

PINCUSHION

by

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and

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First Draft

FADE IN

WHITE CROSS HEADQUARTERS HALLWAY - DAY

A cold hospital hall. A young woman, HARRIS, walks quickly down the passageway, she's nervous, excited, barely able to keep herself from running.

Over her left shirt pocket is an embroidered badge that reads: "HARRIS #567". In her hand she carries a computer printout crumpled. She turns into an office labeled BIO-GEN RESEARCH LAB. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY.

INT. LAB OFFICE

An older woman, WESSON looks up from a big desk as Harris bursts in.

HARRIS

Seventeen!

Wesson immediately leaves her desk as we

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE AUDITORIUM CLASS ROOM - SAME

CLOSE ON BLACK BOARD

A man's hand, its weathered fingers continually re-gripping the chalk in its grasp, writes an intricate equation on board as a WARM PROFESSORIAL VOICE INTONES:

VOICE

1994...a mysterious new disease strikes Boston, Massachusetts. Labeled Mercer's Syndrome for the Harvard researcher who identified it, it kills 250,000 within seventeen weeks of discovery...

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL

CHARLES SHEPARD. 60's. He wears a lab coat, glasses hang from a chain around his neck. He has the demeanor of a researcher/professor who has done more than live in the lab, he has been at the front of a viral war, he's a veteran.

SHEPARD

...Fortunately a cure is found only four years after the first case was discovered. The disease is eliminated...

ON A SEA OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

dressed in lab coats they sit at desks writing furiously. This is not a normal group of students. They are as squeaky clean as the floors, desk, walls etc. of this medical school amphitheater. You can practically smell the extra-strength ammonia.

ON SHEPARD

SHEPARD (cont'd)

...In 1999 a second virus called simply M-2 appears...slightly different genetic pattern. The Mercer's vaccine is powerless against it...It kills faster and less selectively, and is transmitted not only by sexual, but casual physical contact as well... Many in the research community, myself included, believe that the vaccine created to stop Mercers is directly related to the appearance of M-2...a moot point to the 270 million worldwide it killed before a cure was developed. ...Plagues have beset mankind for centuries. We have fought them and we will continue to do so as we have in our development of a cure for the most complex and heinous virus of all...DNV-47...

He motions to the equation on the blackboard. It is indeed complex.

ANGLE ON REAR DOOR

It opens and Harris and the assistant enter.

SHEPARD

sees them and calmly but quickly ends his lecture.

SHEPARD

Be prepared tomorrow for
lab assignments...thank
you ladies and gentlemen...

Students move for the exits as Harris and Wesson quickly approach the stage.

SHEPARD

Yes?

Harris is shaking now...excited, terrified.

HARRIS
Seventeen cases...Salt Lake!

Shepard stares at Harris...

SHEPARD
Salt Lake...are you sure?

HARRIS
It's been confirmed.

Shepard pauses considering this information.

WESSON
We're not ready.

SHEPARD
(firmly)
We have no choice...it's crossed
the Rockies.

He turns back to Harris, smiles gently, reassuringly at the young woman.

SHEPARD
Call them back...tell them
help is on the way.

Harris leaves and Shepard's smile fades to concern. He looks at Wesson.

SHEPARD
Call the Doctor General...

Wesson nods as we

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Night under a broken atmosphere. A eerie, dangerous glow overhead--like lethal humidity. The glow illuminates... A blacktop highway, edges completely overgrown. Broken, derelict power lines stretch off into the darkness. CAR HEADLIGHTS appear at the far end of the road and rapidly approach. As the headlights near...we hear the WHINE of an engine then VOICES over an intercom or radio of some kind...

TOMMY (v.o.)
I hate all that pokin' and
scrubbin' and the topical...
Man, sometimes I think it'd
be worth dying from M-5...
just to stay out of detox...
especially when Ruth's running it.

4

The car is a Jeep-type wagon, an amalgam of several cars (circa 1990), dull black and buffed aluminum...almost a military vehicle coloration. Its rear quarter windows are crudely covered with sheet metal and rivets. It has large off-road tires half covered by heavy steel fenders which aren't there for decoration. It whips by us in a WHOOSH...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON PAIR OF HANDS ON STEERING WHEEL

--a woman's. Rough but dexterous. Steady, strong like the driver they belong to--KATHRYN COSBURN. She's about thirty-five, short cropped hair, utilitarian, pragmatic. Her body is lean, active. Her movements with her instruments are instinctive, it's her job and she's good at it.

KATHRYN

C'mon, Tommy, Ruth ain't so bad....

She eyes her rear view mirror.

HER POV -- TOMMY

the other rider. 20'. He has the exuberance of a child. He sits in the rear in a swiveling chair, a computer terminal in front of him. They talk through lightweight headsets.

TOMMY

Kath, the woman hates me. She's got a way with a brush that makes brave men weep -- Now, Angela... that's a different matter...

KATHRYN

(surprised)

Tommy...have you gone off the pills again?

TOMMY

Kath...I'm a man in the prime of his sexual life...I want to know what it feels like...even if I can't do anything about it. Don't you ever think about it?

KATHRYN

I got more important things to think about...like staying alive. You do too.

TOMMY

Don't worry, I'm not going to do something stupid.

Kathryn looks from the mirror to the road and focuses on something ahead. Tommy notices something on his computer screen.

TOMMY

Hey, Kath...

KATHRYN

Yeah, I see it.

KATHRYN'S POV: THRU WINDSHIELD

A glow in the road a half mile ahead.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A burning car in the middle of the road. The fire illuminates the surrounding road with an eerie light. Kathryn's car approaches.

INT. CAR - SAME

Kathryn pops down the glove box revealing a row of shotgun shells. She removes two and loads a pump shotgun beside her as she slows the car toward the burning wreck.

TOMMY

Is it one of ours?

KATHRYN

Can't tell. Looks like Ben Grady's...
What's it like outside?

Tommy quickly types something on his computer keyboard as Kathryn hits a switch and a spotlight snaps on on the roof of their car. She scans the perimeter.

TOMMY

...trace of radiation, probably
natural. Carbon monoxide...some
neo-oxide...

KATHRYN

What about the "bug"?

TOMMY

Sounds clean, but we're too
far away for a complete check.

She stops the car fifty feet from the inferno.

KATHRYN

Anything moving?

INSERT -- HIS SCREEN

Infrared...the burning wreck masks the scene.

TOMMY (V.O.)

Hard to tell. Lot of heat
out there.

Kathryn primes the shotgun with a snap of her elbow and
opens the door.

KATHRYN

Keep your eyes open...I'm
going to take a look.

TOMMY

You got it, boss.

He grabs another shotgun as Kathryn slips on a surgical mask
and steps out. Tommy pulls a small seashell out of his
pocket and clutches it for good luck, then undoes the bolts
on a roof hatch and

EXT. CAR/ TOMMY - NIGHT

appears through the hole in the roof. He pulls up his
shotgun.

ANGLE - KATHRYN

She moves cautiously toward the burning vehicle. Her eyes
alert. The flames eerily illuminate the surrounding desert.
She hears a SOUND off the road and wheels to see three
Coyotes scatter and disappear into the dark. Her headset
crackles to life.

TOMMY (V.O.)

What was that?

KATHRYN

Coyotes...

She moves on then stops and picks up a brass rifle casing.
Turns it over once in her hands.

KATHRYN

White Cross...

She moves around the burning car.

ON TOMMY

clearly aware of what this means. Looks around worriedly.

ON KATHRYN

She moves slowly along the road, then stops.

HER POV: In the shadows of the ditch--a man's body, shot and dumped.

KATHRYN (to headset)
It's Ben Grady...

EXT. CAR--TOMMY

Tommy reacts to the news. Suddenly a BEEPING from his computer draws his attention inside the car.

TOMMY
Hey, Kath...I'm picking up some--

He looks up as a gun barrel suddenly presses against his cheek, stops him.

TOUGH MAN
(to Tommy)
Hand me your gun, real easy.

Tommy's head turns his head slowly and looks down the barrel of a big old revolver. It's held by a TOUGH-LOOKING MAN in his forties. Black splotches cover his arms and face--signs of a plague. A SECOND MAN stands on the other side. Tommy hands him his gun, trying hard not to touch him.

TOUGH MAN (cont'd)
Well, well, ~~more~~ couriers...
You folks are becoming an
endangered species, ain't you?
(laughs and calls O.S.)
James!...Get the other!

WIDE

A third man, JAMES, about thirty-five and carrying a pistol, jumps the ditch and goes in search of Kathryn behind the burning car.

TOUGH MAN
(to Tommy)
Sun's coming up soon...We were
just about ready to call it a night
before you folks came along...

TOMMY
(dryly)
Boy, are we lucky or what?...

Suddenly James appears on the other side of the car where Kathryn disappeared--he is alone.

JAMES
Ain't no one here!

TOUGH
(stunned)
What? They was just there...
You saw 'em same as me!

Suddenly Kathryn steps up behind James.. Her shotgun aimed at his head. He wisely lets her take his weapon.

KATHRYN
(to Tough Man)
Put down your gun and move
away from my car.

TOUGH
Can't do it. I want what you're
carrying...

KATHRYN
You're too late, we're empty...
coming home.

TOUGH
Sure you are...Now, I'm gonna give
ya till five for someone to open your trunk
or else we'll blow your buddy's head off...

JAMES
Hey, what about me!?

TOUGH
Relax, James...she ain't got
the guts to shoot you.

He grins at Kathryn and starts counting.

TOUGH
One...

ON TOMMY -- He's scared shitless...

TOUGH
Two...

The Tough Man cocks his pistol. His black scaly finger is
just inches from Tommy's face.

TOUGH
...three...

Kathryn doesn't waver.
James is sweating. He eyes the gun then Tough.

TOUGH
...Four...fi--

TOMMY
(suddenly)
Give them the box, Kath!

KATHRYN
Shut up!

TOMMY
Give them the box!

KATHRYN
You open the back and will shoot
you.

Too late, Tommy hands up a set of keys to Tough, who tosses them to the Second man. The Second man unlatches the hatch and removes a flat shipping case. It's made of fiberglass, heavily reinforced and marked: COMMERCIAL LOS ANGELES BANK. Second climbs out, smiles at Tough.

SECOND MAN
Bingo.

Tough replaces the hammer of his pistol and moves away from Tommy as Second hurries off to fetch their car. Kathryn lowers her gun from James' head--he moves off toward Tough.

