

PERVERSIONS OF SCIENCE

"Panic!"

by Andrew Kevin Walker

Based on the EC Comic
"Science-Fiction Radio Broadcast Causes Panic!"

SECOND DRAFT

STOCK FOOTAGE -- NEW YORK CITY - - MORNING

IMAGES of an old MANHATTAN skyline...

SUPERIMPOSE -- TITLE CARD

October 30, 1938

INT. N.B.S. RADIO STUDIOS, OFFICE - - MORNING

Young CARSON WALLS types at a manual TYPEWRITER, shirtsleeves rolled. He is handsome, with penetrating eyes and an almost cherubic face. There's an old fashioned RADIO behind him and a collection of RADIO MICROPHONES on his desk.

REBECCA enters, fashionable, older; a gregarious grand dame.

REBECCA

Well... the great Carson Walls, boy genius, hard at work on his latest radio masterpiece.

And here is Carson's gift from God: a voice so deep, warm and mellifluous that to hear it is to be seduced...

CARSON

(still typing)
I'd say good morning, Becky, but I haven't time. Now, do be a dear and go away. It's a bad habit you've made of wandering the halls and bothering those who are far more industrious than you.

REBECCA

Been slaving away all night again? Don't you ever sleep?

CARSON

Sleep... that deplorable curtailment of the joy of life.

REBECCA

Who said that?

CARSON

I did. It's just Virginia Woolf said it first.

REBECCA

Mind if I take a peek... ?

Rebecca picks up pages from the desk, but Carson takes them back and hides them in a drawer, then returns to typing.

CARSON

It isn't ready.

(CONTINUED)

REBECCA

Never satisfied, Carson. Always rewriting, rewriting, rewriting.

CARSON

The day I'm satisfied with one of my feeble melodramas is the day my thousands of adoring listeners stop listening.

Carson finally quits typing, pulling the page from the typewriter and admiring it. He hands the page to Rebecca.

CARSON

Though, I must admit... this will be one program that won't soon be forgotten.

Rebecca studies the page while Carson lights a cigar.

REBECCA

(reading)

"Invasion of the Martians."

CARSON

Appropriate for a blustery, Halloween eve, wouldn't you say? Full of monsters and menace.

REBECCA

Outer space creatures attacking earth? This'll cause quite a stir.

CARSON

A stir? It'll scare the wits out of them! Mark my words... when Mr and Mrs John Q. Public tune in to "Radio Drama Theater" tonight, they're in for the experience of a lifetime.

Carson blows smoke and arches an eyebrow, smiling, devilish.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - - DAY

The apartment's decorated for a HALLOWEEN PARTY. A big, dim-witted college jock in a letter sweater, JOHN, is seated on the floor, surrounded by the broken remnants of at least six pumpkins. He struggles with a JACK-O-LANTERN...

He's using a knife on the pumpkin, arms and face covered in pulp and seeds, biting his tongue and sweating like a brain surgeon. Finally he finishes, standing and smiling...

(CONTINUED)

The jack-o-lantern is awful: mutilated by slips of the knife, one eye bigger than the other, nose off-center and mouth bent in a half-frown. A child could have done better.

The smile falls from John's face, replaced by sad recognition and disappointment. With a deep sigh he puts the jack-o-lantern down and dials the TELEPHONE.

JOHN
 (into phone)
 Hello, Applebee's Grocery...? I'm
 going to need some more pumpkins
 delivered...

At the front door, BOB breezes in, John's dapper, brainy and bespectacled roommate. Bob carries a BOX and GARMENT BAG, depositing them on the couch.

JOHN
 (still into phone)
 Yes... same as before, thanks.

John hangs up the phone.

BOB
 You're not going to believe it.

JOHN
 What?

Bob comes to study the jack-o-lantern, bends to it, curious.

BOB
 Um... your jack-o-lantern seems to
 have been involved in some sort
 of... violent altercation.

John cradles the pumpkin, kind of hiding it, ashamed.

JOHN
 Never mind about him. What am I not
 going to believe?

BOB
 Our costumes. The costumes I found
 for us to wear at the party tonight.

JOHN
 Let's see.

BOB
 Turn around, and don't look till I
 say so.

JOHN
 Come on, what's the point... ?

(CONTINUED)

BOB
Let me give them a proper
presentation. I'm telling you, your
eyes will pop out of your head.

