they going?

CURT

Don't know. Greensboro, maybe.
Maybe Charlotte.

CONNIE

Why?

CURT

Dunno. Try the radio again.

She leans forward to turn it on, and sees something through the windshield and reacts with sudden terror.

EXT. THE ROAD UP AHEAD, CONNIE'S POV

A 1952 red Mack flatbed pulls out of the bushes and across the road.

INT. THE FURY

CONNIE (SHRIEKS)

LOOK OUT!!

CURT jerks the wheel.

EXT. THE FLATBED AND THE FURY

The Fury swerves into the emergency lane, squirting between the guardrails and the nose of the truck trying to block them off like an agile tailback lunging through a gap at the last possible moment.

The truck's nose smashes through the guardrails a second too late.

INT. THE FURY

CURT

I think I just loaded my pants.

She's looking back over the seat and through the rear window, paying no attention.

CONNIE

It's coming after us! Curtis, it's coming after us!

CURTS eyes look up toward:

INT. THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR, CURT'S POV

The flatbed backs up, a snarl of guardrail cable caught in its grille like broken strands of piano-wire, and turns.

EXT. THE FLATBED TRUCK

It starts up the road after the fleeing car, moving slowly at first, then gaining speed.

INT. THE FURY

CURT steps on it

EXT. THE FURY AND THE FLATBED TRUCK

The chase is on.

INT. THE CAB OF THE FLATBED

Empty.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT MD CONNIE

CONNIE (SCREAMS)

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

EXT. THE FURY AND THE FLATBED

Will they? The flatbed is closing in. The terrain is flat, and the truck has a lot more go under the hood than the Plymouth.

INT./EXT. EXIT SIGN, CURT AND CONNIES POV

It says the exit is a mile up.

EXT./INT. CHASE MONTAGE

The truck is steadily closing in on the Fury as they cover the mile to the exit. As the exit comes up, the truck pulls into the passing lane and starts to draw abreast of the car. Then it cuts in.

CURT and CONNIE are jolted to the right. CURT holds onto the wheel grimly, gauging the distance to the upcoming exit ramp...

The truck crunches them again, crimping in the cars side and driving it toward the emergency lane and the ditch beyond. Heres the exit ramp at last!

INT. THE FURY

CURT (TWISTS THE WHEEL)

Hang on!

EXT. THE FURY AND THE FLATBED TRUCK

The Fury almost turns over... then decides to stay on all four of its wheels. It scoots up the ramp. The truck tries to follow. It misses the ramp and runs up the brushy incline instead.

EXT. THE TRUCK, SLOW MOTION

It overbalances on the slope and crashes back to the highway. Its engine is howling and snarling like a beast in pain. As it hits the highway, the cab bursts into flame.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE EXIT-RAMP, WITH THE FURY

There's a FOOD-FUEL-PHONE sign which points, of course,
toward the Dixie-Boy.

CONNIE (CRYING)
Curtis, what is going on?

CURT
I dont know. But I know we can call
the police from that truck-stop up
there.

EXT. THE FURY

It turns right and starts down the road.

INT. THE FURY, WITH CURT AND CONNIE

He jams on the brakes.

CONNIE
Oh my God!

INT. THE FURY

CONNIE
When we get to the truck-stop
everything will be all right.

She starts to laugh hysterically.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY. CURT AND CONNIES POV

The trucks rumble ceaselessly around it.

INT. THE FURY

CURT drops the transmission into drive. The Fury starts to
creep slowly forward. CONNIE stops laughing at once when he
does this. As I would.

CONNIE
What are you doing?

CURT
Look. You see that gap?

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, FURY'S ROV

There is indeed a fair-sized gap between the head and tail of the circle of trucks.

INT. THE CAR

CURT
The next time that gap comes around, I'm going to shoot through there --

CONNIE (SCREAMS)
NO YOU DON'T THEY'LL GANG UP ON US AND SQUASH US!

CURT
I can do it.

CONNIE
All so we can be inside of where they are?

CURT
What do you thinks going to happen to us if we stay out here?

Considering the flatbed that almost got them, that's a good question.

CURT
We got to get inside, honey.

CONNIE (WHIMPERS)
I'm so scared...

CURT
You ain't alone, darlin'.

INT. THE RESTAURANT, WITH WANDA JUNE

She's by the window, looking out. Suddenly, her eyes widen.

WANDA JUNE
Billy Come here and look at these
fools!

INT./EXT. THE PARKING LOT AND THE ROAD BEYOND, WANDA JUNE'S
POV

The Fury comes creeping along. We can see it through the
moving trucks.

INT. BY THE RESTAURANT WINDOW

BILL joins WANDA JUNE. With him is BRETT, JOE, and a couple
of other patrons.

JOE (FLATLY)
They're dead.

BILL
Maybe not.

He heads for the door. And BRETT goes after him,

EXT. THE FURY

It's almost to the verge of the Dixie-Boys lot now.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, WITH THE CIRCLING TRUCKS

The gap comes around.

INT. THE FURY

CURT
Hang On.

He floors it.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE DIXIE-BOY

The Fury shoots toward the gap. The trucks start to close it up. In the b.g. we see BILL and BRETT come out and stand, watching.

The Fury slams through the narrowing gap -- too late. One of the trucks turns hard and slams into it. The Fury does a complete roll-over and comes up on it's wheels again.

INT. THE FURY

The interior has been pretty well bashed up. CONNIE was wearing her sea-belt. CURT wasn't. His nose is bleeding and the side of his head is gashed. But he's conscious and pretty much okay. He slams against his door. Its crimped, but it opens.

CONNIE is dazed, not sure where she is.

EXT. BILL ROBERTSON

He's at her door in a flash. He pulls it open.

EXT. THE TRUCKS

The garbage hauler pulls out of line, intending to squash the bunch of them, Fury and all.

EXT. BILL AND CONNIE

CONNIE

My seatbelt! I can't --

EXT. BRETT

She bends and lifts one of the cuffs of her jeans to expose a scuffed and balding Desert Driver boot. She reaches into it and comes up with a straight-razor.

BRETT
Hey, hero!

She tosses it and then supports the staggering CURT.

EXT. BILL AND CONNIE

He unfolds the straight-razor and slashes the seatbelt.
CONNIE screams. She has seen:

EXT. THE GARBAGE HAULER. BEARING DOWN ON THEM

EXT. BILL AND CONNIE

He pulls her out of her seat and yanks her back toward the
Dixie Boy.

As they join BRETT and CURT:

BRETT (JOCKS OVER HER SHOULDER)
BILL!

EXT. THE TRUCK, BEARING DOWN ON THEM

They will be crushed for sure, it seems. The SOUND of the
engine is deafening.

SOUND: The WHOOSH of a ROCKET.

The whole front of the truck explodes into flame.

EXT. HENDERSHOT, BY THE RESTAURANT DOOR

He's lowering a smoking bazooka. And still smoking his cigar.

HENDERSHOT
Fucking trucks are supposed to be
dee-po'ed. Well, that ones dee-
po'ed for sure.

JOE is standing nervously beside him. On the ground is an
open ammo chest marked PROPERTY NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL
GUARD.

HENDERSHOT (SHOULDERS THE BAZOOKA)
Reload me, Joey.

JOE takes a rocket out of the ammo chest.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, CURT, CONNIE

They are hauling ass to the Dixie Boy. BILL looks back at:

EXT. ANOTHER CHARGING TRUCK (THE MAYFRESH TOILET PAPER TRUCK)

EXT. HENDERSHOT, WITH BAZOOKA

Squinting. Cigar in the corner of his mouth. He fires.

EXT. BILLS PARTY AND THE TRUCK

The cab of the truck explodes.

EXT. HENDERSNOT

BILL'S party arrives. He herds them inside, then faces
HENDERSHOT.

BILL
Where'd you get that?

JOE
Oh, we got a whole bunch of stuff
like this down in the---

HENDERSNOT
Shut up, Joey.
(to BILL)
Found it in my Christmas stocking,
bubba. Get inside.