KATHRYN
(to Tommy)
Stupid, Tommy...Stupid.

Tommy lowers his head, ashamed. Tough motions to the burning wreckage as second brings up the car.

TOUGH
For the record, we didn't do
this...the White Cross did.

KATHRYN
(implying guilt)
But you watched it.

TOUGH
What'd you expect us to do?...
Stop the White Cross?

He laughs to himself at the thought.

TOUGH (cont'd)
I want to live a little longer.

James and the Tough man climb in and they zoom off. The minute they're gone, Tommy drops through the hatch back into the car. Kathryn moves to the car.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR

Kathryn accelerates hard away... Tommy pulls open a window and chucks out his gloves and mask. There's a loud BEEPING sound coming from his terminal...

TOMMY
Damn, I knew those guys had the bug...
I'm going to be in Detox for a week.

KATHRYN
Goddamnit, Tommy, what were you doing back there, trying to get yourself killed?

TOMMY
C'mon, Kath... I just wanted to see if that other guy broke first... How long we got?

She looks at her watch.

KATHRYN
Any time, now...

CUT TO:

INT. TOUGH MAN'S CAR

James pulls on the clips on the packing crate. The box won't open. The tough man leans over his seat, impatiently.

TOUGH MAN
...Just pull the latchpin on top there.

JAMES
I can do it!

HE DOES and the box EXPLODES in a white hot FLASH.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR - MOVING

The tough man's car BURSTS into flames in the rear window. Tommy turns around to watch. Kathryn stares straight ahead.

TOMMY
I hate doing that.

KATHRYN
It was either you or them, darlin'...

She glances briefly at the fire in her mirror then back to the road.

KATHRYN (cont'd)
(quietly)
...and they were dying anyway.

EXT. TOUGH MAN'S BURNING CAR - NIGHT

The fire rages, burning everything.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE CROSS HEADQUARTERS/ SANTA MONICA - PRE-DAWN

The disintegrating sprawl of Los Angeles at dawn...
Empty boulevards lead from the beach to the city, lined by hollow storefronts and abandoned autos.
Our view is from a beautiful high-rise bedroom window.
A naked woman sits up out of a bed and stares out at the coming day. A moment later a large hand reaches up strokes her back. WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL

DOCTOR/GENERAL ALWIN SPOOR

50's. Strong. He is the head of the White Cross and runs it with a dictator-like toughness. Framed Medical degrees hang on the wall. The door opens and a BIG SERGEANT in White Cross uniform, enters room with coffee and papers.

BIG SERGEANT
Good morning, sir...

He hands Spoor several newspapers and steals a look at the woman as she leaves. Spoor catches him staring. The Big Sergeant immediately feels uncomfortable under his superior's hard look. Spoor smiles mischievously, then goes back to papers.

SPOOR
Forgot to take your suppressant today, Sergeant?

SERGEANT
(caught)
Sorry, sir...Dr. Shepard is here to see you, sir.

On mention of Shepard's name. Spoor looks up, concerned.

INT. SPOOR'S OFFICE

Spoor, wearing a bathrobe, enters his office where Shepard waits.

SPOOR

(alarmed)

What is it, Charles?

SHEPARD

(anxious)

We have 17 confirmed deaths
of DNV-47 in Salt Lake City.
Even though we feel the serum isn't
fully tested it is our recommendation that
we rushed to the Zone immediately--

Even before Shepard finishes, Spoor sits down, obviously
relieved.

SPOOR

Jesus, Charles...for a minute
there I thought you were going
to tell me something bad had
happened...

He laughs to himself. Shepard looks at him lost.

SHEPARD

We need to act immediately...

SPOOR

Why? Salt Lake is not our problem...

SHEPARD

(incredulous)

But we have the cure...we have the
ability to save them all.

SPOOR

Absolutely....For a price.

The statement floors Shepard.

SHEPARD

I beg your pardon...

SPOOR

Jesus, Charlie, it's a question
of economics...

A little smile creeps across Spoor's face. He looks at
Shepard and addresses him like a child.

SPOOR

Because we possess the cure,
our strength grows in direct
proportion to the level of disease.
The more devastating the disease,
the more we can demand of the
serum's price. Sure, Salt Lake's
going to take a beating but lets
face it, there was never any serious
money there...and if we play the publicity
right...it could drive the price through
the roof...Am I making myself clear?

Shepard stares at Spoor as if into the face of a madman.
Whatever opinions he has, he immediately masks them, he nods
weakly in agreement.

SPOOR(cont'd)

Good...

A Servant enters with a breakfast tray. Spoor looks up and
flashes Shepard a charming smile.

SPOOR(cont'd)

Had breakfast yet?

CUT TO:

INT. SPOOR'S ANTEROOM - NIGHT

The door closes behind Shepard. He stands alone, lost for a
moment then steels himself for what he knows he must do.

CUT TO:

EXT. KATHRYN'S CAR - MOVING - DAWN

Kathryn's car CRASHES over a curb and wheels down a suburban
street...an old development. A row of decaying houses
exactly alike...Lawns burnt brown...L.A. without sprinklers.
The car crosses a set of railroad tracks and approaches a
large building. We see the sign: "W ST OR NGE MA L".

INT. GARAGE

Kathryn's car enters an underground entrance. She snaps the
car smartly around concrete barricades...it's an old parking
garage...and pulls up to a large corrugated door.

The big doors roll up as Kathryn pulls the car inside.
Quickly the car is surrounded by people in sexless white
coveralls. They wear surgical masks, tight bonnets over
their hair, rubber boots and rubber gloves. They use hand
signals to direct Kathryn into a work bay.

--One begins to hose the car down with steaming water.
 --Another scrubs it with a brush on a long pole.
 --A third moves what looks like a metal detector over the exposed surfaces.

KATHRYN AND TOMMY

climb out and walk around the back of the car. Kathryn unlatches the hatch and swings it up. Tommy eyes the door to Detox, warily.

A workman with an electric socket wrench rapidly unbolts part of the floor and Kathryn lifts out another shipping case, identical to the one we saw before. She takes the case and they move out of the room.

TOMMY

Please, baby, let Ruth have the night off...

CUT TO:

INT. DISPATCHER'S OFFICE - SAME

The Dispatcher, PAUL, a gruff veteran courier, sits behind a glass window. He wears a headset and sits at a computer terminal. The walls are covered with maps and notes. Radio transmissions fill the air.

On the other side of the window we see Kathryn and Tommy enter the room. Kathryn heaves the case onto a moving conveyor belt--it disappears into a hole in the wall.

Kathryn steps through a metal detector-like doorway followed by Tommy and a LOUD ALARM instantly sounds.

PAUL

(over the intercom)

Dirty again, huh?

KATHRYN

It's dirty world out there, Paul.

PAUL

My heart bleeds for you....Detox... both of ya...

Tommy and Kathryn turn toward the detox room. Tommy stops dead in his tracks.

TOMMY

Oh, no...Ruth...

WHAT HE SEES:

A vaguely female figure stands in the door. RUTH. She

wears an enormous gas mask and carries a long, narrow scrub brush. Tommy starts toward the door like a condemned man. Kathryn starts to follow when Paul stops her. There is a change in his tone. One veteran speaking to another.

PAUL

Hey, Kath...I heard the Cross
got Ben Grady...That's tough...

The reminder steels Kathryn. She nods, follows Tommy into the detox.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE OFFICE - NIGHT

TIM BLORE strides heavily into his grimy office looking at a handful of papers. He is a big man, about fifty. Auto parts and auto parts books are stacked around the room so at first we don't see a visitor waiting for him there...Charles Shepard...Plate glass windows overlook the garage below.

TIM

Shepard?

SHEPARD

Doctor Charles Shepard...

TIM

(reading from papers)

...White Cross I.D. rank twenty-seven...

(hands him back

his papers)

Tim Blore. No number...

Shepard extends his hand. Tim coldly ignores the offer--stares at him hard.

TIM

I got to be honest, Doc. There're people here that if they knew a Cross member was in the building they'd open you up a new asshole...and I might just be one of them...

He motions out his window at the garage below.

TIM(cont'd)

Five years ago I had one hundred and ten cars on the road...then the White Cross closed the borders. Now I have ten left...

SHEPARD

The border closure was necessary to prevent the spread of the plagues--

TIM

Bullshit. Spoor closed the borders to freeze trade so he could get rich, and it's been open season on my couriers ever since...I've lost two hundred including one tonight.

He holds Shepard's look.

SHEPARD

I didn't come here to defend the White Cross, Mr. Blore. I came because I have a package I must have moved... quickly and quietly to Salt Lake City. I need your help.

TIM

(incredulously)

Salt Lake City? Doc, you got to be out of your mind?

Shepard opens his suitcase. It is full of money.

SHEPARD

I'm prepared to pay up to forty thousand dollars for the run.

Tim stares at the money, then motions Shepard to a chair.

TIM

I might have just the person for you, Doc...

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

A pink and well-scrubbed Tommy sits on a bench examining his arm.

TOMMY

I don't believe it...she missed a few hairs...

Kathryn in fresh jumpsuit, wet hair, stands in front of her locker and removes a plastic pill vial. She shakes out a couple of capsules and stares at them--Sexual Suppressants. She jiggles them in her hand considering, then downs them as Paul comes to the door looking for her.

PAUL
Hey, Kath...Tim wants to
see you guys.

KATHRYN
Be right there.

She pockets the vial then closes her locker as we

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S OFFICE

Kathryn and Tommy sit in front of Shepard who stands nearby.
Tim leans against a filing cabinet watching their reactions.

KATHRYN
Are you out of your mind? No one's
made it to Salt Lake since you closed the
borders. And I never liked that run much
even when the roads were good...

TOMMY
(agreeing)
Lots of desert.

KATHRYN
...Lots of desert and two days out...
And then there's the border fence--

TIM
It's twenty thousand bucks,
Kathryn...

The figure momentarily stops Kathryn, Tommy is in shock.

TIM(cont'd)
You could retire and become a
respectable lady on that kind of money.

TOMMY
(stunned)
You say, twenty thousand?

SHEPARD
Ten when you start the trip
ten on delivery of the package.

Tommy looks at Kathryn eagerly.

TOMMY
Twenty thou, Kath...

KATHRYN
Remember this about money, Tombo

CONT'D

KATHRYN(cont'd)
...you got to be alive to enjoy it.
(to Tim)
Get yourself another team.