John faces away begrudgingly. Bob unzips the garment bag.

JOHN
I haven't got all day...

BOB
Hold your horses, you big ape.
You'll be back dissecting gourds in
no time. Okay... you can look...

John turns. Bob holds up two SPACE ALIEN COSTUMES on
hangers: sparkling gold jumpsuits with creature hands and
creature feet, made of rubber, sewn on.

BOB
How perfect are these?

JOHN
Oh, man... ! Where'd you get them?!

BOB
Costume shop downtown. Look at the
claws on the hands and the feet.
But, wait... that's not all...

Bob goes to the BOX he brought, takes out a big, fish-bowl
ALIEN SPACE HELMET with antennas, putting it on.

BOB
(deep "alien" voice)
"Take me to your leader."

John and Bob find this hilarious.

JOHN
I can't believe how great these are!
Think mine'll fit?

BOB
One's Extra-Husky. Aren't they the
bee's knees? The other helmet's in
the car, but give it a try...

Bob takes off his helmet and places it on John's head.

JOHN
You've really outdone yourself, Bob.

John grimaces, lumbering forward, hands raised menacingly.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
 "Do not be afraid, earthlings. We
 come in peace."

John and Bob can't stop laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT -- TIME CUT - - NIGHT

BALLROOM MUSIC is HEARD. A fur covered GORILLA HAND pours a fifth of gin into the punch bowl...

The COSTUME PARTY'S in full swing, lit by candles and a fire in the fireplace. The punch-spiking GORILLA passes a drink to a woman dressed as an AMERICAN INDIAN.

MUSIC comes from the RADIO on the mantelpiece. A DOZEN GUESTS mingle, college-aged, all in costume. A VAMPIRE and MUMMY... a bedsheet GHOST... a COWBOY and foppish, European powdered-wig DANDY...

Bob and John are the center of attention, wearing their SPACE ALIEN COSTUMES. Everyone's laughing. Bob has a lovely blonde FRENCH MAID on his arm. A beautiful brunette in a CHEERLEADER outfit stands with John.

BOB
 ... a pornographer who sold photos
 of a very explicit nature, if you
 know what I mean...
 (winks)
 So, one day the pornographer's
 arrested and taken before a judge.
 "Do you have anything to say in your
 defense?" asks the judge. "Yes,
 your honor, I do," says the
 pornographer. "These pictures aren't
 dirty. Haven't you ever seen eight
 people in love before?"

Laughter. A man dressed as CHARLIE CHAPLIN slaps Bob's back.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
 Oh, you are so blue. Really!

JOHN
 You sure know how to tell 'em,
 buddy. That's funny.

BOB
 Thanks, John. Hey, listen... what's
 the problem with the food... ?

JOHN
 What do you mean... ?

(CONTINUED)

BOB
 (motions to food table)
 Well, we're running awfully low on
 cocktail wienies and cheese puffs.
 Are you on top of that, or is
 everyone going to starve to death?

JOHN
 Oh, yeah... sorry. Thanks for
 pointing that out.

John moves away. Cheerleader looks upset, following...

CHEERLEADER
 John... John, wait...

JOHN
 What is it, honey? I have to get
 more snack foods from the kitchen.

CHEERLEADER
 I know Bob's your good friend, but
 why do you let him order you around
 like that?

JOHN
 Huh? Oh, that's just the way he is.

Gorilla comes to interrupt.

GORILLA
 Great costume, John! Hey, gonna
 whip Wisconsin's ass Saturday,
 right? Pound 'em into the ground!

JOHN
 Sure... I guess...

GORILLA
 Want to know what I think? I think
 you've got a real shot at the
 Heisman this year.

JOHN
 What?

GORILLA
 The Heisman. The Heisman trophy.

JOHN
 (at a loss)
 What's that?

GORILLA
 You're putting me on, right?! Oh,
 you're a real kidder...
 (more)

(CONTINUED)

GORILLA (cont)
 (nodding, laughing)
 Yeah, "duh"... "what's that?" Ha,
 ha! That's rich!

John forces an awkward laugh, but still looks confused as Gorilla walks away. Cheerleader tugs John's arm.

CHEERLEADER
 John... I'm hoping, when the party's
 over... maybe we can get a little
 private time... up on "Lover's Lane."

John looks a bit fearful, trying to hide his nervousness.