BILL goes. HENDERSHOT and JOE follow.

EXT. THE GRAVELED AREA, RESTAURANT'S POV

Another truck peels out of line and smashes into CURT and
CONNIE'S Fury, reducing it to junk.

INT. THE RESTAURANT

WANDA JUNE (FEARFUL)
 Why'd it do that? Wadn't nobody in
 it! Why'd it do that?

BILL (SOFT)
 Maybe it was mad.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, WIDE

The trucks circle. Inside the circle, the hulls of the two
 trucks HENDERSHOT took out continue to burn.

INT. THE PICTURE OF DEKE ON DUNCAN'S DESK

A hand picks it up.

INT. THE FUEL OFFICE. WITH BRETT

She's looking at the picture -- her expression is thoughtful,
 sad.

The door from the restaurant section opens and BILL comes in.

BRETT
 How are the lovers?

BILL
 Heart-rates are slowing down a
 little, I think.

He takes the straight-razor out of his pocket and unfolds it.

INT. THE BLADE OF THE STRAIGHT-RAZOR

Inlaid upon the blade in Olde English letters are the words
 MOTHER'S HELPER.

INT. BILL AND BRETT

He refolds the blade and holds out the straight-razor to her.

BILL
Mother's Helper?

BRETT
A girl hitching her way down to
Florida needs some protection.

She puts DEKE'S photo back on the edge of the desk and slips
Mother's Helper back into her boot.

BILL
That what you're doing?

BRETT
What I was doing before every
machine in the world went into
maximum overdrive. I'm pretty
scared, Bill.

BILL
If I put my arm around you would
you stick me with that thing?

BRETT
YOU dont stick a person with a
straight-razor. You kind of...

She draws her finger swiftly down through the air and makes a
whickering noise.

BRETT (FINISHES)
And I wouldn't.

He comes to her and slips an arm around her.

BRETT
Yes -- that's a little better.

BILL
Why Florida?

BRETT

I just needed to get away. Things weren't so great where I was.

BILL

They aren't so hot here, either.

They look out at the circling trucks together. Now she puts an arm around him. She looks younger, sweeter, more vulnerable.

BRETT

Can I ask you something?

BILL

Sure.

BRETT

What's a nice guy like you doing working for a booger like that man Hendershot?

BILL

If you're on parole, you need a job.

BRETT

You're on parole?

BILL

Not many people want to hire a parolee. On the other hand, some guys hire all they can get. Guys like Hendershot. You want to know what I did?

She looks up at him.

BRETT

Tore the heads off third-graders and ate them?

BILL

Well, you're half-right. Just the
tongues. The tongues was all I
wanted.

She laughs. He smiles. And when she stops laughing he kisses
her and she kisses him back, quite naturally. He CUPS one of
her breasts gently just for a moment.

They look at each other.

BRETT

You're looking quite a bit cuter.
I must admit.

BILL

That's good.

They look out the dirty window where another bunch of trucks
are passing by. Then BRETT picks up DEKE'S photo again.

BRETT

It was his father who got killed
out there?

BILL

Yeah. Duncan Keller -- another one
of Hendershot's pet parolees.

She looks at the picture.

BRETT

Do you think he's dead?

BILL

God knows, but Deke's bright. And
he's gutty. If he's not dead, he's
trying to get here.

BRETT

To his father.

BILL (HEAVILY)
Yeah. To his father.

BRETT
Ain't life grand?

BILL
Pretty grand all right.

They're looking at each other, he kisses her gently. THE
CAMERA MOVES TO the picture of DEKE and HOLDS.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE HIGHWAY WHICH LEADS TO THE DIXIE-BOY, WITH DEKE

He's riding his bike in the emergency lane.

SOUND: Trucks, Lots of trucks.

DEKE immediately gets off the highway and into the bushes,
dragging his bike after him. BILL'S right. He's smart.

EXT. THE FAR LANES, DEKE'S POY

Another passing convoy of trucks, this the biggest one yet.
Maybe as many as a hundred tractor-trailers. They head down
the road, fast.

EXT. DEKE, IN THE BUSHES

As the CONVOY SOUNDS FADE, DEKE cautiously gets out of the
bushes. he remounts his bike and rides on.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DEKE, FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD

He brings his bike to a stop. He looks awed and a little
surprised.

DEKE
Holy Crow!

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY EXIT AND THE OVERTURNED FLATBED, DEKE'S
POV

The flatbed has burned itself out.

EXT. DEKE

He rides his bike up the exit ramp.

EXT. DEKE, AT THE TOP OF THE RAMP

He comes to a stop and looks down the road toward the Dixie-
Boy.

SOUND: The drone of a airplane.

DEKE looks over his shoulder, immediately wary.

EXT. AN EXECUTIVE-TYPE PLANE

It is painted in bright, memorable colors -- blue and red,
let us say.

Also, there's a memorable slogan on the side: TOOLKIT
SPECIAL, and a wrench logo. The tail-numbers: N9758. It goes
into a shallow dive.

INT. THE COCKPIT OF THE TOOLKIT SPECIAL

The wheels turn in tandem; a switch flicks and air starts
flowing; the radio is playing classical music. But the plane
is empty.

EXT. THE DESERTED HIGHWAY. PLANES POV

Its purpose is clearly reconnaissance. The highway unrolls
beneath it. Here's the exit with the burned-out flatbed. No
sign of human life.

EXT. THE TOOLBOX SPECIAL

It pulls up and banks away.

EXT. HEAVY SHRUBBERY, KUDZU, ETC. BY THE EXIT RAMP

DEKE comes out, dragging his bike after him. He looks scared but determined. He mounts his bike and rides off toward the Dixie-Boy.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY. FAIRLY LONG

The trucks circle endlessly, motors rumbling.

DEKE (DISSTRESSED VOICE)

Oh, no.

EXT. THE FAR SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY, WITH DEKE

He's been peering out of the bushes at the truck-stop. Close by is a culvert which passes under the road and connects with the drainage ditch where CAMP LOMAN is lying. At first DEKE'S face says he hasn't the slightest idea what to do next. Then it lights up a little.

Inspiration has struck. Keeping low, he moves off to the left, along the ditch which runs parallel to the road and the Dixie-Boy off the far side.

EXT. DEKE, IN THE ROADSIDE DITCH

He stops and looks at:

EXT. A LARGE-BORE SELWER PIPE, DEKES POV

A little dirty water dribbles from its mouth into the grass. Its big enough for DEKE to go under the road toward the Dixie-BOY, but its mouth is covered with heavy-gauge steel mesh.

EXT. DEKE, AT THE PIPE

He pulls at it, yanks at it, but the mesh is too stout. He sits back, not knowing what to do.

INT. MEN'S ROOM OF THE DIXIE-BOY, WITH BILL

He's at a urinal, tending to business.

BILL
Has he really got a lot of
firepower down cellar, Joe?

INT. A CLOSED TOILET STALL

Beneath the door we can see JOE'S feet, pants puddled around them.

JOE (UNEASY VOICE)
You heard him tell me to shut up.

INT. BILL, AT THE URINAL

BILL
Come on, Joey -- this is serious.

INT. THE TOILET STALL, WITH JOE

He's sitting there with a skin-mag in his hands, but listening to BILL.

JOE (RELUCTANT)
He's got a lot.

INT. BILL

Flushes. We can tell that he's zipping up.

BILL
Grenades?

JOE (VOICE)
Well --

BILL moves to the wash basins. Turns one on.

BILL
Flame-throwers?

JOE (VOICE)
You're gonna get us both in
trouble.

Bill finishes washing his hands and dries them.

BILL

In case you didn't notice it, were
already in trouble.

He walks over to the stall.

BILL (CONTINUES)

Talk to me Joey.

INT. JOE, IN THE STALL

JOE

Everything. He's got everything.
Now leave me alone, Billy.

He flushes the toilet.

INT. THE CELLAR, WITH BILL AND BRETT

BILL'S got the key to the place in one hand -- I think we can
assume he got it out of HENDERSHOT'S office.