She starts for the door. Shepard looks anxiously to Tim for help.

TIM
There isn't anybody else.
Kathryn, you're my best.

KATHRYN
Yeah, kiss my ass. Come on, Tommy
we got real work to do...

She gets up to go to the door, but Tommy stays seated, fixed. He looks up at Shepard.

TOMMY
What's the package?

Kathryn stops at the door and looks back, annoyed.

KATHRYN
Tommy...

TOMMY
I want to know. Whatever
it is has got to be important!

SHEPARD
It is.

KATHRYN
(sarcastically)
Yeah. For twenty thousand
what do you expect him to
say?: It's cow manure they
want us to carry...
(impatiently to Tommy)
C'mon...

But Tommy remains.

SHEPARD
(to Tommy)
You've heard of DNV -47?

TOMMY
(almost a whisper)
The Ultraplague...

The word has an unsettling influence on the group.

SHEPARD

You would be carrying the cure.

The words have impact. Tommy is mesmerized. Shepard seizes the moment.

SHEPARD (cont'd)

It has wiped out Atlanta and St. Louis...
There hasn't been a radio signal-out
of New York in almost two months.
We'd hoped the Rocky Mountains would
act as a barrier that would keep the
disease from moving any further west...
but yesterday seventeen cases were
found in Salt Lake.

KATHRYN

Sounds like a good reason to
stay here.

TOMMY

(to Shepard)

Why us?...I mean, why don't you
just get the Cross to move it?...

SHEPARD

(pauses, then)

It's become apparent that my
superior has no intention of
distributing this cure. Especially
not to an area outside his control.

KATHRYN

You're superior?...

SHEPARD

Doctor-General Alwin Spoor.

The mention of Spoor holds Kathryn. It has meaning. Tim
knew it would, watches her reaction.

KATHRYN

You mean not only do we have to
drive this thing across 700
miles of desert...Spoor doesn't
even know we're doing it?

Shepard nods.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

Well, you shoulda mentioned
that earlier, I woulda saved
you the whole sales pitch...You
are crazy. No way.

She leaves. Tommy looks after her, then follows. Shepard looks up at Tim worriedly.

TIM
Give her a minute to sort things out

CUT TO:

INT GARAGE - DAY

Kathryn leaves the office and enters the garage, followed by Tommy. He hurries to catch up.

TOMMY
Kath, it's the cure...we should do it.

Kathryn gives him a little laugh.

KATHRYN
Tommy if I had a dollar for every time someone told me I was carrying "the Cure" I wouldn't be doing this shit today. There ain't no cure. And even if it was legit, there's no way to get over the border fence... That's two thousand volts of electricity they ain't going to just turn off for us.

TOMMY
I could get us through.

KATHRYN
Sure you could Einstein...Tommy, forget it...Nobody's stupid enough to do it.

Suddenly a voice from the rear calls out.

VOICE
Hey, Cosburn...

The room falls quiet as a huge man, MERC, twenties, in torn shirt clambers up on top of an auto. Kathryn stops and looks up at him as does the rest of the garage.

MERC(cont'd)
Yo, bitch...Stop.

KATHRYN
What're you blind, Merc? Or does it look like I'm going somewhere?

MERC

Shut up and listen...As of next week I'm taking over your Riverside run...so make new plans.

He hops off the car and goes back to work. Kathryn remains fixed, stunned at the challenge.

KATHRYN

Says who?

MERC

Says me...Don't take it personal, Cosburn...It's just a matter of money.

KATHRYN

My money...I take that personal...

Merc pulls out a knife. Snaps open blade.

KATHRYN

(eyes the knife)

On the other hand...it's only money...

MERC

That's a good girl...

He grins...She turns around and starts away from the big man giving him just long enough to close his knife when she takes a metal pipe leaning next to a car and swings it like a baseball bat--catching Merc full in the ribs. The blow knocks his breath away and sends the knife to the floor.

The garage explodes with yelling, bets are suddenly placed, sides drawn.

Before Merc can recover Kathryn is on him like a cat. She fights with a fluid but tough style--part street fighter, part karate--using her lean body to its fullest. She whips the pipe up, giving him an undercut that rolls his eyes back, then spins and kicks him into the car.

Kathryn swings the pipe again in what should be the coup de grace but this time Merc sees it coming and catches the end of the pipe right in front of his face with a meaty hand. The betting shifts.

Whipping the pole like a willow branch he sends Kathryn sliding across the floor under a truck that has been jacked up--the handle extends out from the manual jack. Kathryn tries to extract the jack handle as a weapon as Merc closes in with the pipe but it won't budge.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - SAME

Shepard and Tim watch from his window. Tim seems to enjoy it, Shepard watches worriedly.

SHEPARD

Shouldn't you do something...?
Go down there and stop them?

TIM

Relax, Doc...I don't think
she'll hurt him.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - SAME

Merc mercilessly hammers the car three times trying to hit Kathryn, each time she just manages to dodge the blow. The third time Kathryn slips under his blow, grabs an overhead air hose and blasts him in the face. The air blinds him just long enough for her to duck nimbly under his blow and use his momentum to throw him against the jacked up car. Merc starts to move then freezes. The yelling stops as the big man looks down and then swallows hard.

He has straddled the jack handle. The handle extends between his legs and is held by Kathryn. One jerk of her hand and the metal pole will fly up into the big man's crotch.

KATHRYN

You've got a problem, Merc.

The big man gulps. Sweat beads up on his forehead.

KATHRYN(cont'd)

Now...have we cleared up the matter?

Merc nods.

KATHRYN(cont'd)

Good....

(beat)

Tell me something, Merc...
why next week?

MERC

(weakly)

What?

KATHRYN

Why take over my Riverside
run next week?...Why not
tomorrow?

MERC

Tim offered me a job for
next week...twenty-five thou to
drive a package to Salt Lake...

The figure hits Kathryn hard.

KATHRYN

Twenty-five thou?

He nods again weakly.

KATHRYN

That sonofabitch...

She moves away from the jack. Merc watches her a moment, he
made it. Then angrily she hits the car--setting the jack in
motion and Merc leaps for cover.

THE JACK handle whips up and down furiously as we

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S OFFICE

The door bursts open and Kathryn enters.

KATHRYN

I changed my mind...we'll run it...
But not for twenty...

TIM

Yeah, well, I'm sorry about that
Kath--How 'bout for thirty?...

KATHRYN

... Forty. Take it or leave it.

Tim's face falls, she's got his number.

EXT. MAGIC MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Kathryn and Tommy's car sits beneath the enormous skeleton
of a roller coaster. Tommy stands relaxed, besides the car.
At his side is his automatic shotgun. He stares up at the
sky--an almost glowing orange cloud.

TOMMY

Kind of pretty isn't it?.

Kathryn gives him a look.

KATHRYN

You know, Tommy...only you could find something positive to say about the destruction of the Ozone layer.

(looking at her watch, impatiently)

Where are they?...This place is worse than a ghost town. Gives me the creeps.

TOMMY

Not me....I like it...It stood for families...people having fun. When children had love, good times. Maybe someday they'll open this place up again...

KATHRYN

Don't hold you breath.

TOMMY

You know that's your problem, Kath... you're too much a pessimist.

KATHRYN

Wrong...I'm a realist. I don't believe in wasting good thought on anything that doesn't stand a chance of happening.

TOMMY

Don't you just ask yourself every now and then..."what if?"...

She looks at him about to admit something, then looks away.

KATHRYN

Where are these guys?

Suddenly they see a light deep inside the park. Tommy climbs in as Kathryn pulls the car slowly toward the light.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Another flashlight blinks off to their right. Kathryn turns toward it. Suddenly a man steps out of the dark in front of their car. It's Charles Shepard. He turns and signals with a wave of his arm.

VOICE (far off)

All clear!

Suddenly, arc lights BURST ON and flood the area surrounding the car. There's a flurry of activity...three or four of

Shepard's people run across the bright ring.

A small forklift suddenly appears and approaches the rear of the car. In its prongs is a box--five feet long. Two feet high, three feet wide. It looks like an ordinary shipping trunk but covered with valves, pipes, scuba-like tanks.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

The forklift carefully loads the special crate into the rear of the Jeep. Tommy's eyes are wide. Kathryn is more cynical.

TOMMY

You sure there's enough cure
in there to save Salt Lake City?

SHEPARD

More than enough...as long as
it gets there.

KATHRYN

It'll get there as long as
you remembered to bring the fuel.

Shepard hesitates a beat then places a briefcase on the seat next to Kathryn. She opens it to reveal: \$20,000 in worn but neatly wrapped bills.

EXT. FRONT OF AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT

In the shadows we detect the movement of a new group of vehicles...lights off...they prowl silently into position.

CUT TO:

EXT. KATHRYN'S CAR - NIGHT

ANGLE - REAR DOOR

Tommy cinches the straps that secure the box. He notices a black digital clock on the top. Shepard hits switch on the clock and immediately the display flashes on. It says: 72:00:00.

SHEPARD

Seventy-two hours...

Shepard hits the switch again and the display begins counting down in tenths of a second splits. He hands it to Kathryn.

SHEPARD

When the clock reaches zero...

CONT'D

SHEPARD (cont'd)
it'll send out a 200 ultrahertz micro
beacon. My associates in the Salt Desert
will track it and pick up the package.

KATHRYN
And they'll have the other half of
our money?

SHEPARD
Yes...

The hatch is shut with a THUNK at the back of the Jeep.
Tommy climbs in.

TOMMY
What happens if we go over
seventy-two hours?

SHEPARD
My associates in Utah are in
great danger...They'll meet
you exactly thirty minutes
after the 72nd hour has expired.
They will give you a password:
"Today the sun rises in the West."
Should you be late...you may
as well keep on going.

Shepard steps back into the night. Suddenly a SIREN WAILS.

SHEPARD
Quickly! Get out of here!

Kathryn slams the car into gear and swings into a one-eighty
as a distant siren WAILS.

Over the top of the roller coaster two helicopters sweep
across the park in pursuit.

INT. CAR - SAME

Kathryn roars across the park. Turns out her lights. She
leaves most of the trucks behind but one the helicopters
picks her up.

WIDE

The helicopter roars after her. Kathryn's car jumps the
curb and roars through the decaying roller coaster ride in
an attempt to lose it. The helicopter follows but doesn't
make it, clipping the huge loop and exploding...lighting the
old amusement park like the Fourth of July.