JOHN
 Maybe. We'll see how it goes...

CHEERLEADER
 I really like you a lot, you know.

JOHN
 I like you too, sweetheart. I'm
 just... I'm not sure I'm ready to
 be... intimate.

CHEERLEADER
 We've been dating a long time.

JOHN
 I... I better see about those
 wieners...

John pulls away, disappearing through the SWINGING DOOR into the kitchen. Cheerleader is left aggravated.

Across the room, Bob uses a straw thru his helmet to sip soda. He's with French Maid, Charlie Chaplin and Vampire.

VAMPIRE
 You know... every time I go to the
 library, I see you and John. I
 mean, every single time...

BOB
 Yes, well... we often do research
 together.

FRENCH MAID
 Thank you for bringing that up,
 because I keep telling him the same
 thing.

BOB
 Yes, dear. Anyway...

(CONTINUED)

FRENCH MAID

He spends so much time in the library, I think he lives there.

BOB

It's important to study...

VAMPIRE

It's important to study, sure, but you guys are nuts.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN

Come to think of it... whenever I'm there, you guys are there too.

Bob struggles to hide his growing irritation.

VAMPIRE

An Egg-head like you, I can almost understand it, but why's John the big-football-hero burning the midnight oil? I mean, how much studying's required for Phys Ed and Basket Weaving 101?

BOB

(restrained annoyance)

We take our schoolwork very seriously, that's all. Now...

(forced smile)

Who wants to hear the one about the Priest, the Rabbi and the nudist... ?

Across the room, from the RADIO, MUSIC STOPS, replaced by the unmistakable VOICE of CARSON WALLS:

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)

(from radio)

Ladies and gentlemen, we must interrupt this program. We reported earlier this evening on the peculiar phenomena on the surface of Mars, witnessed by the most powerful telescopes on earth, and the strange lights seen in the skies over New York City, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. Now comes a bulletin that some sort of... flying saucer has crashed in Boreman Field, east of Newark, New Jersey. I'm sorry...just a moment...

FROM THE RADIO: whispered, urgent VOICES. Much ACTIVITY.

GORILLA

Hey, did you hear that?

(CONTINUED)

INDIAN
Everybody, shhhhhhh... listen!

Across the room, John comes out from the kitchen, curious.

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
(from radio)
Um... pardon me, ladies and gentlemen... where was I? The object is said to be resting motionless at the center of the large, smoldering crater it created when it crashed to earth.

GORILLA
Boreman Field's only a few miles from here.

The party's gone QUIET. Everyone gathers around the radio.

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
The "spacecraft," if that is what it is, has been described as "glowing" and giving off some sort of low hum. Details are sketchy. Unfortunately, this is all we've been told so far, but rest assured that we will provide further updates. The N.B.S. Radio Network now returns you to the Ballroom of the Crown Royal Hotel.

From the RADIO, pleasant Dance Hall MUSIC RESUMES. Party guests are frantic, ALL TALKING AT ONCE. Bob moves to stand in front of the fireplace, holding up his hands...

BOB
Alright, calm down... quiet down a moment! Obviously this whole thing is somebody's idea of a joke...

VAMPIRE
Who's going to joke about something like that?

BOB
Let's not make too much of it.

JOHN
He's right. It's some sort of misunderstanding or something.

FRENCH MAID
What if it isn't?!

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
How could it not be? It can't really be happening.

(CONTINUED)

The debate begins anew, with EVERYONE TALKING AT ONCE again. Meanwhile, from the RADIO:

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (from radio, less calm)
 Hello, we're... we're breaking in once again, ladies and gentlemen, with more news on the object which crash landed in Boreman Field...

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
 Shut up, everyone! Listen!

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (from radio)
 We have a man on scene now, and we go live to Boreman Field for an eyewitness report...

SIRENS, VEHICLES and SHOUTING can be HEARD from the RADIO, along with the MURMURING of a CROWD.

REPORTER (V.O.)
 (from radio)
 Hello... hello... yes... ?
 (loud static)
 This is Robert Morris reporting. There's quite a commotion here. A large crowd has gathered. Police and firemen are trying to keep the onlookers back. Everyone's gathered around the crater that this... this object made. The crater itself... excuse me, can I get through here!?

Fireplace light flickers across the faces of fretful guests. Bob moves to stand close to John. They're both worried.