They are looking around at bazookas, rocket launchers, crates
of rockets, M-1s, M-16s, flame-throwers, grenades, etc.
There's canned goods and janitorial supplies down there, but
its mainly an arsenal.

BRETT (AWED)

Ny mothers name! You think he
stole all this?

BILL

No. I think he bought it. That's
what a guy like him does.

BRETT picks up a rocket launcher and looks at it.

BRETT

Buys things.

BILL

Buy cheap and sell dear. It's the American way, isn't it?

HENDERSHOT (VOICE)

Well, this is cute, isn't it? The jailbird and the little road-twitch standing around and talking about the American Way. Jesus Christ Palamino!

They both turn, startled.

INT. THE CELLAR, WIDER (TO INCLUDE HENDERSHOT)

HENDERSHOT

I don't know what to make of you, boy. You bright -- I know you are -- but you keep bein' ob-tuse.

BRETT

Come on -- we don't want to steal your stuff -- we just want to get out of here.

HENDERSHOT (TO BILL)

You're messin' where you hadn't ought to be messin' again, boy. I guess sometimes even college boys don't learn their lessons until they've had their chops busted a few times, do they?

BILL

Do you know what's going on outside, you happy asshole? You blind?

HENDERSHOT (TO BRETT)

Did the college boy here fill you in on his illustrious career? Oh, he was a bloodthirsty criminal, all right -- a regular John Dillinger.

BILL

Shut Up.

HENDERSHOT (IGNORES HIM)

Couple of Charlotte cops found him
in a little grocery store with a
sack of money in his hand and his
thumb up his ass and a big grin on
his face to pass the time of day.
Now you want to get out of here,
boy. One call and --

BILL

Who you gonna call? The North
Carolina State Police? Ghost
Busters? I don't want to play games
with you, Hendershot. I just
want to get out of here.

HENDERSHOT

I'm warning you, boy --

BILL (PICKS UP A ROCKET LAUNCHER)

No -- I'm warning you.

HENDERSHOT is perfectly caught between fury at BILL and fear
of what BILL might do.

HENDERSHOT

When this is over, your ass is
grass, boy. Grass, you hear me?

BILL

I'll just settle for being around
when it is over.

HENDERSHOT whirls with a final baleful stare and leaves. As
he tromps up the stairs:

HENDERSHOT (O.S.)

Joey Joey, goddammit!

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY JUST PAST SUNSET

It's dusky-gloomy but not yet full dark. There's an odd glow in the sky -- not very bright right now. It will be brighter later on.

The trucks patrol in their endless circle, motors GROWLING.

Their lights pop on all at once.

EXT. THE DITCH OH THE FAR SIDE OF THE ROAD, WITH DEKE

Truck headlights splash across his face and he shrinks down. He slowly rises back up. Just his eyes showing as he looks at the Dixie-Boy... so near and yet so far.

INT. THE FUEL OFFICE. STORAGE ROOM WITH BILL AND BRETT

They are on the cot where DUNCAN was lying before. They have just made love.

BRETT

I'll tell you one thing, hero.

BILL

Whats that?

BRETT

You make love like Dangerous Dan
Mc Grew.

BILL (GETS UP)

Come over here. I want to show you
something.

He's wearing shorts, she's wearing panties.

EXT. THE SKY OVER THE DIXIE BOY REAR PARKING LOT NIGHT

It is now full dark, but the sky is lit with a bright, shifting glow like the aurora borealis.

INT. BY STORAGE ROOM WINDOW. WITH BILL AND BRETT

BILL

It's the comet. We've been in the tail for almost twelve hours. And if it is the comet that put the machines in what did you call it? Maximum overdrive? All we've got to do is stay alive for the next seven days or so.

EXT. THE CIRCLING TRUCKS, BILLS AND BRETT'S POV

INT. BILL AND BRETT

BILL

We're less than four miles from the coast here. We'd have to use the drains and go through a few back yards, but we could make it in maybe two hours.

BRETT

And?

BILL

Can you sail?

BRETT

A-little -- Hobie Cats and things like that.

BILL (NODS)

I used to crew the big ones. Sailboats... no motors. You dig that? No motors.

BRETT (EXCITED BY THE IDEA)

Where would we go?

BILL

Haven. It's an island about 6 miles off the coast. An easy sail.
(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

There are no motor vehicles of any kind on the place.

BRETT

None?

BILL

Not a single one. It's a municipal ordinance. There's electric power, but killing it would be a matter of just cutting the power-cable from the mainland.

BRETT

And waiting for the planet to get out of the comets tail! You're a genius!

(hugs him)

You really think we could make it?

BILL

With all of the firepower downstairs? You bet.

BRETT

Tonight?

BILL

Maybe we won't have to go at all. Put that thing on and come back to the window.

EXT. THE SHOWER BUILDING W/MILK TANKER, BILL AND BRETT'S POV

It sits silently just inside the circle of moving trucks, its lights burning.

INT. BILL AND BRETT

BILL

See it? It was circling with the rest of them when we came over here.

(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

They pushed it out of the way. It's out of gas. I'm pretty sure that's what it is. It ran out of gas.

BRETT

They can't fuel themselves!

BILL (GRINS)

Give the little road-twitch a cigar.

She throws herself into his arms and hugs him hard. Kisses him.

And he picks her up and carries her back to the cot for Round Two.

EXT. THE CIRCLING TRUCKS. NIGHT

INT. THE JUKEBOX, WITH JOE

He drops in a quarter. Selects. AC/DC starts singing "Sink the Pink"

INT. BY THE WINDOW, WITH WANDA JUNE, STEVE GAYTON, HANDY MCKAY

WANDA JUNE is looking out. There is a 40 ounce of Miller's in front of her. Her hand squeezes on it, relaxes, then squeezes again.

WANDA JUNE

They can't! We made them!

INT. THE RESTAURANT,

People look around at her.

BILL and BRETT come in from the doorway to the left -- they have re-entered from the inside door connecting to the fueling area, of course.

STEVE GAYTON puts a hand over WANDA JUNE'S hand.

STEVE

Now come on, sweet thang --

She pulls her hand violently away. Her 40 ounce of beer spills.

WANDA (STANDS)

Dont you sweet thang me! They
can't! We made them!

She runs for the front door. The people around her are too paralyzed with surprise to stop her. She pulls it open and lunges out.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR, WITH WANDA JUNE

WANDA JUNE (SHAKES HER FIST)

YOU CAN'T! WE MADE YOU, Y'HEAR?

EXT. THE DITCH ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, WITH DEKE

He's drowsing by the culvert.

WANDA JUNE (VOICE)

WE MADE YOU!

DEKE comes awake and peers at:

EXT. ANGLE ON THE DIXIE BOYS FRONT LOT

A white Mack truck cab peels out of line and starts for WANDA JUNE.

EXT. WANDA JUNE

WANDA JUNE

YOU CAN'T! WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF
LOYALTY, YOU PUKEY THANGS? YOU
CAN'T YOU --

EXT. WANDA JUNE, DEKE'S POV

As the truck bears down on her. BILL comes out, throws an armlock on her, and drags her back in. The truck comes to a skidding stop less than a foot from the restaurant and then backs up.

DEKE

We can just see his eyes over the top of the ditch. They are full of longing to be over there with them, even if they are surrounded, rather than to be out here alone in the dark.

INT. JUST INSIDE THE DOOR, WITH BILLY AND WANDA JUNE

He's holding her in his arms. She is sobbing against his shoulder.

WANDA JUNE (MUFFLED SOBS)
They can't! We made them! They
can't!

BILL and BRETT exchange a look of deep sympathy.

The lights flicker off. On again. Everyone looks up at:

INT. THE RESTAURANT FLOURESCENTS

Off. On.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY SIGN

Off. On.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY TRUCK-STOP

Lights spill out of the restaurant window. The pump stations are lit; there are flourescents on in the garage bays of the service area.

All these lights go on and off twice... and then die.

INT. THE RESTAURMT

WANDA JUNE (SHRIEKS)
NO! NOT IN THE DARK! PLEASE GOD,
DON'T LET US BE IN THE DARK

BRETT moves to her and holds her.