EXT. HIGH AND WIDE - NIGHT

As the helicopter burns below. The lights of the Jeep disappear into the mountains.

EXT. MAGIC MOUNTAIN AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT

Shepard stands in the middle of the compound. His associates have been gathered up and herded into a group behind him, watched by armed White Cross guards. He watches as a helicopter lands and moments later Spoor emerges followed by his dog.

Spoor approaches Shepard. His appearance sends a silent shock wave through his guards. Even Shepard seems surprised, uncomfortable at Spoor's presence. Spoor stops in front of Shepard, smiles.

SPOOR

You know, I haven't been outside in five years, Charles... It's really not so bad, is it?... Which one of the other groups made you the best offer, Charles? Was it the Cancer Society? The AMA?

SHEPARD

None of them.

SPOOR

You realize, even if you don't tell me, one of your colleagues will.

Shepard just stares at him. He's not going to talk.

SPOOR(cont'd)

Geneticists... You people think you invented life.

(beat, then forcefully)

Who did you sell it to!

SHEPARD

(calmly)

What makes you so sure I sold it?

Spoor stares absently at Shepard. The thought is almost incomprehensible to Spoor.

SPOOR

You... gave it away?

(beat)

You are a very sick man, Charles... Very sick. I'll find them, believe me.

(to Big Sergeant)

Kill him... please.

Spoor leads his dog back to the helicopter, the Big Sergeant removes his pistol from its holster and steps toward Shepard. As Spoor climbs in the helicopter we hear a single PISTOL SHOT O.C. Shepard is dead.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR - NIGHT

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON the TRUNK six green pilot lights on the shipping case flash. The trunk shudders with the rough jerking of the car. WE PULL BACK TO SEE TOMMY at his keyboard, smiles at the message on the screen.

TOMMY

Hundred and fifty miles...We're making good time.

At the sight of the flashing lights on the trunk, another thought hits him.

TOMMY(cont'd)

Kath...what do you think it is, exactly?

KATHRYN

It's a package, exactly. That's all that matters.

TOMMY

Maybe it's an atomic bomb? Kill the plagues and everything else too...

Kathryn gives him a look that says put your imagination on ice for a while. Tommy turns around in his seat.

KATHRYN

Try raising Tim.

Tommy switches on the radio.

TOMMY

Zero Base, Base...this is Tango-Delta Niner. Zero Base come in...

Tommy throws a switch and waits. We hear radio WHITE NOISE.

TOMMY(cont'd)

Where the hell is he?

KATHRYN

We're pretty far out. Give him a moment.

Suddenly there's a CRACK OF STATIC, then Tim's familiar voice comes over the radio.

TIM(V.O., on radio)
Tango-Delta Niner this is Zero
Base...come in please...

TOMMY
Hey, Tim, where you been?

TIM(V.O.)
A little problem with the trans-
mitter...I don't want to stay on
long so listen...Ben Grady picked
up a report on Medline. Head up
190 to 374. Looks like the
cleanest spot to cross the wire.

Tommy looks up at Kathryn who cuts in.

KATHRYN
Got it. Thanks for the tip.

TIM
Right...Good luck.

Tommy punches down the radio. For a beat they consider this
information, silently. Tommy looks up at her concerned.

TOMMY
Did you hear that?

KATHRYN
Yeah...Tim just got a report
from a dead man.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Tim turns off radio. His face bruised, beaten. The Big
Sergeant stands menacingly behind him. Through the plate
glass window overlooking the garage a roundup of drivers and
mechanics is taking place by the White Cross guards. We pull
back to see Spoor. He watches the action through the
windows.

SPOOR
Who was that woman?

No answer. He turns slowly and faces Tim. The Big Sergeant
strikes Tim and Spoor repeats himself.

SPOOR(cont'd)
Who...was...that woman?

TIM

(boldly)

Her name is Cosburn...Kathryn Cosburn.

The name strikes Spoor. He hunts his memory as if it should mean something.

SPOOR

Cosburn...

TIM

You don't know her...but buddy,
she sure as shit remembers you.

SPOOR

(to another guard)

Alert all border installations.
Bring out the fastest cars. Find
them.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Kathryn's driving. They enter a mountain tunnel and leave the eerie orange night glow for total darkness. Tommy checks his computer screen. The electronic grid of a map covers the screen.

TOMMY

Coming up on our turn off. You
sure this is the best thing to do?

KATHRYN

(sarcastically)

Well we could always put a bow
on it and go back and say we're sorry....

She gives Tommy a look that steels him.

KATHRYN(cont'd)

We're in this now, Tommy...
There ain't nothing back there
to go home to.

Tommy nods sadly. Kathryn checks her gauges.

KATHRYN(cont'd)

Time to switch off first reserve tank.

Tommy hits a series of overhead switches, and the engine whines a moment as the old fuel tank is disengaged and the new one kicks in.

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TOMMY
New tank operational...dropping
this one.

He bends down to the floor to detach the empty tank, and as he does, a shot BLASTS open the passenger window.

KATHRYN'S POV - OUT SHATTERED WINDOW

A White cross truck is riding in the other lane only a few feet from Kathryn's car. The passenger levels a shotgun.

HIS POV:

A clear shot at Kathryn. Suddenly Tommy springs into frame from below the window with a shotgun and fires twice. The White Cross truck spins out of control into an embankment and bursts into flames.

INT. KATHRYN'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Tommy reloads as Kathryn looks in her mirror and sees a second truck's headlights.

KATHRYN
Here comes number two.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A spotlight beams off the second and picks out Kathryn's car.

INT. CAR

The wind HOWLS through the broken windows.

KATHRYN
Take out that light!!

SHOTS bang and TOCK into the car sheet metal. Tommy unhooks the roof-hatch and throws it back. Kathryn pulls the wheel hard to the left, then hard to the right.

EXT. CAR

Kathryn's car sways laterally across the road, making it difficult to hit.

Tommy appears at the roof of the car and fires back at the truck. On the fourth burst, he knocks out the light.

TOMMY
I got it! That ought to slow

CONT'D

TOMMY (cont'd)
them down.

Suddenly an unbelievable fusillade of bullets hits Kathryn's car, forcing Tommy back inside. Bullets pound the car's protective sheet metal like hail on a tin roof.

INT. CAR

Tommy ducks back inside, white as a sheet.

KATHRYN
Yeah, that really slowed them
down...

(glances in mirror)
Hang on, here they come...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROAD - NIGHT

Kathryn's car picks up speed as it hits a short straightaway--Seventy, eighty MPH. The White Cross truck follows--engine ROARING--gaining. It moves next to them, fender to fender. Its greater weight forces Kathryn's car onto the shoulder.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR

Kathryn fights the wheel to stay on the road. Suddenly she looks up.

KATHRYN
Shit...

KATHRYN'S POV --THRU WINDSHIELD

Dead ahead we see the dark opening of a tunnel. They're on course to slam into the outside wall.

ON KATHRYN

eyes fixed on the approaching wall. Tommy in passenger seat is losing it.

TOMMY
Kath!

KATHRYN
Hold on!...

Kathryn jerks the wheel, sending her car smashing into the

White Cross truck, forcing it over just enough for both to fit into the narrow opening. Sparks fly as the two vehicles scrap the sides of the stone tunnel.

Suddenly they come out the other side and immediately Kathryn, slows, drops behind the other vehicle then moves up on its other side--now she's on the inside pushing out.

With three, quick, hard blows she forces the bigger truck to the shoulder. But her car is not heavy enough to hold it there. She sees A White Cross Guard with a rifle take aim through the passenger window, but instead of falling back, Kathryn slams her vehicle into the other car, forcing the shots to go wild. The White Cross truck goes onto the shoulder and Kathryn fights to hold it there. Tommy looks up and sees The White Cross guard using the closeness of the two cars to steady his aim.

TOMMY

Fall back, Kathryn...look out!

But Kathryn doesn't waver. She holds the White Cross Truck on the shoulder and punches the speed--eighty, ninety...

INT. WHITE CROSS TRUCK - NIGHT

The gunner fingers the trigger when the driver looks up and sees another tunnel suddenly upon them. His reflexes are not as fast as Kathryn's...

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The White Cross truck rams into the exterior wall of the tunnel and explodes into a ball of flames as Kathryn's car disappears into the tunnel.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR

Kathryn and Tommy are both thrown against the shell of the car by the shock wave as it skids against the side of the tunnel, then straightens out.

Tommy turns and CLACKS at his computer.

TOMMY

Skin took a lotta lead...busted
a brake line...need a closer look.

Kathryn steals a look at the sky.

KATHRYN

Clear...Ultraviolet's gonna be bad.
We need to go inside.

TOMMY
Gotta safehouse marked on the
map...Wanna check it?

EXT. HOT SPRINGS DESERT INN - DAWN

A deserted old hotel. Swooping pseudo-modern architecture, fifties style, now faded but preserved in the high desert sun. A sign rattles in the breeze: "VACANCY".

Kathryn's car limps into frame. It has a flat tire, is riddled with bullet holes and one of its metal tire shields drags in the dust.

INT. CAR

Tommy studies his computer screen.

TOMMY
Looks clean...Nothing on the
screen.

(re: the motel)
Man, what were they thinking when
they built this thing?

KATHRYN
The future...C'mon let's get
it inside.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - DAY

Empty. Buckling parquet floors. Tables and chairs are stacked in corner. Tommy opens two large glass doors and as then helps Kathryn roll the crippled Jeep into the room. Tommy closes the drapes as Kathryn wearily looks around.

Lining the high walls are a series of balconies, draped in dusty red velvet. At the back of the room are another series of doors.

Tommy takes off his jacket and pulls out the car's jack. Kathryn pulls her shotgun out of the car.

KATHRYN
I'm going to have a look
around while you start on that.

Tommy nods, already hard at work.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Kathryn moves slowly down the hallway with her shotgun. She

wears a surgical mask and rubber gloves. She opens a door, moves

INT. HOTEL ROOM

into a hotel room. A suitcase is opened on the bed--it has been ransacked. Sunlight creeps in through a crack in the drapes. She moves to the bath...empty.

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

The car is jacked up. Tommy's legs protrude from underneath. He reaches out for a tool and his hands touch something else--a milky substance dripping from above.

CLOSE ON BOX

A series of red pilot lights FLASH insistently. Tommy's fingers feel the case, find a smooth bullet hole...it's been punctured.

TOMMY

Oh, shit...