BOB
 (whispers)
 What do you think?

JOHN
 (whispers)
 I don't know.

REPORTER (V.O.)
 The crater itself is large... I'd say the size of... at least the size of a baseball diamond, if you can imagine. I'm looking down now at the alien object. It's a round, seamless saucer, probably metal... reflective like the surface of a mirror. I'm sure you can hear it humming. I'll point the microphone...

(CONTINUED)

A loud, throbbing HUM can be HEARD from the RADIO.

GORILLA
(fearful awe)
... holy hell...

CHEERLEADER
I'm scared.

Cheerleader pulls close to John, who comforts her.

VAMPIRE
Be quiet, Goddamn it!

REPORTER (V.O.)
The police are trying to... just,
just one moment... something's
happening here...

Loud, frightful METALLIC POUNDING is HEARD from the RADIO.

REPORTER (V.O.)
That pounding is coming from inside
the object. The surface is
changing, it's hard to describe...
like some sort of door is twisting
open. Yes, a door is opening very
slowly. I can't tell you how
strange this is, to be witnessing
this. Oh my Lord... !

The CROWD is HEARD GASPING. People SHOUT FEARFULLY...

REPORTER (V.O.)
There's a creature coming out.
Ladies and gentlemen, I'm looking
upon a creature from another world.
I almost can't believe my eyes...
this thing, it's ugly. Humanoid.
It's skin is green.

Bob and John share a fearful glance, sweating profusely.

REPORTER (V.O.)
It's a space man, holding some sort
of... metallic object.
(shouting, off mic)
Oh, keep back there... keep back!

Another COLLECTIVE GASP from the CROWD!

REPORTER (V.O.)
The crowd's surged forward! Several
men have fallen into the crater!
The creature's watching them. The
men are trying to climb back out and
the creature... wait... no! NO!

(CONTINUED)

A BLAST of ELECTRICAL ENERGY is HEARD, PEOPLE SCREAMING...

REPORTER (V.O.)

It's some sort of weapon! A wave of energy... red electricity... it's killing the men. Someone do something! Everyone's running. The men have been burned... oh, God... they've just been burned to ashes!

Party guests tremble, terrified, clutching each other, covering their faces. John suddenly crosses the room...

John disappears thru the swinging door to the kitchen.

From the RADIO -- GUNSHOTS and PANDEMONIUM: all hell's breaking loose at Boreman Field.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Police are shooting. Look out there! He's using the weapon... the police... they're burning... they're all burning. I can't stay here. I have to...

The REPORTER SCREAMS as ELECTRICAL SOUND of the ALIEN WEAPON grows suddenly LOUDER! Then, DEAD AIR...

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)

(from radio)

Robert... can you hear me? Does anyone... what's happened?

(muffled sounds)

Something has happened to our connection with Robert Morris at Boreman Field. We will... what's that you say... ?

(pause)

I've just been handed a report. There are... is this true? Similar objects have been reported landing in Washington D.C. and Chicago. There isn't any way for us to confirm this. Now... I'm being informed that we are going off the air momentarily, but I assure you...

Carson's VOICE is suddenly GONE, replaced by lyrical RECORDED MUSIC. The costumed guests look to each other for some sort of support, stunned, disbelieving...

INDIAN

What happened?

VAMPIRE

What do you mean "what happened?"
You heard!

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
I'm getting out of here!

GORILLA
Now, hold on... !

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
It's a fraud! We're being
bamboozled!

GORILLA
We have to stick together.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
To hell with that!

Charlie Chaplin heads for the door, but Gorilla grabs him.

GORILLA
Where are you going to go?!

Charlie Chaplin SHOVES Gorilla backwards, into other guests.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN
Get your stinkin' hands off me...

CHEERLEADER
Stop it! Stop it, both of you!

Cheerleader's teary-eyed. Vampire steps up, afraid.

VAMPIRE
The monkey's right... we need to
stay together. There's strength in
numbers.

FRENCH MAID
Bob... what do you think... Bob... ?

Bob sweats, staring at the floor, lost in thought.

Cheerleader wipes her tears, looking around, realizing...

CHEERLEADER
Where... where's John... ?

French Maid shakes Bob from his reverie...

FRENCH MAID
Bob... what do we do... ?

Bob looks at her, then looks to everyone around him,
focusing, confused, searching for words, opening his mouth
to speak, when a CRY of RAGE is HEARD O.S. as...