BRETT
It's going to be all right. Cool
it now. Just cool it. Shhh.

EXT. DEKE

He's peeking over the edge of the ditch at:

EXT. THE DARKENED TRUCK STOP

The trucks go round and round. We can see a stopped tractor-trailer outside the circle and another one inside. As the circle turns, we can see the gaps where those trucks were. Among the circling trucks we see two more killer trucks from other gas stations.

INT. BILL, AT THE RESTAURANT WINDOW

His cigarette winks fitfully as he smokes and looks out. BRETT joins him. He puts a friendly arm around her. Behind them, we can see patrons crashed out on the floor; they're sleeping on piles of coats.

INT. BILL & BRETT

Their attention is caught by a CRY from outside. They look at each other, as if asking if it was really there, and the CRY is repeated.

CURT joins them.

Long, wavering CRY.

BRETT
Oh Jesus. It's him.

CURT

Who?

BRETT

The guy I got a ride with. He's
still alive.

The CRY is heard again.

CURT

Well, lets go get him.

CONNIE

No you don't! Let some of those
other big strong men go out
there and get him!

ROLFE, MAX, HANDY, AND SOME OTHER PATRONS IN THE B.G.

They look at their feet and shuffle them, ashamed. But they
ain't going out there.

BILL, BRETT, CURT, CONNIE

He starts for the door, BILL grabs him and hauls him back.

They are joined by JOE and HENDERSHOT. HENDERSHOT gives BILL
and BRETT an evil look. They are, needless to say, on his
shit list.

But for the time being, its sink or swim together and
HENDERSHOT, a survival expert, recognizes it.

BILL (TO CURT)

Its like the old joke -- you can't
get there from here.

INT. THE SHOWER ROOM, WITH BILL AND CURT

It's tile construction, about eight shower-stalls with narrow
partitions between them. The floor is slightly slanted, and
all the water runs down into a big central drain.

BILL and CURT cross to an adjoining room, filled with cooling equipment, pumping equipment, etc.

INT. THE PUMPING ROOM, WITH BILL AND CURT

There's a drain in the cement floor. They get their fingers under this and lift it up with some effort. They overturn it. BILL has a flashlight stuck in his back pocket. He shines it into the drain.

INT. THE DRAIN. BILL AND CURT'S POV

There's a wide slimy pipe, about four feet in diameter, which drops down about eight feet.

INT. CURT, IN THE MACHINERY ROOM

BILL throws the rope over and ties one end fast around a piece of pipe.

CURT
Think that'll hold?

BILL
Fucked if I know.

BILL drops the rope into the pipe, and climbs down it.

INT. IN THE PIPE

With effort he's able to stuff himself into the transverse pipe and starts crawling along.

INT. CURT, IN THE MACHINERY ROOM

CURT
Banzai.

He slides down the rope.

INT. THE TRAVERSE PIPE, WITH BILL AND CURT

First BILL and then CURT crawls past us.

INT. BILL

BILL (LOOKING AT SOMETHING)
Frig.

INT. CURT

BILL stops, CURT almost bumps his nose on BILL'S engineer boots.

CURT
What?

INT. SEWER RAT, BILL'S POV

Its a big one. It runs, squeaking, over one of BILL'S hands.

INT. BILL

BILL
I'm sending you a friend.

BILL starts crawling again.

The rat runs between his supporting hands and under him.

CURT (GROSSED OUT)
Oh shit!

He starts to crawl. Fast.

(NOTE: During this pipe sequence, we can hear the MUFFLED SOUND of the trucks circling overhead.)

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE CULVERT

SOUND of the trucks is louder. Headlights swing and merge with each other creating a carousel of shadows.

From the mouth of the culvert comes DEKE. Streaked with goo and looking frightened.

He looks around arm then begins to crawl rapidly up the filthy drainage ditch. He gets about thirty feet and then stops, horrified.

EXT. CAMP LOMAN. DEKES POV

He is covered with mud and blood. After being hit by the big truck, the man looks hardly human. His eyes are open, bulging. He is dead.

EXT. DEKE AND CAMP

DEKE waves his hand in front of CAMP'S eyes. His eyes remain fixed.

DEKE (TIMIDLY)

M-Mister?

Nothing. DEKE gulps and starts to crawl past CAMP'S sprawled body.

And suddenly CAMP, not dead after all, grabs him.

DEKE is terrified, CAMP is determined... and horrible. His lips are skinned back from his teeth in grimace at effort.

CAMP (A WHISPER)

Help me.

OEKE

H-H-How?

CAMP

Pull me.

DEKE

I can't. You're too heavy.

EXT. CAMP

CAMP

You pull me out of this ditch or
I'll kill you!

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE SHOWER DRAIN-PIPE

CRAWLING SOUNDS, getting closer.

BILL, badly smeared with pipe-gluck, pokes out of the end and then allows himself to tumble into the drainage ditch which has a shallow creek of scummy water running through it.

CURT fellows tumbling beside him.

CURT

Shit. I wish I could do that every day. What a good time. What --

DEKE (VOICE)

BILL! BILL!

Startled, they look toward:

EXT. THE DITCH, WITH CAMP AND DEKE, BILL'S POV

DEKE is trying to drag CAMP. CAMP is clutching the boys legs, face ploughing in the mud.

DEKE (SCREAMS)

BILL!! HELP!!

EXT. THE DITCH, WITH BILL AND CURT

BILL

Jesus, that's Deke.

CURT

Who?

BILL

Never mind -- come on!

They start to crawl down the ditch, fast.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY PARKING LOT

The HappyToyz truck stops suddenly. It blinks its lights.
Another semi pulls out of line and heads for the drainage ditch.

EXT. THE DRAINAGE DITCH WITH BILL, CURT, DEKE, CAMP

DEKE grabs BILL, delirious with joy.

DEKE

BILL! Make him stop --

BILL

You're okay now, Deke. You're --

DEKE

Make him stop pulling me!

CURT goes around and lifts CAMP'S head.

EXT. CAMP

This is it, he is most surely dead.

EXT. CURT AND CAMP

CURT (DROPS HIM)

He's dead --

SOUND: Oncoming TRUCK ENGINE.

They both listen.

EXT. BILL, CURT, DEKE, AND CAMP'S BODY

BILL slides down the side of the drainage ditch and looks at:

EXT. THE SNOUT OF AN ONCOMING TRUCK

EXT. THE DITCH, WITH BILL, CURT AND DEKE

BILL slides down, grabs DEKE'S shoulder, and shoves him in the direction of the drainpipe.

BILL

Go! Go! Go!

The three of them haul their asses back the way they came; it's DEKE first, CURT second, BILL third.

Now the tractor-trailer that the HappyToyz truck picked rolls over the top of the drainage ditch. The cab slams down where the people were a second ago. The trailer falls in after, askew. The mucky bank collapses. CAMP is buried under the falling, roaring truck and an avalanche of wet ground.

EXT. BILL, CURT AND DEKE

They are no longer bothering to crawl, or even crouch. They run.

EXT. THE CAB OF THE EIGHTEEN-WHEELER

It has come uncoupled from the trailer and has somehow managed to remain upright. It comes roaring up the drainage ditch after the two escaping men, rocking from side to side, big wheels spraying water.

EXT. AT THE DRAINAGE PIPE, WITH BILL, CURT AND DEKE

They are illuminated by the truck's headlights. SOUND of the oncoming motor. DEKE gets right into the pipe, but CURT, half-panicked, is having trouble.

BILL doesn't climb in but dives in after him. Two seconds later the cab of the truck comes roaring along, splashing up water, and amputates the jutting finger of piping.

INT. THE PIPE, FEATURING CURT

He's twisting his head backward with an effort. Ahead of him we can just make out DEKE, also looking back with concern.

CURT

Bill! You all right, boy?

INT. THE PIPE, FEATURING BILL

BILL

I'm okay. Will you for Christs
sake move your ass?