CUT TO:

HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Tommy, armed with his machine gun, moves slowly down the ghostly passage.

TOMMY

(whispers)

Kath?...Hey, Kath...

There's no response...then a CREAKING SOUND. He pushes open a door next to him and steps inside, gun barrel first.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

He steps into the room. There's a faint sound from the other side of the door. His finger grips around the trigger, summons his courage and kicks the door open..

WHAT HE SEES: A pair of rats chewing on a mattress. They look up at him absently, then go back to eating.

TOMMY

lets out a breath.

TOMMY

No matter what happens to us, I guess they'll always be rats, cats and cockroaches...

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Suddenly he notices a whisp of movement on the other side the room...a person? A shadow? It's a torn curtain. But why did it move? There's no wind. Tommy braces to himself to investigate when a hand comes down on his shoulder...He turns..It's Kathryn.

TOMMY

Jesus, Kath...you scared the shit out of me!...I thought I saw something moving over there.

KATHRYN

Your imagination. I've been all through here...place is empty.

Tommy looks back at the open window skeptically.

KATHRYN(cont'd)

What're you doing up here, anyway? I thought you were working on the brakes?

TOMMY

I was, but...We got a problem...

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

CUT TO:

Tommy flips the back hatch on the car. He fingers the dripping liquid as they stare inside at the case...

TOMMY

Could be refrigerant. I'm pretty sure one of the tanks is empty... Whatever's in there could be spoiling.

KATHRYN

Look, we didn't pack it and they knew this wasn't going to be a ride in the park. Soon as it's dark we blow out of here.

But Tommy doesn't move.

TOMMY

We got to open it Kath...

KATHRYN

Why...? It's not our responsibility.

TOMMY

You really think they're gonna

CONT'D

TOMMY (cont'd)
 pay us the other half of our
 money if whatever's in there
 isn't a hundred percent?

Kathryn turns and looks at Tommy, then at the flashing RED
 LIGHTS on the box.

TOMMY (cont'd)
 We got to open it, Kath...we gotta.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON TRUNK --

Tommy's boring out the cylinder on the trunk lock. He frees
 it from the top of the trunk.

TOMMY
 That's it.

Kathryn moves up to one side.

KATHRYN
 Grab the other side.

They grab the ends of the lid and slide it off. There's a
 second lid fastened down with simple clasps. They tear at
 the clasps and lift the lid clear.

CLOSE ON THEIR FACES

as their mouths drop.

TOMMY
 Holy shit...

THEIR POV:

The inside of the case is like an embryo in a womb...there,
 in fetal position, is the body of a six year old boy.

KATHRYN
 It's a kid...

The child lays sideways. A large breathing apparatus
 strapped to its face. There are wastepipes and tubes
 strapped around its midsection. Electrodes strapped to its
 limbs and chest cause it to twitch and jerk as slight
 electrical impulses are sent through its muscles.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADWAY - MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

Six big ambulances marked with White Cross insignia pound across the desert road. Just overhead, flying only twenty feet off the ground is Spoor's helicopter.

INT. HELICOPTER - SAME

Spoor sits in a passenger seat with his dog. He strokes its head as he rides. The grizzled Big Sergeant hangs up the radio.

BIG SERGEANT

We should be arriving at the Nevada border in four hours. Patrols have checked their route...no sign of them.

SPOOR

Of course not, she's good. Keep them looking.

He notices A YOUNG GUARD stealing looks at his dog.

SPOOR(cont'd)

(to guard)

Have you ever seen a dog before, son?

YOUNG GUARD

No sir.

SPOOR

He's the last dog on earth.
...Would you like to pet him?

The young guard nods, he's dying to. He carefully reaches to the dog, but just before he does, the dog snaps at the hand viciously. Spoor howls with laughter.

SPOOR(cont'd)

I love doing that.

CUT TO:

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

Tommy holds the child's body carefully in his arms.

TOMMY

What are all these tubes and wires for, you think?

KATHRYN

Food, muscle stimulant. He's

CONT D

KATHRYN (cont'd)
 a lab rat...a pincushion. Look
 at his arms--like a junkie...
 They kept him narcotized.

She begins pulling the needles and electrodes off the body.

TOMMY
 Hey, Kath...you think you
 should do that?...

KATHRYN
 His box is shot...if he's
 traveling with us now he's
 got to adjust sooner or later.

Carefully she removes the breathing apparatus. The child reacts to breathing on its own...For a moment it struggles desperately trying to suck in air...then suddenly it exhales, catching like a pump settling into its rhythm. It is almost like a birth.

Slowly the boy's eyes open, then shut sleepily as he fights off the drug. His eyes open again--they're light blue and have an eerie, alien quality.

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

CUT TO:

Tommy's bent over the front of the car, hood up. Kathryn sits near him at one of the banquet tables, frayed maps spread out all around. The boy, dressed in an ill-fitting cutoff jumpsuit, sits on a blanket on the floor near her. He watches her. Candlelight provides small illumination in the big room.

KATHRYN
 ...And all I'm saying is if we're
 getting forty to deliver a box...
 Well, then I figure a person's gotta
 be worth another thirty or forty more?
 (no response)
 Right?

She looks down at the boy. He just stares at her.

KATHRYN (cont'd)
 (to Boy)
 Right? You talk some sense
 into him.

Tommy leans out of the engine, looks at her.

TOMMY

I don't know Kath...I mean if he really is the cure to the ultraplague...we ought to be doing this for free...

KATHRYN

(incredulous)

For free? Now I know why they don't let you drive.

She goes back to back to work studying the maps. There's a small cookstove near Kathryn's right hand. On it is a pot of stew. She absentmindedly stirs the pot with spoon, then looks at the boy. He stares at her.

KATHRYN

What're you looking at?

The boy looks away, scared. Kathryn goes back to the maps.

Tommy watches this. He closes up the engine and comes over to sit with the boy...He wipes off his hands and digs inside a pocket, comes out with his tiny seashell. He takes the boy's hand and presses it into his palm. The boy stares at the intricate design of the shell then up at Tommy.

TOMMY

(to boy)

Don't mind her...She gets like that from time to time. But if you ever get into trouble there isn't anybody I'd rather have on my side than that woman.

KATHRYN

What're you think you're doing?

TOMMY

He's a blank page, Kath...I just want him to know that the world ain't all bad...I want him to know that there's still a lot of good in it, that people still mean something.

KATHRYN

Nobody put you in charge of his social development... You're paid to deliver a package and don't forget it.

She fills two bowls of stew and puts them in front of Tommy and the boy. She hands a spoon to the boy. He picks it up and holds it like a dagger. Tommy shows him how to hold it

correctly.

KATHRYN

Great...work on his table manners.

She serves herself and starts eating. The boy watches the others eat. He sticks the spoon straight in the bowl and pulls it out. A huge wad of stew hangs on...He brings it up in front of his face...Half goes in, the rest PLOPS onto the table. The boy swallows. He smiles, briefly and tries another bite.

Kathryn reaches over to turn off the camp stove when suddenly a HISS...then THWAACK! A long feathered arrow rips palm of Kathryn's hand.

WIDE

Tommy dives for the kid, covering him as another arrow hits the wall just behind them.

Kathryn pulls her shotgun and takes cover behind an overturned table. She looks up, searching the balconies. No sign of anyone. She looks back to Tommy.

TOMMY

Can you see anything?

KATHRYN

(gesturing with her chin)

Over there I think...

They look up at the balconies...nothing moves, quiet.

ON THE CHILD

He notices an arrow stuck in the wall over his head. He reaches out to touch the feathers with an expression of wonderment. Tommy pulls his hand back down. Notes Kathryn's wound. Watches as Kathryn grits her teeth, puts her boot next to the shaft and steps on the arrow, breaking the shaft. She grimaces.

TOMMY

Need some help?

KATHRYN

(barks, pained)

Just keep your eyes open!

He looks away, but the child remains fixed on her actions, clearly fascinated by her bravery and pain.

Gingerly, Kathryn grips the arrow behind its head, then in one smooth jerk she pulls the broken shaft through her palm. Big tears roll down her cheeks. The child watches, takes it in. Tommy passes her a length of cloth and she wraps her hand tightly, then tenderly grips her shotgun. She looks up at Tommy.

KATHRYN

We got to get him in the car.

Tommy nods.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

I'll cover you on three...

Tommy picks up the kid and crouches.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

One, two...~~three~~.

She stands from behind the car and fires several bursts into the balconies as Tommy sprints to open the back. He tosses the child into the empty back and dives in after him, dropping the cover behind him as arrows TONK against the sheet metal.

Tommy grabs his machine gun and fires a burst toward the balconies. The arrows stop.

TOMMY

Okay, Kath...I'll cover you
Ready? One....

Kathryn braces herself for the fifteen foot sprint to the car, then steals a look around the corner of the table at the room.

KATHRYN

Oh, shit...

INT. CAR - SAME

On Tommy braced with the kid.

TOMMY

...two...

KATHRYN (O.C.)

Tommy...Look out your window.

He stops counting and steals a look out his window.

TOMMY'S POV:

The second level balconies are now loaded with people. Arrows and rifles bristle over the railings. Heads emerge,

like aboriginal people, we see long unkempt hair and beards, men and women armed to the teeth.

Tommy gulps.

ON KATHRYN

behind the table.

KATHRYN

Tommy...Listen carefully...
Start the car and pick me up.

TOMMY

I can't, Kath...

KATHRYN

Don't argue with me Tommy...

TOMMY

...but Kath...

KATHRYN

Just do it!

TOMMY

I can't, goddamnit!...you've
got the keys...

She feels her pocket, we hear the JINGLE of her keys.

KATHRYN

Shit...

Just then the leader stands and aims his bow. He SCREAMS and fires at Kathryn. Everyone follows. Kathryn hunkers down behind the table as a shield against the rain of arrows.

TOMMY

pulls the kid down on the seat as Arrows TONK against the sheet metal and rip through the plastic. The barrage is so intense he can't fire back.

ON KATHRYN

The points of the arrows stick through the wooden table.

INT. CAR - SAME

ON THE CHILD fascinated as arrows fly. Suddenly in his excitement he hits the HORN, a long hard blast. In the empty ballroom it sounds like a MACK TRUCK'S.

THE DESERT PEOPLE

drop for cover, frightened.

KATHRYN

realizes the firing's stopped. Takes out the keys.