The kitchen door swings open -- John rushes out, screaming,
wielding a BUTCHER'S KNIFE in each hand...

(CONTINUED)

John moves thru the guests, STABBING WILDLY, rapidly cutting a path of carnage, dropping guests left and right...

... STABBING Charlie Chaplin repeatedly as the little Tramp screams and SPURTS BLOOD...

... PLUNGING one knife into the neck of Mummy...

... SLICING the throat of Indian with a sweeping SLASH!

Bob sees this, eyes widening. He turns...

Bob grips the handle of a heavy, iron FIREPLACE POKER, hefting it and SWINGING...

Bob CRUSHES the skull of French Maid with one blow!

John drops the knives, gripping the bedsheet Ghost's head in both hands and TWISTING till the NECK is HEARD SNAPPING!

Cheerleader's freaking out, screaming.

John SWINGS the iron poker again -- BLUDGEONING Gorilla...

Gorilla falls hard, BLOOD SQUIRTING out his eye holes!

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE APARTMENT - - NIGHT

SOUNDS of MURDER can be HEARD in the hall as two guests, a KING and QUEEN in crowns and royal robes, arrive at the door.

KING

See... I told you. We're late.
They're playing one of those novelty
fright recordings.

QUEEN

Well, let's get in there. I hope we
haven't missed out on all the fun.

They enter, moving O.S. Their O.S. SCREAMS join the others. The DOOR to the apartment SLAMS SHUT.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT -- TIME CUT - - NIGHT

The corpses of the King and Queen are thrown onto a pile of other dead guests. John takes a few steps back, looking around at the carnage, catching his breath.

The apartment floor is strewn with bodies.

Across the room, Bob's jabbing downwards with his poker, finishing someone off, till he's finally done, dropping the poker, gasping, looking around... looking to John...

(CONTINUED)

John's stares back, then nods.

Bob takes off his costume's helmet, beginning a TRANSFORMATION: his human features MORPHING... changing shape and color... revealing his true form...

John also takes off his helmet, also CHANGING... becoming an ugly, GREEN-SKINNED ALIEN, with twisted, bulbous features, red eyes and horrible sharp, discolored teeth.

Bob and John are hideous MARTIANS. They fold their arms across their chests and bow in salute.

MARTIAN BOB

Hail Mars.

MARTIAN JOHN

Hail Mars. Death to humans.

They straighten. Bob's worried.

MARTIAN BOB

We're fucked.

MARTIAN JOHN

Not yet we're not. Lock the door.

Martian John crosses to a WALK-IN CLOSET, opening it and pulling out coats and hangers, throwing them aside.

MARTIAN BOB

(points at radio)

You heard the humans' electromagnetic radiation box... the invasion has begun!

MARTIAN JOHN

Calm down.

MARTIAN BOB

This is madness! How could they start without us?

MARTIAN JOHN

Get a grip on yourself! I told you to lock the door, now do it!

Martian Bob crosses to lock the front door, muttering.

IN THE CLOSET

Martian John pushes the BACK WALL of the closet. The wall slides open with a pneumatic hiss, REVEALING a SECRET ROOM...

INT. APARTMENT, SECRET ROOM - - NIGHT

It's a small room, noisy with BEEPS and PINGS, filled with advanced ALIEN TECHNOLOGY: hundreds of flashing lights, monitors showing oscillating wave patterns, alien computers computing. Martian John enters, sitting in a chair and operating the complicated INTERSTELLAR TRANSMITTER.

Martian Bob enters, wringing his hands and pacing.

MARTIAN BOB

What are we doing here studying the humans if our Martian brethren are just going to go off half-cocked?

MARTIAN JOHN

It's possible they determined our research mission obsolete.

MARTIAN BOB

So they don't tell us? I mean, how much trouble is that? They don't even send a memo?!

MARTIAN JOHN

This is not the time to panic. I'll simply use the interstellar transmitter to contact the Supreme Commander and we'll have our answer.

Martian John keeps pushing buttons. The transmitter makes all sorts of HIGH PITCHED NOISES. One screen shows a flickering image of the RED PLANET.

MARTIAN BOB

Typical, bureaucratic bullshit! Eight months of undercover work, down the tubes.

Martian John pounds his fists in frustration, standing.

MARTIAN JOHN

Damn it! There's no answer!