INT. BILL, FROM BEHIND

From this angle, as BILL follows CURT up the pipe and away from THE CAMERA, we can see just how close it was: the heels on both his boots are gone. We are looking at the shiny nailheads.

INT. THE MACHINERY ROOM

The rope goes taut and begins to move as DEKE climbs up. CURT comes next. He turns and helps BILL up and to his feet.

BILL picks up the rocket launcher again and then looks at the stretcher. He kicks it aside, and the action is fairly eloquent: they won't be needing this.

DEKE

Bill? Is my dad okay?

BILL looks at him for a moment, troubled, but is not able to tell him. Not yet, anyway.

BILL

Come on.

They head for the door.

INT. BY THE BACK DOOR OF THE RESTAURANT

Host of the people trapped in the Dixie-Boy are here, but most prominent are BRETT and CONNIE.

CONNIE is so worried she's just about ready to fly.

BRETT is more quiet, but we can tell she's very concerned about BILL.

CONNIE

I think the truck that went over the embankment got em. That's what I think.

BRETT

No. They're all right.

CONNIE (FRANTIC)

Then where are they?

BRETT can't answer that but HANDY, who is standing nearby, can:

HANDY (POINTS)

There! They just came out.

EXT./INT. THE SHOWER AREA, BACK RESTAURANT DOOR POV

Yes, we can just make them out in the glow thrown by the headlights of the circling trucks. BILL'S got the rocket launcher in hand.

Again, off to the left we notice the stopped flatbed -- engine not running but lights glowing. Could be out of gas... but I think most of us now strongly suspect the truth: that baby's playing possum.

INT. THE GROUP BY THE BACK DOOR OF THE RESTAURANT

HENDERSHOT

They don't have the salesman. Looks like some damn kid.

EXT. THE DOOR OF THE SHOWER BUILDING

BILL

You guys ready?

CURT

No. You?

BILL

Not at all.

They run for the Dixie-Boy.

EXT. THE MILK TANKER TO THE RIGHT

Its engine roars into life and it leaps at them.

EXT. CURT, DEKE AND BILL, RUNNING

BILL turns holding the rocket-launcher. He aims.

EXT. BILL AND THE TRUCK

It's bearing down on him as he aims... and fires.

The truck explodes.

Milk goes everywhere.

BILL, who only had the one rocket, gets up and runs for the back door of the Dixie-Boy, shepherding the other two ahead of him.

EXT. THE AREA AROUND THE BACK DOOR OF THE RESTAURANT

CURT is holding CONNIE, who is sobbing wildly.

BILL steps over to BRETT and hugs her.

DEKE walks toward them -- toward BILL, actually.

He looks troubled. He has seen that his dad isn't here.

HENDERSHOT also comes toward BILL. He looks disgusted and angry even though things turned out all right. Come to think of it, that's probably why he disgusted and angry.

HENDERSHOT (DISGUSTED)
You ain't gonna be satisfied until
you get him right in here with us,
are you, bubba?

BILL looks at him but doesnt answer.

DEKE
BILL... Where's my dad?

BILL
Deke -- you've got to brace
yourself for some pretty tough news
--

HENDERSHOT (DOESNT GIVE A SHIT)
Done got scrubbed by one of them
big boys out there. Tough break,
kid.

INT. DEKE, BILL, BRETT

DEKE turns slowly to look at HENDERSHOT. His face is stunned
and horrified. He slowly backs away from all of them.

DEKE (TO BILL)
No! No!

BRETT (TO HENDERSHOT)
You shithead! Why --

BILL (TO DEKE)
Deke --

INT. DEKE AND BILL

DEKE
Is it true?

BILL
Deke --

DEKE
Is it true?

BILL
Man, you gotta --

DEKE (SCREAMS)
Just tell me if it's true!

BILL
Yeah. It's true. He's gone. I'm --

DEKE screams. Puts his hands to his face and screams again. BILL tries to hold him. DEKE struggles, screaming. BILL keeps on trying to hold him.

At last DEKE stops fighting and collapses, crying. BILL holds him tightly, cheek pressed against the top of DEKE'S head. BILL is also crying.

HENDERSHOT

He's looking at all this in utter perplexity. I think he's one of those guys who really doesn't think anyone in the world but him is really real.

BRETT (VOICE)
Mr. Hendershot?

He turns toward the voice.

INT. HENDERSHOT AND BRETT

She slaps him in the face, hard.

BRETT (COLD)
A little lesson in manners from the
road-twitch, you fucking oinker.

She walks out. HENDERSHOT can only gape after her.

INT. BILL AND DEKE

BILL is hugging DEKE, who is still weeping -- hugging him and trying to comfort him.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY DAWN

It's dawn; 5 A.M. The trucks are still circling but now there are many holes in the circle. There are as many as fifteen trucks, large and small, pushed out of the way. Out of gas. Or dead, if you please.

INT. DEKE

He's sitting by himself in one of the booths by three plate-glass windows, looking out, his face is thoughtful and sad.

SOUND: Approaching engines.

EXT. THE ROAD

Here comes an army vehicle with a machine-gun mounted on it.

The Army vehicle parks outside the circle of moving trucks and sits there, idling. Now a large bulldozer pulls up and stops near the Army truck.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, WITH THE CIRCLING TRUCKS

They all stop at the same time, engines idling.

INT. DEKE

He's got something other than his dad to think about now. He gets up and runs for the door connecting the restaurant to the fueling area.

INT. THE SERVICE STATION OFFICE

BILL and BRETT are cuddled together on the cot again, being a couple of spoons. Both are fast asleep.

DEKE bursts in, and BRETT wakes up at once, clutching the rather greasy sheet to herself. BILL sleeps on.

DEKE
Bill! Hey Bill!

BRETT (GROGGY)
Deke, what--

DEKE ignores her and begins shaking BILL hard.

DEKE
Wake up! Wake up, Bill! Something's happening!

EXT. THE BULLDOZER

The blade comes down.

INT. THE RESTAURANT

People are waking up. CURT and JOE are walking toward the front window. CONNIE is behind them.

BILL, BRETT, and DEKE come back from the service area. BRETT is buttoning her shirt. BILL is tucking his in.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK, FEATURING THE MACHINE GUN

One very long HORN-BLAST.

EXT. BULLDOZER CAB

The stick-shift moves and engages by itself. The ENGINE REVS UP.

EXT. THE BULLDOZER

It begins to MOVE TOWARD THE CAMERA.

INT. THE HALLWAY TO HENDERSHOT'S OFFICE

He comes bursting out wearing a undershirt and zipping his pants. He is, of course, smoking a cigar.

Following him is WANDA JUNE, looking dishevelled and trying to put herself back together.

HENDERSHOT
What the fuck is going on now?

INT. CONNIE

CONNIE (STUNNED)
No... I don't believe it...

INT./EXT. THE ONCOMING BULLDOZER, CONNIE'S POV

No doubt about what it's doing: Charging at the building.

INT. CONNIE

CURT pulls her out of the way.

EXT./INT. THE ATTACK OF THE KILLER BULLDOZER

It crashes into the restaurant portion of the building. The long picture-window crashes inward, spraying shards of glass.

The PATRONS draw back, shielding their faces: WANDA JUNE is shrieking.

The booths that were by the windows are shoved across the floor, splintering and breaking, We see tread-marks on the flooring.

Boards snap under the weight of the dozer. It retracts, then comes again. It pushes over support beams and part of the roof falls down with a crash.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

It seems to be surveying all of this, like a general observing his army as they attack.

INT. THE RESTAURANT

Pandemonium. BILL drags BRETT and DEKE toward the service area.

Others are hiding in the video-game room and behind the counter.

INT. ANGLE ON HENDERSHOT

He's not scared: he's pissed.

HENDERSHOT

All right. All right, goddammit!

He turns around and heads back toward the office.

EXT. THE BULLDOZER

It stops in mid-charge and backs up. Its blades rises to position.

INT. THE HALLWAY BETWEEN HENDERSHOT'S OFFICE AND THE KITCHEN

He's brought a good deal of his arsenal up here. Now he grabs a rocket launcher and loads it. He stuffs another rocket into the waistband of his pants -- a tough fit, but he manages.