TOMMY

looks up. Kathryn tosses him the keys. He cranks up the engine and pulls toward Kathryn as the arrows begin again

KATHRYN

using the car as a shield she breaks for the moving vehicle and leaps in behind the wheel. Tommy slides over for her.

KATHRYN

Good going, kid...Hold on.

Tires SQUEAL across the parquet floor and car spins, heads for the door.

EXT. HOT SPRINGS HOTEL - SUNSET

Kathryn's car CRASHES through the front doors in a startling burst of glass. It roars past the office and out onto the road. Leaving the hotel behind.

DEATH VALLEY - INT. CAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON CLOCK -- 48:02: 01 and counting.

ON KATHRYN

driving as the car bucks and rattles across the desert floor. She holds the wheel with her right hand. Her cleaned and bandaged left hand lays in her lap.

Tommy has his hands on the console as he stares at his computer monitor.

THE BOY

is back in the cargo area. His trunk is gone. He stares out the rear window...an expression of fright and wonder on his face. Tommy looks at him thoughtfully.

TOMMY

You never seen desert before have ya, kid?

The boy turns and looks at Tommy dumbly.

KATHRYN

watches in the rear view mirror.

TOMMY (cont'd)
...Ever been outside before?

The boy continues to stare at Tommy dumbly. No response.

TOMMY (cont'd)
The kid's never been outside
before, Kath.

KATHRYN
(sarcastically)
Oh, really? Did he tell you that?

TOMMY
Sort of...

A long pause. Kathryn looks at the kid. He clearly makes her uncomfortable.

TOMMY
I been thinking...Shepard said
he was a geneticist...so this
kid might be...different, you
know...

She stares at the child a long beat, then back to the road.

KATHRYN
He gives me the creeps.

Tommy grins and winks at the boy.

TOMMY
Naaah...I like him.

The boy tentatively returns Tommy's smile.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Watch this, kid...

Tommy demonstrates some primitive, entertaining face for the kid, makes his ears wiggle. The kid giggles. Tommy cracks up. Kathryn glares at them both in the mirror.

KATHRYN
You guys keep it down back there...
You're giving me a headache.

Tommy looks at the kid and puts his fingers to his lips indicating quiet. The kid tries to emulate this.

TOMMY

(finger to his lips)

...means "quiet"...no noise.
Shhh...

Suddenly Tommy's computer makes some loud BURRRING sounds...A soft HUMMING noise fills the air. Tommy immediately turns to the monitor.

KATHRYN

What do ya got?

TOMMY

I don't know. Some kind of magnetic field...we may have been picked up by radar.

Suddenly a bluish light illuminates Kathryn's face as the car crests a desert hill. She brakes.

KATHRYN

Holy shit...

Tommy slides forward to look.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

From the top of the hill we see a quarter mile away--the border fence--its strands of filament wave like a deadly gossamer web. Soft blue pulses ripple along its surface.

Kathryn kicks her door open. Tommy comes out the other side. They stare.

TOMMY

The border...

It runs on in either direction as far as the eye can see. A WHITE CROSS truck appears in the distance along the fence...Its single searchlight swings and flashes along the ground.

KATHRYN AND TOMMY:

duck and watch it pass below, moving slowly toward a group of buildings about a mile away. Tommy pulls out a pair of binoculars, hands them to Kathryn. She looks through them.

KATHRYN'S POV:

Through the binoculars we see a series of rough Quonset hut-style barracks. A large WHITE CROSS painted onto the tin roof of the main building.

KATHRYN (v.o.)
...White Cross camp...

Her view through the binoculars shifts slightly to the other side of the fence to include a small, make-shift town. Neon flashes, people in the streets. It resonates with primitive night life.

KATHRYN
...Border town...

TOMMY
(excitedly)
Border town...let me see.

She hands the binoculars to Tommy who looks through them hungrily.

TOMMY (cont'd)
Man, it's hopping!

She starts back to the car.

KATHRYN
Okay, Einstein...we're here...
Now it's up to you to get us over.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - BORDERLINE - NIGHT

Kathryn reclines in the front seat. Her feet up on the dash, eyes closed, sleeping. A flash of lightning from a distant thunderstorm illuminates her face. She doesn't stir. From the rear of the car we hear TOMMY'S VOICE as he talks to the boy.

ANGLE ON REAR

in dim light shielded by rear cover. Tommy and the kid sit on the tailgate. He is constructing a metal coil out of wire, instructing the kid, who watches.

TOMMY
You take this line and bring
it up through here...then this
one up through here...

Suddenly the wind kicks up. The rumble of DISTANT THUNDER reaches them. The boy looks up with wild eyes at Tommy for security.

TOMMY (cont'd)

(calmly)

Storm coming...don't worry...
'can't hurt you...

The child keeps his eyes on the moving clouds. His hand reaches out to Tommy, clutches his arm. It moves Tommy.

TOMMY (cont'd)

I know how you feel. When I grew up in the hatcheries there were about two hundred other kids in my batch--all test tubers. No parents. Never knew any adults 'cept the "keepers"...Bet you had keepers...

The child's eyes show us he did.

TOMMY (cont'd)

Of course, you had cream of the crop...You were bred special. I had your basic garden variety. We had this one sicko who'd turn out the lights on us whenever we'd have a storm. Man, it'd be like panic city everybody in this one big room, screaming and crying. No one to run to when you're scared. Now, Kathryn...she was born before the hatcheries. She had real parents...

The kid steals a look at back of Kathryn's head, she sleeps quietly. Hasn't moved.

TOMMY (cont'd)

They died in the first plagues. I think she said she was four when they died. The first plagues killed a lot of parents. Afterwards the Cross decided it was probably better if they just made a clean start, so they rounded up most of the orphans and got rid of them. Kath had an older brother...they got away.

He finishes the wire strand, looks at it, satisfied, then back at the boy.

TOMMY (cont'd)

She says she doesn't remember her
parents, maybe she does...but least
she had some...Not like you and me.

ANGLE FRONT SEAT

A distant lightning bolt illuminates Kathryn's face. We see
her eyes are open...she's been listening.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDERLINE - NIGHT

The storm has hit. Rain lashes the fence--its blue pulses
continue to beat. A White Cross patrol truck lumbers past.
Its lights scan the fence area.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Kathryn and Tommy sit quietly and watch out the front
windshield.

THEIR POV:

The truck passing.

TOMMY

(low)

D-Fifties...slow...we can
outrun 'em.

Kathryn glances at her watch.

KATHRYN

It'll be light in four hours.
I don't want to be outrunning
anybody out in the sun in our
condition... that is, of course,
if you get us over this thing.

Tommy grins confidently.

TOMMY

Piece of cake...D-Fifty trucks are
insulated, but at this ampage, they'd
cook everyone inside if the Cross
doesn't turn off the juice at
the relay station. When they do
I'll wrap the wires, make the cut
and we're out of here.

KATHRYN

(skeptical) -

How do we get the truck into
the fence...or should I ask?

Tommy gives her his grin...she shouldn't ask.

KATHRYN

(off his look)

...I shoulda figured.

Kathryn looks over her shoulder at the sleeping child. Tommy
clutches the metal coil we saw him making with the kid.

TOMMY

Here it comes...

Kathryn turns and sees the slow moving search truck. She
starts the engine. Her hand moves over the stick shift.
She starts to ride the rush of adrenaline.

KATHRYN

Let's get 'em.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

The tires kick up mud as Kathryn's car roars down the hill
toward the unsuspecting truck.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Two crewmen sit inside small compartment. Suddenly the
computer operator looks up.

COMPUTER OPERATOR

Something's coming at us...
three o'clock.

THE DRIVER

In the cab of the truck looks out his rain streaked window.

DRIVER

I don't see anything...

COMPUTER OPERATOR (V.O.)

(alarmed)

Sonofabitch...it's going to ram us!

THE OTHER CREWMAN

reaches for his machine gun and turns it in the direction of

Kathryn's car.

HIS POV:

He can't see anything thru the rain--then suddenly Kathryn's car, like a dive bomber coming out of the blackness, appears in front of him.

EXT. BORDERLINE - SAME

Before the machine gunner can fire, Kathryn's car grazes the White Cross truck, knocking it off the roadway into the fence. Suddenly the darkness is illuminated by a burst of sparks as a blue envelope of electricity surrounds the truck.

INT. WHITE CROSS TRUCK - NIGHT

The driver is fried on the spot.

CREW COMPARTMENT INSIDE THE INSULATED TRUCK

The crew shrinks back from the heat.

COMPUTER OPERATOR.

(to radio headset)

Mayday! Mayday!

CUT TO:

INT. POWER STATION - NIGHT

The VOICES of the panicked crewman filter over the P.A.
The SHIFT SUPERVISOR reacts immediately.

SHIFT SUPERVISOR

Shut down power. Get a rescue
crew out there immediately.

A rescue squad moves quickly out of the room as SIRENS
SOUND.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDERLINE - NIGHT

Tommy kicks open the door to Kathryn's car and leaps out
with his wire coil and Sawzall.

TOMMY

(to himself)

C'mon, baby...I'm ready.

CUT TO:

INT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

The warning SIREN wails as men leave their barracks. A door opens and Spoor emerges from his room. He grabs one of the guards moving down the hall.

SPOOR
What's going on?

GUARD
(startled)
We've got a truck caught in
the fence, sir.

Spoor releases the guard and he disappears back into the stream of men. Spoor leaves his room and moves down the hall toward the Dispatch Room.

CUT TO:

INT. SUB STATION - NIGHT

Power substation. The NIGHT WORKMAN listens to orders over his headset.

NIGHT WORKMAN
Roger. Power off.

He hits a series of switches and turns a rheostat wheel as we

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDERLINE - NIGHT

The Cross truck caught in the pulsing fence. Its paint burnt off, the metal begins to buckle.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOMMY - NIGHT

He watches as suddenly the blue river of electricity disappears. The truck smokes and CREAKS. In the distance the White Cross trucks leave the Barracks, but Tommy doesn't hesitate.

He throws his weighted metal rope over the fence and gathers in the weighted end when it hits the ground. He pulls the noose tightly around the filaments until they form a dense bundle about eight inches in diameter. Kathryn holds the bundle firmly as Tommy begins cutting with the Sawzall.

INT. KATHRYN'S JEEP - NIGHT

The Child watches Tommy and Kathryn work..

OUTSIDE

Kathryn looks off at the advancing headlights of the rescue crews

KATHRYN

C'mon, Tom...don't make me nervous...