MARTIAN BOB

See! See what I mean! This is a total communication break-down!

MARTIAN JOHN

Shut up! I can't think straight!

MARTIAN BOB

What do we do? We've got to do something! We're at war.

Martian John considers... decides...

(CONTINUED)

MARTIAN JOHN
Prepare the incineration rifles.

MARTIAN BOB
Now you're talking my language.

Martian Bob leaps to obey, waving his hand in front of a glass case. The glass door opens automatically and Martian Bob reaches in to get two gleaming, futuristic RIFLES.

INT APARTMENT - - NIGHT

Martian John and Martian Bob come out from the closet.

MARTIAN JOHN
We return to human form and make our way to Boreman Field, where we will stand side by side with our Martian compatriots.

MARTIAN BOB
And, we kill any humans we encounter on the way.

MARTIAN JOHN
That goes without saying, yes. And we'll, umm...
(looking around at bodies on the floor)
We'll clean this up later.

Martian Bob nods.

MARTIAN JOHN
You've got car keys?

Martian Bob pats the pockets of his costume, nods.

MARTIAN BOB
Yes.

Martian John leads the way as they exit in a hurry.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - - NIGHT

John and Bob's CAR races past...

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
... Ladies and gentlemen, I'm afraid I have dreadful news...

INT. CAR - - NIGHT

Bob and John are human again (still in costumes without helmets). Bob drives. John clutches his rifle. RADIO'S ON:

(CONTINUED)

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (from car radio)
 ... U.S. military forces are
 engaging the Martian invaders at
 Boreman Field. Army and National
 Guard forces are said to have
 suffered terrible casualties,
 apparently no match for the
 Martian's unearthly weapons.

Bob and John HOOT and HOLLER happily at this news.

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 This same scene of incomprehensible
 destruction is reportedly being
 played out in major cities all
 across America.

BOB
 Hail Mars!

JOHN
 Hail Mars! Victory is at hand!

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - - NIGHT

A HITCHHIKER stands at the roadside with his thumb out.
 John and Bob's car passes, but then SCREECHES to a halt.
 The grateful hitchhiker runs toward the car.

A BOLT of RED ELECTRICITY shoots from the passenger side of
 the car -- ZAPS the hitchhiker, DISINTEGRATING HIM!
 The car PEELS OUT, heading onward...

EXT. BOREMAN FIELD - - NIGHT

John and Bob's car arrives at Boreman field, sliding to a
 stop in the grass. Bob and John leap out, brandishing their
 rifles and RUNNING, war faces on, ROARING...

JOHN
 Death to humans!

They run uphill, SCREAMING BLOODY MURDER...

Reaching the crest of the hill, pointing their weapons,
 charging forward, ready for the Hell that is war... and
 then, they slow... losing steam... and they halt...

They look all directions, dumbfounded.

Boreman Field is empty. Not a soul in sight. CRICKETS
 CHIRP. FIREFLIES blink occasionally in the darkness.

BOB
 What the hell... ? What the fuck is
 going on here?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
 You want to know what's going on?
 I'll tell you what's going on. You
 took us to the wrong field.

BOB
 I did not. This is Boreman Field!

JOHN
 Is it? Where's the battle? Where
 are our Martian brothers crushing
 the human legion under foot? Show
 me, because I don't see them!

BOB
 This is Boreman Field! I've driven
 past it a hundred times.

JOHN
 Fuck!

John storms back toward the car. Bob follows.

AT THE CAR

John throws his alien rifle in back. He pulls a MAP from
 the glove compartment and goes to open it on the hood. The
 car's running, with only STATIC from the RADIO.

Bob throws his rifle in the car, frustrated.

BOB
 I'm telling you...

JOHN
 Don't! Don't talk to me right now!

John flattens the map, studies it. Bob sulks, arms crossed.

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (from CAR RADIO)
 Good evening, ladies and
 gentlemen... my name is Carson
 Walls. You've been listening to the
 "Radio Drama Theater" presentation
 of "Invasion of the Martians..."

Bob reacts, leaning in to gawk at the radio.

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (from car radio)
 A work of fiction. Yes, you heard
 me right... complete fiction.
 (more)

(CONTINUED)

CARSON'S VOICE (cont; V.O.)
 You see, the N.B.S. Radio Theater
 Players and the Fluffy-Time Biscuit
 Company have conspired to bring you
 this Halloween treat... or trick,
 depending on how you look at it...