HENDERSHOT

You want a war? You got one!

He turns around and strides out.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

The machine-gun swings around by itself.

INT. THE SMASHED DIXIE-BOY RESTAURANT

Little by little people raise their heads and look around.

HENDERSHOT walks around the counter and strides through the broken glass toward the remains of the window.

HENDERSHOT

You want it? You got it, bubba!

He levels the rocket launcher.

BILL

I wouldn't --

HENDERSHOT

Shut up, bubba.

He triggers the rocket launcher.

EXT. THE BULLDOZER

The rocket hits it. The blade is torn off and goes flying.

INT. HENDERSHOT

He's got the other rocket out of his pants and is loading it. He's grinning around the cigar.

HENDERSHOT

How do you like that, chicken-shit?

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

The machine-gun swings around by itself and opens fire.

INT. HENDERSHOT

HENDERSHOT is hit and pushed back to the counter. He loses the rocket launcher.

HENDERSHOT (SURPRISED)

Huh?

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

Continues to fire.

INT. HENDERSHOT

He falls dead.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

The machine-gun swivels on its mount, still firing.

INT. THE DIXIE-BOY, MONTAGE

It s torn up by the hail of machine-gun fire. People lie on the floor, behind the remains of the booths, behind the grill, counter and under the tables.

BILL is lying half on top of BRETT by the door to the service area.

He has a protective arm over DEKE as well.

HARRY, ROLFE, and FRANK are all killed during the carnage.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

It stops firing. Smmoke curls from the barrel.

INT. WANDA JUNE

WANDA JUNE

You sons of bitches! You dirty
sons of bitches!

She gets up and grabs the rocket-launcher. She sprints toward either the door or the gaping hole in the front of the restaurant.

STEVE GAYTON

Wanda June! No!

He grabs for her. No good. She's out there. BILL tackles STEVE, bringing him down out of what will soon again become a free-fire zone.

BRETT AND DEKE

BRETT (AT BILL)

NO!!

EXT. WANDA JUNE

WANDA JUNE

WE MADE YOU! DIDN'T YOU UNDERSTAND?
YOU CAN'T DO THIS, WE MADE YOU!

She raises the rocket-launcher.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

The machine-gun swivels on its mount... and fires.

EXT. WANDA JUNE

She's hit... torn up. She looks like Faye Dunaway at the end of Bonnie and Clyde as she's driven back against the demolished restaurant wall. She holds onto the rocket-launcher, and triggers it.

EXT. ONE OF THE GASSLESS TRUCKS

It explodes.

EXT. WANDA JUNE

WANDA JUNE (DYING)

We... made you.

She falls over.

EXT. BILL AMONG THE TRUCKS

He walks among toward the diesel pumps like a man walking through a pack of sleeping lions. They stand still idling.

The swivel-mounted machine-gun tracks him, in case he tries something funny. He reaches the Happy Toyz truck and leans toward its ear.

The others look on anxiously from the smashed front of the Dixie-Boy.

BILL (LOUDER)

Alright you bastard. Tell all your friends the mainline's open. You want your fix or not? Step right up. This is the best shit on the east coast. Practically uncut. You got that fuck-face?

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

It beeps several times.

EXT. THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

It starts up and speeds off.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE DIXIE-BOY, VERY WIDE

The trucks rev up and began to move. It's the circle again, but instead of going around and around, the circle becomes a snake with its head at the diesel pump where BILL is standing and it's tail straightening toward the road.

EXT. BILL

BILL (LOW, TO HIMSELF)

This could be a very long day.

He sticks the nozzle in the first truck's filler tank and starts pumping.

EXT. FEEDING THE TRUCKS, MONTAGE

BILL, pumping.

The numbers on the diesel pump turning up gallons, dollars, cents.

The line of waiting trucks, like a flashback to the days of the oil embargo.

The sun, beating down.

BILL, with sweat rolling down his face.

One of the trucks which is running pushes one of the trucks that was stopped up to the pumps for a revivifying shot of diesel.

The sun.

BILL, his shirt dark with sweat. He sticks the nozzle in a truck and then looks at his hand. They are covered in painful blisters, some have even busted open.

The road. Here comes one of those convoys... about twenty trucks.

They fall into line. The line is now a quarter of a mile long.

BILL looks up at:

The sun.

Yet another convoy of trucks arrive. Now the line stretches out of the lot and out of sight.

We see from time to time St. Gayton, Joe & Curt pumping, but concentrate on Bill.

EXT. BILL. AT THE PUMPS

He realizes no fuel is flowing. He hangs the nozzle up and looks at his hand, which is covered with broken blisters, he walks away.

EXT. THE TRUCKS

They all BLAST THEIR AIR HORNS at exactly the same second.
The sound is tremendous.

EXT. BILL

He puts his hands to his ears until the HORNS stop and then turns to face them. He is swaying on his feet, sunburned, almost done to death.

BILL

You don't understand fellas -- it
was fun while it lasted but we're
all out.

SOUND of a oncoming rumbling motor.

EXT. THE TRUCK LINE-UP, BILL'S POV

Those close to the pumps crowd forward; those further away squeeze backward, creating a gap.

Through it rolls a gigantic Texaco tanker truck. The words NO. 2 DIESEL FUEL are written on the side.

It rolls toward BILL, past him, and over the filler-plate. It stops just past the hatch cover. A hose falls out of the back of the truck and actually lands on the hatch. The implication is pretty clear: fill up the diesel tanks quick as you can, then get back to business, bubba.

EXT. BILL

He bends over to get the hose... and reels. He's on the verge of a sunstroke, hands catch him before he can fall.

It's HANDY.

HANDY

I'll take over here. Man, you're
done up.

BILL (DAZED)
They don't understand.

HANDY
What s that, Billy?

BILL
How it is to get tired. How a
man gets tired.

They look at:

EXT. THE ENDLESS LINE OF TRUCKS

EXT. BILL AND HANDY

HANDY (BITTERLY)
Why should they?

BILL
Yeah. You yell for help when you
need it.

HANDY
I will.

He pulls BILL a little closer.

HANDY (LOW)
We've been putting stuff down in
the cellar. The kid says there's a
big sewer pipe. He couldn't get in
that way because of the wire, but
we can use it to get out.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

It beeps several times.

EXT. BILL AND HANDY

HANDY

I guess that means coffee breaks
over, huh?

BILL (BITTER)

His master's voice.

HANDY

Go in and lay down, Billy.

HANDY takes the pump and starts feeding the trucks.

EXT. BILL, HEADING FOR THE DIXIE-BOY

He's walking like a drunk. BRETT comes out and guides him
inside.

INT. THE SERVICE STATION OFFICE

BRETT leads BILL inside. We can see STEVE DAYTON outside,
fueling trucks at the side pumps.

BILL

I'm all right --

BRETT

Sure. Heroes always are. Now just
sit still. I want to get a cold
cloth on your head.

He sits down in the chair, BRETT wets a rag in the little
bathroom down the side of the office. BILL is in a semi-daze.

BILL

Isn't a comet. It's a broom.

BRETT

What?

BILL

Broom.

BRETT (COMES BACK)
What are you talking about?

BILL
Say you're a race of aliens looking
for a new place to live... say
you're looking for a new planet
like you or me might look for a new
house. You dig it?

BRETT sits down beside him and puts the cloth on his head.

BRETT
No.

BILL
So here's Earth. Only it's like a
big old house no one ever took care
of. It's dirty and smoky and
polluted. Grease on the walls...
soot in the chimneys... so they
send in their interstellar house
cleaners... send in their broom...
and sweep it clean.

BILL closes his eyes. He's going to sleep. BRETT looks at
him, finally understanding what he's getting at. She's
chilled.

BILL (EYES CLOSED)
It's a broom... using our own
machines to sweep... sweep us right
off...

He's asleep. She sits looking at him.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY. DUSK

The trucks are still lined up at the pumps. In front we can
see the 4TH PATRON pumping away.