CUT TO:

INT. DISPATCH CENTER - NIGHT

The door opens and Spoor charges in followed by guards. The Supervisor looks up..

SUPERVISOR

We've had an emergency on the line sir. One of our trucks went into the fence...

SPOOR

How?!

SUPERVISOR

We're not sure, sir. We've got units on the way out now.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDERLINE - NIGHT

TOMMY

totally focused on the job at hand. He is half-way through.

CUT TO:

INT. DISPATCH OFFICE - NIGHT

Spoor looks up and suddenly notices that the power gauges are all flat.

SPOOR

What happened to the power?

SUPERVISOR

Procedure, sir. Its been turned off to save the--

SPOOR
(an order)
Turn it back on.

SUPERVISOR
But sir, the crew...It'll
kill them!

Spoor grabs the man by the collar.

SPOOR
Turn it on, now!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FENCE - NIGHT

Tommy cutting the wire. He is almost through it. He looks at Kathryn.

TOMMY
Start the car!

She rushes back and climbs into

CUT TO:

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR - NIGHT

Kathryn revs the engine. Quickly she eyes the headlights coming her way, much closer.

The child looks up over her seat.

KATHRYN
Get down!

He disappears. She yells out the window.

KATHRYN
C'mon, Tommy!

CUT TO:

INT. SUBSTATION

The Night worker takes his orders over the headset.

NIGHT WORKER
Yessir.

He turns the rheostat wheels and throws his switches and the generating plant suddenly begins to HUM with power.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOMMY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON FENCE

Tommy on the last strand when suddenly the blue light races down the fence. He has no time to react. WHAM! A huge bolt of blue and white spark SHOOTs down the length of the saw truss...

The blade kicks and blackens from the jolt...

ON TOMMY

his jaw drops and his body tightens...His face pales as he falls against the wire...forcing the saw through the last strand. Immediately the fence goes cold again.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBSTATION - NIGHT

The night worker watches his dials go flat.

NIGHT WORKER

What the hell?

CUT TO:

INT. DISPATCH OFFICE - NIGHT

Spoor watches the power drop to zero. The dispatcher looks up.

DISPATCHER

There's been a break.

Spoor looks from the dials to the dispatcher.

SPOOR

I can see that!

(to guards)

Get me out there!

CUT TO:

EXT. KATHRYN - NIGHT

watches in Horror. Tommy lies still. Steam rises from his body in the rain. She throws open the door and runs toward him.

TOMMY

She turns him over in the mud. His skin is black. His eyes flicker...he looks up at Kathryn.

KATHRYN

Hold on you stupid---

His mouth opens for a moment nothing comes out...then a dry, scratchy sound...

TOMMY

(weak)

Out run them, Kath...

Don't let them catch him...

He manages a smile, then his eyes go distant...he's dead.

KATHRYN

Tom...Tommy!

She looks up. The White Cross trucks are only a hundred yards away. Reluctantly she lowers his head to the ground then runs back to the car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The boy is staring petrified at Tommy...Kathryn pushes him aside and climbs behind the wheel.

KATHRYN

Move over and get down!

She revs the engine, tears and rain streak her face. She jams the car into gear and roars toward the cut in the fence--bursting through the broken section taking part of the fence with her as she disappears into the night on the Nevada side.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - DAWN

Kathryn's car. It rests on its side in an arroyo. The rain has stopped and the sky is clearing. Suddenly a White Cross truck pulls up, then others and armed guards climb out.

A GUARD moves to the driver's door and carefully opens it and looks inside....Empty.

ON PILL VIAL...on the ground. Kathryn's suppressant pills scattered in dirt. It is picked up by the Big Sergeant.

SPOOR

emerges from a White Cross truck overlooking the site. The BIG SERGEANT comes running up.

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BIG SERGEANT
They're on foot, sir. The
life-support container is gone.

Spoor, concerned, looks up at the sky. The sun is not yet
up, but only minutes away from rising...

SPOOR
They're not far...Find them.

He gets back inside as we

CUT TO: —

EXT. BORDER TOWN - DAWN

Up close it is an old fashion boom town. Rising from the
plains out of weathered wood and scrap metal, it catches the
first rays of the sun. No one is on the street.

ANGLE - AN ALLEY

Kathryn and the boy move down the street next to a battered
building and pause to catch their breath. She's exhausted,
but looks around for shelter, sees something.

KATHRYN
Time to go underground, kid.

She crosses the alley to a basement vent and kicks it in.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Carefully she climbs in and helps the boy in after her.
Storage for a store. Not much to store.

KATHRYN
Sit over there, kid.

She puts down her pack of items, quickly gathered from the
car and looks up. The child is still standing. He looks at
her dumbly.

KATHRYN
Sit.

She demonstrates. It takes one or two times but it finally
clicks. But no sooner does he sit than he stands again.

KATHRYN
Screw it...do whatever you
want--just ~~don't~~ get too comfortable.
I've still got 40 hours to get you to
Salt Lake. All I gotta do is
grab a car and we're out of here.

He just stares at her, then points tentatively to his mouth--he's hungry.

KATHRYN

Tough. Shepard didn't say
you had to arrive fattened.

She finds what she was searching for...a rope. She pulls out about ten feet and cuts it with her knife. As she does this the boy's eyes widen, slowly he begins to back away.

KATHRYN

Aw c'mon...you didn't really think
I was going to leave you here to
go sightseeing while I went out?

She grabs him by the arm and quickly pulls his hands behind his back. His eyes are pure terror. He struggles against her hold, but Kathryn holds on. Suddenly he begins to SCREAM like an animal. Wild, high-pitched screams.

She jams a bandanna into the boy's mouth, silencing him as she finishes tying him off.

KATHRYN

What're you trying to do, tell
everyone where we are?! You're
perfectly safe down here.

When the last knot is tied she looks up at him. He stares at her, truly terrorized. His eyes are big as saucers. Sweat pours down his forehead. Kathryn's hard exterior bows slightly.

KATHRYN

Hey, look...It's only for
a short time, so buck up and
be tough, alright?

His eyes don't waver. He is truly traumatized. His fist opens and something drops to the floor of the basement. Kathryn sees it.

INSERT: Tommy's seashell.

Kathryn picks it up. It hits her hard, but she reacts as she always does to emotion...she fights it.

KATHRYN

He's dead, kid... He was a good
guy and I know you liked him,
but he's not coming back, understand?

He stares at her, sad, confused.

KATHRYN

Okay, get this straight then...
 I'm not Tommy and you're stuck with
 me. It's dangerous out there--bad
 people're looking for us, the sun'll
 burn a hole in your arm the size of
 a quarter, and I'm in a rotten mood--so
 I ain't taking you with me and that's that.

She puts the shell into his pocket and goes to the door.
 His look has turned mournful--tears roll down his cheeks.
 Kathryn stops by the door.

KATHRYN

(to herself)

Shit...

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE CROSS BORDER - DAY

The fence opens and the first of ten trucks rumble across
 the border into the Border Town. A major search operation
 is underway.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR - DAY

Two trucks pull up in front of bar and two groups of guards
 pour out the back and storm into the bar.

INT. BAR - DAY

The patrons, men and women are forced to the floor as rooms
 are searched. When everyone is down, the BIG SERGEANT
 enters with a billy club. He moves among the patrons,
 stepping over them as he talks.

BIG SERGEANT

We are looking for a woman,
 thirties, medium height...
 possibly traveling with a child...

Silence. This is a tough room.

BIG SERGEANT(cont'd)

This woman is in violation
 of the Interstate Transportation
 Act and wanted for Grand Larceny...
 Anyone aiding this woman or knowingly
 withholding knowledge of her
 whereabouts will be prosecuted
 under White Cross statutes.
 Has anyone seen this person?

No answer. Then suddenly a BOOMING VOICE comes from the rear.

VOICE (O.C.)

What if we did? What's it worth to you?

The Sergeant looks up at a big, well built man in his forties: ROAM, a tough Okie. He seems neither disturbed nor angry about the Cross presence, and lounges by a rear door. The Sergeant moves across the room toward the tough man.

SERGEANT

Have you seen them?

ROAM

Nope...But I get better vision when I have a reason to look.

The Sergeant comes right up to Roam, threateningly.

SERGEANT

How about your life...Is that reason enough?

Roam doesn't flinch.

ROAM

That ain't worth a whole hell of a lot, now, is it?

Laughter around the room. The Sergeant feels the embarrassment. He turns away then wheels and swings at Roam with the club but the big Okie is ready. He sidesteps the blow and before the Sergeant can recover takes the man's head in his arms like a cantaloupe. He looks up at the guards.

ROAM

Go ahead, take a shot...I'll pop his head off before you get me.

The guards freeze. The Sergeant caught in Roam's grasp can hardly breath. Suddenly FOOTSTEPS on the steps outside reveal

SPOOR

He moves into the room with his small group of guards. He takes in the situation, grins.

SPOOR

(sarcastically)

Well, Sergeant...I see you
have everything under control.

He goes calmly to the bar and takes a glass off the rack, looks at the bartender who's still holding the bottle of liquor over his head from when the guards came in. Spoor motions to the Bartender to unfreeze and fill his glass, which he does. Spoor looks at Roam.

SPOOR

It is White Cross policy to
more than adequately compensate
those that help its cause.

ROAM

How much?

SPOOR

A thousand dollars.

Roam laughs and releases the Sergeant's head. The man slumps to the floor, gasping. Roam reaches over the bar and reveals a machine gun, aims it at Spoor.

ROAM

Bout the only thing your money'll
help you find in here is the door...
And I'll give you that as a freebie.

He points casually at the doorway with the barrel.

ROAM(cont'd)

Get out of my bar.

Spoor holds his look and doesn't move.

SPOOR

It is also the policy of
the White Cross to remember
those who do not help its cause.

He finishes his drink and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR LOT - DAY

The gleam of sun on a hundred windshields. It is a used car lot/junk yard. Kathryn and the child--heavily bundled up against the rays of the sun--move toward the office.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A SALESMAN sleeping on a sofa when WHAM! the door flies open. The startled man struggles to rise but Kathryn is on him before he can blink twice. She pins him to the bed with her knee, covers his mouth and puts her gun against his side. The man is terrified.

KATHRYN

(calmly)

Don't yell, don't scream.
Understand?

The man nods, terrified. She removes her hand from his mouth. He tries to smile, gain some semblance of composure.