BOB
 Did... did you hear that?!

JOHN
 Leave me alone.

BOB
 You better listen to this... !

John looks up as Bob leans in and turns up the VOLUME...

CARSON'S VOICE (V.O.)
 Just our way of jumping out from
 behind a chair in a darkened room
 and saying "boo." There are no
 space ships... no Martian invaders
 overrunning the countryside.
 There's only the wind whistling
 through the trees... the "tap, tap,
 tap" of a branch against your window
 pane... and of course... your
 imagination. This is Carson Walls,
 bidding you good evening. Farewell.

MUSIC PLAYS. John's absolutely stunned, speechless, near
 tears. He and Bob are at the end of their rope.

BOB
 A hoax. It was all a hoax!

JOHN
 What... what kind of person does a
 thing like that?!

BOB
 We... we killed every human
 acquaintance we had.

JOHN
 We blew our cover.

BOB
 We didn't just blow it, we exploded
 it into a billion pieces! When the
 Supreme Commander hears about this,
 he's going to skin us alive!

JOHN
 Literally.

(CONTINUED)

BOB

We've compromised the mission.

John pulls at his hair, thinking, desperate...

JOHN

Okay... just wait... first, we return to the apartment and dispose of the bodies... we incinerate them... whatever...

BOB

Yes, okay, yes...

JOHN

We gather all the knowledge crystals from the laboratory... as much equipment as we can fit in the car...

BOB

Yes...

JOHN

And we run away. We run as fast and as far as we can. We begin new secret lives elsewhere. No one ever has to know this happened...

An ENGINE is HEARD ARRIVING O.S. as HEADLIGHTS hit John and Bob. John and Bob turn to look, squinting...

A PICK-UP TRUCK halts. A filthy, hillbilly FARMER gets out with his craggy, hillbilly WIFE, both pointing SHOTGUNS...

FARMER

Ah-right... don't you move! Put yer hands in the air!

JOHN

What... what is this?

WIFE

Shadd-up, or we blast you in half. Put your fuggin' hands up!

FARMER

God damned space men, think you can take over the world, do you...?! Over my dead body, you sonsabitches!

John and Bob put their hands up, afraid, trying to figure.

JOHN

Space men... ? What are you... ?

John looks down at his shiny outfit, then at the rubber creature hands and feet he's wearing, realizing...

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
 Oh, wait... this... this... ?
 (of his outfit)
 This is a costume. This is just a
 Halloween costume!

FARMER
 Sure it is... and I'm Franklin D.
 Roosevelt! Shut yer filthy cake
 hole, 'cause we're takin' you in!

BOB
 You're making a big mistake. We're
 not aliens.

WIFE
 You got claws on your hands and feet!

BOB
 They're rubber... look... see for
 yourself...

WIFE
 Don't you come any closer!

JOHN
 Listen... the whole thing on the
 radio...it was fake! It wasn't real.
 (points at pick-up)
 Turn on your radio!

FARMER
 Radio's broke. Now, git in back the
 truck! Move it! Git goin'... !

John gives a wanting look out of the corner of his eye...
 The incineration rifles sit in the back seat of the car.
 Farmer comes to shove John toward the pick-up.

FARMER
 Quit dilly-dallyin'! You two are
S.O.L. Know that? Shit outta luck!

John and Bob look at each other, helpless, as they move to
 obey, climbing into the pick-up bed at gunpoint.

The gap-toothed wife cackles, pokes Bob in the ass with the
 gun as he climbs in. Farmer spits tobacco juice.

WIFE
 These sure are mighty fine
 specimens, pappy. Healthy. We
 could have a lotta fun with them.

(CONTINUED)

FARMER

Sure as shit, mommy. You said it.

IN THE BACK OF THE PICK-UP

Bob and John sit, leaning to whisper...

BOB

They're crazy.

JOHN

Thanks for cluing me in. Look...
once we get to the police, we can
talk our way out of this mess.

FARMER

Shaddup, space men! Quit flappin'
them pretty lips a yours.

Farmer climbs in back with them, keeping his gun trained.
Wife gets in front to drive.

FARMER

Don't make me so dang-blasted angry
I have to come over there and start
man-handlin' you, you hear me?!