EXT. A CONCRETE PIPE. DUSK

This is the pipe DEKE couldn't get into. A hacksaw is working on the mesh. As we watch, the circle is completed and the mesh falls out.

DEKE, STEVE GAYTON, JOE, MAX, and HANDY come out with rocket launchers, a couple of packs filled with food.

SCRAPPING SOUNDS of someone approaching through the pipe and then CURT and the 6TH PATRON emerge with more stuff. They pile it on.

STEVE

That it?

CURT

That's it.

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY. DUSK

Bill comes out and walks past the Army truck. The 4TH PATRON looks over at him.

BILL

Hey, boy!

BILL waves for him to come over. 4TH PATRON looks doubtfully at the long line of trucks, then hooks the nozzle and starts toward BILL.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

The machine-gun swivels around toward BILL.

EXT. BILL, THE ARMY TRUCK, AND 4TH PATRON

BILL (TO THE TRUCK)

Cool it. This is just a little people business. You wouldn't understand. Only take a minute.

The 4TH PATRON arrives. He's understandably nervous.

PATRON

Look, I really don't think --

EXT. BILL AND THE 4TH PATRON

BILL puts his arm around the 4TH PATRON shoulders and leads him toward the Army truck and the Dixie-Boy.

BILL (VERY LOW)

When I say run, you run, pal.

BILL takes a grenade from his pants pocket. At the same time, he gives the Army truck a big old shit-eating grin, just to show all's well.

PATRON (TERRIFIED)

But... I... you...

BILL pulls the pin and throws the grenade into the cab of the truck.

BILL

RUN!

BILL'S arm is still around the 4TH PATRON'S neck, so he's really forcing him to run with him. The machine-gun snaps around.

EXT. BILL AND THE 4TH PATRON. IN FRONT OF THE DIXIE-BOY

BILL

Down!

They dive through the hole and into the interior as machine-gun bullets chew the air above them.

EXT. THE ARMY TRUCK

It blows up.

INT. THE DIXIE-BOY. WITH BILL AND THE 4TH PATRON

They look a little like they're praying to Allah.

BRETT (VOICE)
I never saw a hero with his ass up
in the air like that.

BILL looks up.

INT. BRETT. BY THE HALLWAY TO HENDERSHOTS OFFICE

She's smiling at him. Could this be love? I think so.

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE PIPE NIGHT

This is the far end, of course, across the road. Gathered around are DEKE, STEVE, JOE, CURT, CONNIE, HANDY, MAX, 3RD PATRON, and the 6TH PATRON. The 6TH PATRON is up the embankment a way, close to where DEKE originally observed the DIXIE-BOY.

SOUNDS from the pipe, approaching. First BRETT comes out, then the PATRON, then BILL. BILL looks around, verifying everyone's there.

BILL
All right. Let's go, and --

PATRON
Holy shit!

SOUNDS: Revving engines, breaking wood, smashing concrete.

The others climb up the embankment and look at:

EXT. THE DIXIE-BOY, LONG. NIGHT

Their slaves have escaped and the trucks are pissed. They converge on the truck-stop. Battering it, reducing it to rubble. The overall feel once again is that these are motorized dinosaurs on the rampage.

The pumps are knocked over and ground to twists of metal and piles of powdered glass. The struts supporting the canopy over the pumps are knocked out and the canopy falls.

The Happy Toyz truck inflicts the coupe de grace by knocking over the Dixie-Boy Sign.

EXT. BILL'S GROUP

BILL

Jesus is coming and he is pissed.

DEKE

Can we get out of here, Bill?

BILL

You bet. We're going to be quiet; were not going to attract any attention. Because we don't want to end up like the Dixie-Boy, right?

EXT. BRETT

BRETT

Oh. You are so right.

EXT. BILL

BILL

Come on. Lets go.

They move out.

EXT. A WOODED AREA. NIGHT

We are looking at these woods from across a two-lane road with a few stores, fast-food places, etc. on it.

A plane has crashed on the road. It's a smouldering wreck, but we can read the tail ID number: N9758 and part of what was written on the side: TOOLKIT SPECIAL.

Close by the road: A mailbox.

SOUND: Bouy-bells.

SOUND: Branches crackling underfoot.

BILL appears. BRETT is next to him.

EXT. THE DRAWBRIDGE. BILL S AND BRETT'S POV. NIGHT

It s still up. Behind it, the sky is red with flames.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, AND THE OTHERS

DEKE

What s burning. Bill?

BILL (GRIM)

Wilmington, Deke. All of the east coast, maybe.

(to the others)

We have to cross the road. I'm going to go out and make sure it s deserted. When I wave the rest of you come... and don't linger.

BRETT

I'm coming with YOU.

BILL

No you're not.

BRETT

Why?

BILL

Don't you go to the movies? Heroes always do this shit alone.

He runs toward the road.

EXT. BILL AT THE MAILBOX

He crouches behind it for a moment and starts to look out. Just as he does we hear an ELECTRICAL HUMMING SOUND approaching. BILL draws back, then looks toward:

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE WOODS, BILL'S PDV

Some of the others, with BRETT and DEKE in the back, have crept anxiously out of the woods to see how it's going with BILL.

EXT. BILL, BEHIND THE MAILBOX

HUMMING SOUND IS LOUDER. BILL waves for them to go back.

EXT. THE GROUP AT THE EDGE OF THE WOODS

BRETT looks puzzled. "What?" She mouths.

EXT. BILL, BEHIND THE MAILBOX

He waves madly for them to go back. HUMMING SOUND is STILL LOUDER.

EXT. THE GROUP AT THE EDGE OF THE WOODS

BRETT understands. They fade back.

EXT. BILL, BEHIND THE MAILBOX

He sneaks a peak at:

EXT. THE ROAD, BILL'S POV

Here comes a ghostly caravan of empty golf-carts, looking like Snow White's dwarfs marching back from a hard day at the mine.

Their headlamps glimmer, they skirt the wreck of the plane and hum, onward.

EXT. BILL, BEHIND THE MAILBOX

He draws back, sweating, as the dim glow of their headlamps washes around him and the HUMMING SOUND starts to fade a little. He looks around the other side at:

EXT. THE ROAD AND THE GOLF-CARTS. BILL S POV

Now we see their little round taillights going away.

EXT. BILL, BEHIND THE MAILBOX

He looks awhile longer at the road, then back toward the woods.

He gives a come-on gesture.

EXT. THE WOODS

BILL'S group breaks over and runs, bent-over, toward the road.

A FAST FOOD PLACE, HOPEFULLY MCD'S, FROM THE FRONT

Our group runs across the road toward it and around the side.

The SOUND of bouys is louder; we also hear the SOUND of the ocean now.

THE REAR OF THE FAST-FOOD PLACE. WITH THE GROUP

They have stopped near the drive-through order stand. There's a menu card, and, in the center, a battered speaker/listener for placing orders. All are out of breath, from fear and excitement.

DEKE

How far, Bill?

BILL

To the marina? Close now. Maybe
half a mile. Or even --

All the lights in the rear of the fast-food place come on at once -- hi-intensity arc sodiums that cast a brilliant orange glare.

Front behind them, a MECHANICAL ROBOT'S VOICE comes from the drive-through speaker.

SPEAKER
HUMANS HERE! HUMANS HERE! HUMANS
HERE!

A siren goes off from somewhere nearby.

A SUBURBAN STREET OR ROAD

In the extreme foreground is a child's body.

SOUND: The siren; faintly, the ROBOT VOICE ("Humans Here! Humans Here!"); and, coming closer, the DIESEL ROAR of a truck.

Lights splash the street. From around the corner comes our old friend. HappyToyz.

THE STREET THROUGH THE WINDSHEILD OF HAPPYTOYZ

It comes rushing down the street toward the body.

THE STREET, FROM THE SIDE

HappyToyz runs over the body and just keeps right on trucking.

THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK. FOLLOWING FROM IN FRONT, UP ANGLE

It looks really furious.