Farmer spits tobacco, leering.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - - NIGHT

The pick-up zooms by, with Farmer guarding his captives.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - - NIGHT

The pick-up truck arrives, tooling down a dirt road.

The truck stops at a ramshackle FARMHOUSE. Farmer jumps
down and motions with his gun. John and Bob grow more
fearful by the second. Wife comes to Farmer's side.

FARMER

Git down... !

JOHN

This... this isn't the police...

FARMER

Who said anythin' 'bout any police?

WIFE

Hurry up, pappy. Let's get them
indoors an' away from pryin' eyes.

JOHN

Now, look here... I don't know what
you think you're doing... !

(CONTINUED)

FARMER

No, you look! Way I see it, you got two choices. Either, you get down like I already told you...

(cocks shotgun)

Or, I pull this trigger and find out just what color Martian blood is.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE, KITCHEN - - NIGHT

The door's kicked open and John and Bob enter with their hands up, followed by the gun-toting hicks.

JOHN

Please... if you'd just tell us what you want...

WIFE

You'll find out soon enough.

BOB

Where are you taking us? What are you going to do... ?

FARMER

Just keep marchin'...

John and Bob are shoved forward to a DOOR...

INT. FARMHOUSE, CELLAR - - NIGHT

John and Bob are lead DOWN A DARK STAIRCASE.

FARMER

I'm lookin' at these two, mommy, and I'm thinkin' to myself that I might enjoy a close encounter of the lubricated kind!

WIFE

I know what you mean, pappy. There's fire in my britches.

John and Bob share a fearful, queasy glance. It's dark at the bottom of the stairs. There's a bare BULB shining ahead.

WIFE

Straight ahead there...

Wife pushes John and Bob toward a WOODEN DOOR.

BOB

(under his breath)
We've got to fight back. If we change back into our alien forms...

(CONTINUED)

JOHN
 (under his breath)
 What good will that do?

BOB
 It'll frighten them.

JOHN
 (sarcastic)
 Yes, it will, and in their fear,
 they'll shoot our heads off.

FARMER
 Alright, stop yappin'. This is it.
 We got a mighty big surprise for you
 on the other side a that door.

WIFE
 All you got to do is open it.

John and Bob are drenched in fear sweat, looking to the Farmer and Wife, then turning back to face the wooden door.

FARMER
 Well, whatcha waitin' for? Open it!

John swallows, obeying, reaching to the doorknob...

INT. FARMHOUSE, HIDDEN ROOM - - NIGHT

The door CREAKS open. John and Bob enter, jaws dropping...

It's a room full of noisy EQUIPMENT, like the one in John and Bob's apartment, but recognizably different. There are giant VATS of BUBBLING COLORED LIQUIDS with tubes snaking out in all directions. Very psychedelic. Very alien.

Bob and John turn to face Farmer and Wife.

JOHN
 Who... who are you?

Farmer and Wife grin and raise their shotguns, FIRING -- BOOM! BOOM! -- blasting John and Bob point blank!

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. FARMHOUSE, HIDDEN ROOM -- TIME CUT - - NIGHT

The high-tech room is alive with SOUND and LIGHT. The buckshot-riddled corpses of John and Bob lay on two tables, having reverted to their green-skinned alien forms.

Farmer and Wife study them, poking and prodding with alien devices. The door is HEARD CREAKING open. A VOICE...

(CONTINUED)

CARSON'S VOICE (O.S.)
 Good evening, friends... greetings,
 salutations and congratulations...

Carson Walls enters, puffing a cigar.

CARSON
 So... our little radio drama worked.
 We finally succeeded in flushing out
 the Martian invaders.

Carson comes to look down at the dead Martians, pleased.
 He smiles, and he begins to TRANSFORM... changing, as John
 and Bob did previously, except he becomes an even uglier,
blue-skinned alien monster. A JUPITERIAN.

CARSON
 Now, there will be no meddlesome
 interference when we begin our
Jupiterian invasion of earth.

FARMER
 Hail Jupiter.

WIFE
 Hail Jupiter.

Wife and Farmer smile their crooked, rotten-teeth smiles,
 and TRANSFORM... CHANGING also into blue-skinned Jupiterians.

JUPITERIAN CARSON
 Hail Jupiter.

Carson blows cigar smoke, throwing his head back and
 LAUGHING a deep, mellifluous laugh that seems to ECHO out
 into the night air.

THE END