THE DRIVE-THROUGH SPEAKER

SPEAKER
HUMANS HERE! HUMANS HERE! HUMANS
HERE!

BILL'S GROUP

They are all stunned except for DEKE, who picks up one of HENDERSHOT'S illicit machine-guns and aims at the speaker.

DEKE

This is for my dad, you loudmouth
son of a bitch.

He triggers off a burst of machine-gun fire.

THE SPEAKER

SPEAKER

HUMANS H--

It is demolished -- turned into a hunk of metal and sparking
wires. It gives one final squawk and shuts up.

BILL'S GROUP

BRETT (KISSES DEKE)

Not bad, kid.

BILL

Let's get out of here, fast.

They run toward the rear of the lot.

HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

It roars past a sign which reads MARINA -- 1 MILE.

EXT. THE FUELING AREA

They all pop up from behind the drums, where they were
hiding.

HANDY

Man, when that speaker started
talking, I all but dropped a load
into my pants.

CONNIE

I can't take much more, mister --

BILL

We're almost home free.

BILL crawls a distance away from the others and looks at something.

EXT. BILL

BRETT joins him.

BRETT

Are we going to make it, Bill?

BILL

To the marina? Yes. In the long run? I don't know.

BRETT

What do you mean?

BILL

Remember what I said about the comet?

BRETT

That it was a broom?

BILL

Yeah, a living broom just smart enough to get into our machines. Smart enough to burn, cut, shoot, or run down anything on two legs. Not much smarter. Something with maybe the brains of a dog -- I mean, if they were much smarter they would have had us on our way over here for sure.

BRETT

So?

BILL

So dealing with a broom is one thing. What happens when the house is clean... and the new owners decide to move in?

She stares at him, surprised and scared by this new idea.

BILL
Come on. Let's do it

He motions for the others to come ahead.

EXT. PART OF A MARINA. NIGHT

It's much later the same night. Many motorboats. A large sailboat at the far end.

EXT. BILL AND BRETT

BILL (POINTS)
There. That's the one I had in mind.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L. GROUP'S POV

It's a good-sized boat. It can hold them all.

EXT. BILL'S GROUP

CURT
If we don't get out of here soon,
it's going to be light.

BILL
Right.

They start down toward the boat, which is at the very end, when they hear a RISING DIESEL SNARL from behind them. BRAD is last in line.

LOOKING BACK TOWARD THE MARINA'S OFFICE

Here comes HappyToyz, with the Green Goblin's face on the front.

EXT. BILL'S GROUP

BILL
Oh, Shit! Come On!

They run for the Signora L. CURT more or less pulling CONNIE along, BILL with an arm around BRETT and holding DEKE'S hand.

All the lights in the docked boats start coming on. Many honk their boaty little horns.

BRAD AND HAPPYTOYZ

It hits him, with its Green Goblin face.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L.

All of them jump aboard except BILL, who starts trying to untie the heavy boatline.

BRAD

He lands on a lower dock with a sorry thump. There's a motorboat docked here, its outboard tilted up. BRAD tries to get up, and falls over instead, head going into the water. T

he outboard turns on, pivots, and comes down as the screw starts to turn. Bloody water bubbles up. BRAD'S arms and legs thrash spasmodically... but not for very long.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L.

BILL unshoulders the rocket-launcher he's carrying and FIRES.

BILL (SCREAMS)
ADIOS MOTHERFUCKER!

EXT. THE HAPPYTOYZ TRUCK

It bursts into flame, but others are coming.

EXT. BILL, AT THE MOORING POST

He can't untie the knot. He looks up.

BILL
Mother's helper! Mother's helper!

EXT. THE DOCK WITH BRETT

She understands. She pulls the straight-razor out of her boot and throws it.

EXT. BILL, AT THE MOORING POST

He catches it, opens it and uses it to saw through the rope. He gives the boat a shove away from the dock and hops aboard just as STEVE fires his bazooka.

EXT. THE DOCK, WITH TWO APPROACHING CARS

The lead car bursts into flame.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, DEKE

They make sail. BILL and DEKE with fast competence, BRETT a little more slowly.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L. LONGER

As the sails go up and belly out in the mild breeze, the ship swings away from shore and begins to move on its own.

EXT. CARS AT THE EDGE OF THE DOCK

They are idling, watching the Signora L go, like animals cheated of their prey.

EXT. THE GROUP AT THE THE SIGNORA L.'S RAIL

They raise a wild cheer. BILL puts one arm around BRETT and the other around DEKE.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, DEKE

There should be little doubt in our minds that a little nuclear family is forming right here.

BRETT

If they come -- the people on the other end of the broom -- what will we do, Bill?

BILL

I guess we'll fight. All of this.

He gestures with an arm to indicate, I think, the whole world.

BILL (CONTINUES)

...may be dirty and run down...not much of a place to live anymore...but it's our house, isn't it?

DEKE (TO BRETT)

He's talking about the whole earth, isn't he?

BILL

I guess I am, and I guess maybe we got squatters rights.

(To BRETT)

If they show up, they'll have a fight on their hands.

BRETT

It finally happened.

BILL

What?

BRETT

You're looking cuter, hero.

He looks at her, then kisses her. She kisses back. DEKE looks at them both with approval.

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE BOAT BASIN

Here comes a small but deadly Coast Guard boat with a searchlight trained into the eye of THE CAMERA. There's a machine-gun mounted on the front. It opens fire.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L.

Bullets stitch the water off the port side.

EXT. STEVE GAYTON, AT THE RAIL

He's still got the rocket launcher, but before he can do anything with it, he's torn up and dropped by machine-gun bullets.

JOE goes for the downed rocket-launcher and hes hit.

EXT. BILL, DEKE, BRETT,

BILL

Down! Down!

At the same time he runs for the rocket-launcher.

BRETT

No!

She runs to go after him and is hit. She goes down.

DEKE (SCREAMS)

Brett! Brett! JESUS! NO!

He throws himself on top of her body in a protective gesture.

EXT. BILL, AT THE RAIL

Bullets fly around him. They splinter the rail as he picks up the rocket-launcher, sights in on the C.G. boat, and... whoosh!

EXT. THE COAST GUARD PATROL BOAT

KA-BOOM! Up in flames and smoke. Maybe we could actually see the machine-gun go flying.

EXT. THE SIGNORA L. AND THE BURNING COAST GUARD BOAT, WIDE

The Signora L. is now under full sail. It doesn't look as classy as an America's Cup vessel, but she still looks mighty fine as she sails past the burning hulk of the Coast Guard vessel and then heads for the mouth of the boat basin... and Haven.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, AND DEKE

DEKE has BRETT'S head cradled in his lap. As BILL corks back, she struggles up to a sitting position.

BILL

How, bad? How bad is it?

BRETT

Relax. Its going to leave a scar, but it's all right. It just grooved me.

She gets up shakily. BILL tears off the tail of his shirt. But before he can use it as a bandage, her eyes have been taken by something and she walks toward the rail.

BRETT (VERY SOFTLY)

Oh... my... God.

They join her. Firelight plays brightly on their faces. By now I think the other survivors have joined them, CURT with his arm around CONNIE. They look solemn, stunned.

EXT. BILL, BRETT, DEKE, THE OTHERS

CURT

That's Wilmington, burning to the ground.

BRETT (REVERENTLY)
Jesus Christ.

She turns to BILL.

BRETT
Yes. If it comes to that. I'll
fight.

DEKE
What are you talking about?

BILL puts the bandage on BRETT'S wounded arm. He looks over at DEKE and smiles at him, tiredly but with love.

BILL
Tell you what, buddy -- I hope you
never have to know.

He finishes tying the bandage. He puts his arms around BRETT and DEKE again and they turn to look at the conflagration that was a small and lovely Southern city.

EXT. WILMINGTON AND THE SIGNORA L. IN THE FOREGROUND

Silhouetted by the flames, it turns toward the mouth of the bay again.

THE CAMERA MOLDS ON the racing fire, and then SLOWLY PANS UP to where the comet has turned the sky to glowing green fire.

HOLDS... HOLDS... and then we fade out.

THE END