MAN

(meekly)

Help you with a car today, miss?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR LOT - DAY

The SALESMAN moves between his used cars, he wears sunglasses, hat and gloves and holds a large golf umbrella over his head to shield himself from the rays. Most of the cars are types of trucks or vans that have been modified by families for their long trip to California, then sold. Nothing in the "fast" variety that Kathryn is looking for. The man stops in front a circa 1990's Dodge Caravan that has been customized for long distance travel.

SALESMAN

Here's a real prize for you...
Made back when the word "family"
meant something. V-6 engine...
Room for eight...

(opens door,
proudly)

...original upholstery...only
150,000 miles on it.

Kathryn looks away, around for another candidate. The Salesman sees that she's not interested.

SALESMAN

Not what you're after, don't have
to knock me over the head...I've got
Microbuses over here...It'll take
your crew down the border in style...
What you trading in?

Kathryn says nothing.

SALESMAN (cont'd)
I see... Well, where're you folks
from? New York? New Jersey?...
hadn't had anyone from the east
coast in years...

KATHRYN
California.

SALESMAN
(incredulously)
California?...
(he stops)
You left California?
Why the hell'd you--

She gives him a wilting look that freezes him.

SALESMAN (cont'd)
None of my business, you're
absolutely right... don't mind
me, I just like to talk. What
kind of car did you possibly
have in mind?

KATHRYN
Something fast.

SALESMAN
Speed... there's a selling point.

ANGLE ON - A PORSCHE CONVERTIBLE

CUT TO:

Kathryn checks out the engine. The child sits in the front
seat, runs his hand over the knobs and controls.

SALESMAN
If speed's what you need, this baby
should fill the bill... Driven in by
a doctor from Connecticut about ten years
ago... rest his soul... I'll let you have
it for seven thousand...

Kathryn doesn't respond. She checks the tires, moves around
the rear of the car.

SALESMAN (cont'd)
We could haggle about the price
all morning but I see you're a driver
who knows her way around an automobile so
why don't we cut the bullshit and
you can drive it off the lot for
fifty-five hundred...

She says nothing. The child hits a switch and the top starts to drop.

SALESMAN

Hey, watch the top!

(to Kathryn)

Can't you control him?

KATHRYN

He's got a thing about being
cooped up... Two thousand.

SALESMAN

(offended)

Don't embarrass me. I want to make a
deal, I want to sell you this car but
there's no way on God's earth I can
part with this baby for under five
thousand dollars. No way.

KATHRYN

Twenty-two hundred... cash.

SALESMAN

Sold.

She pulls out her money and begins to peel off twenty-two
hundred. The salesman watches hungrily.

KATHRYN

I need gas, too...

He looks at her as if she's just ask for Uranium.

SALESMAN

Gas?

KATHRYN

Enough to get me to Salt Lake City.

SALESMAN

(delicately)

Well, that's a problem...

He reaches for his money and she withdraws the bills just
before his fingers touch them.

KATHRYN

How big a problem?

SALESMAN

Look around, lady, we ain't
exactly on the pipeline no more...

She puts up her money and pulls the kid out of the car.

KATHRYN

No deal.

SALESMAN

But then again...there is a fellow
in town that might be able to help you.

KATHRYN

What's his name? —

SALESMAN

"Roam." He's a wild one...Stays
up all day, sleeps all night...not a
regular guy. But if anyone can get you
gas...he's the fella. Runs a bar
called Alicia's.

Kathryn starts to leave. The salesman calls after them.

SALESMAN (cont'd)

...Of course...without a deposit...
I can't promise your car will be here
when you get back...

KATHRYN

(dryly)

I'll risk it.

Kathryn carries the boy out of the lot.

CUT TO:

EXT. BORDER TOWN STREET - DAY

Two White Cross trucks move down the street. In their wake
we see Kathryn and the boy move quickly across the street to
the safety of a ramshackle boarding house and move through
the opened door.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Dimly lit. A dirty hallway lined with rooms--an open back
door at the other end. Kathryn and the child stop just
inside the front door. Upstairs there is COUGHING. Down
the hall someone plays a harmonica. A man YELLS for quiet.
Kathryn presses the child next to her and peers out a window
at the street.

HER POV:

A White Cross Truck stops fifty feet away in front of the
building and a dozen guards pile out the rear.

KATHRYN

Keeps her eyes on the window.

KATHRYN

(quietly)

Well, kid...looks like we're
in deep shi--

She censures herself and looks down at the kid.

—KATHRYN (cont'd)

...Trouble. Got to be real
quiet, understand?

He just stares at her, blankly. She puts her finger to her
lips.

KATHRYN

Quiet...Remember?...SHHHH.

The boy puts his finger to his lips and copies the sound as
he did with Tommy.

KATHRYN

Good...

Suddenly a door opens next to them, and a ROUGH-LOOKING MAN
appears at the doorway, sees Kathryn and the kid.

ROUGH LOOKING MAN

(loud)

Hey, what the hell?...

Kathryn raises her shotgun under the man's nose, silencing
him instantly. The boy looks up at the man, his finger to
his lips..."Shhhh." The man nods respectfully at the kid
and steps back inside.

Kathryn grins at the kid. A noise outside draws her
attention. She looks out the window as another White Cross
Truck stops out front. The Big Sergeant directs the troop
search.

ON THE BOY

He looks down the hall. A cat comes out into the hall and
wanders toward the open back door. The boy silently moves
down the hall following the cat. He almost reaches it but
it moves away just before he can touch it. Kathryn
continues to look out the window and doesn't notice the
child slip away.

EXT. BACK OF HOUSE - DAY

The cat leaves the house followed by the boy. He reaches for its tail and just touches it before it moves away again.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

KATHRYN'S POV:

Two GUARDS move threateningly toward the boarding house to search it.

KATHRYN

steels herself to what she has to do. Her finger brushes off the safety on her shotgun. Her eyes riveted to the doorway.

OUTSIDE

The Guards step onto the porch start to enter the boarding house when suddenly they are called back by the Sergeant. Quickly the two men jog back to the truck with others and the truck leaves.

KATHRYN

lets out a sigh of relief.

KATHRYN

(to kid)

Jesus...this is going to give me
gray hair. You okay, kid...?

She looks around for the boy, sees he's gone.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

Kid?...Kid?...

She notices the open back door and for it.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The boy moves across the back alley and follows the cat into a deserted garage. He disappears inside seconds before a White Cross Truck rumbles by.

EXT. REAR OF BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Kathryn moves to the doorway and looks out. She sees the White Cross truck and ducks back inside.

KATHRYN

Shit...when I get hold of that kid, I'm going to wear him out.

The truck passes and, she moves out toward the alley.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

In the dark garage the child finds the cat and strokes him, his fingers run through the soft fur. The cat purrs. The boy smiles at the sound and sensation. Suddenly FAINT MUSIC draws his attention toward the front doors of the garage. He leaves the cat and follows the sound.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Moves out across the yard to the alley. She reaches the corner just as a White Cross guard passes by. He barely misses seeing her. She must wait till he's gone to continue.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICIA'S BAR - DAY

The source of the MUSIC. Roam, sitting by the window in the bar, looks out and sees the child step out of the garage across the street.

ROAM

Well, I'll be damn...

He stands to go out when something stops him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACROSS STREET FROM ALICIA'S - DAY

The boy moves toward the music. WE TRACK with him as he crosses the dusty street toward the bar. He looks in windows trying to see inside when suddenly he walks right into a pair of white coveralls--a WHITE CROSS UNIFORMED GUARD ~~Hands~~ down and lifts him up. He lifts his face visor to smile at the kid, then turns to call others when WHAM! A blow to his face drops him cold.

WIDEN

Kathryn grabs the boy.

KATHRYN

Boy, you are in deep trouble...

She looks for cover just as three Cross guards appear.

Kathryn fires a burst at them and they leap for cover. When they look up she's gone.

INT. ALICIA'S - SAME

Roam watches the action outside, concerned.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - SAME

KATHRYN carries the boy down the alley past boarded up windows and doors. She turns a corner reaching a dead end.

ON ROOFTOP OVERLOOKING THE ALLEY

A WHITE CROSS GUARD appears on rooftop and aims his gun.

GUARD

Freeze!

KATHRYN

gives him a quick look then pulls the boy across the alley and kicks in a boarded up doorway leading into:

INT. STOREROOM(ALICIA'S) - DAY

Dark. Tall metal shelves divide the room. Kathryn moves through the cases of beer and liquor, clutching the kid. Her gun barrel shifts from side to side in front of her.

Suddenly a white uniformed hand grabs her from behind and another pair of hands pulls away the child as two WHITE CROSS guards separate them. The child SCREAMS. His eyes look back at Kathryn for help before he disappears from her in the dark.

Kathryn wheels and sends an elbow into the Guard's face behind her, breaking his grip, then drops him with an uppercut of gun stock. She takes off after the kid.

ON OTHER GUARD WITH THE CHILD

He moves quickly among the dark shelves. The boy kicks and fights him. The guard stops, catches his breath and tries to orient himself. He sees light ahead and heads in that direction.

CUT TO:

KATHRYN

following quickly but carefully. Every corner has to be

negotiated carefully.

CUT TO:

ON THE GUARD

He turns a corner and stops, listens for Kathryn. He pulls out his pistol.

ON THE CHILD

The guard's hand clamped over his mouth. The boy's eyes widen at the sight of the gun.

ON KATHRYN

moving closer.

ON GUARD

He aims the gun at the corner where Kathryn will appear.

HIS POV:

Kathryn turns the corner, doesn't see the ambush.

ON GUARD

a smile creeps across his face, his finger starts to pull the trigger--when suddenly a wire is whipped around his neck and the man is pulled from frame.

KATHRYN

reacts to the noise. She moves to the spot in time to see the boy and the dead guard...and another figure, ROAM. He rises from the dead man and smiles at his handiwork, but his smile disappears when he sees Kathryn's shotgun leveled at him.

ROAM

Whoa there, sister. I'm on your side...besides you pull that trigger, and there'll be so many Cross boys down here we'll both be history.

Kathryn pauses then suddenly they both hear the SOUND of approaching Cross guards.

ROAM

C'mon...this way.

He scoops up the kid and leads the way into the darkness.

INT. TUNNEL

A Civil Defense tunnel. The faded CD signs on the wall are lit by a string of naked light bulbs. A door opens and Roam drops into the tunnel. He is handed the boy from above, then waits for Kathryn to drop down next to him.

ROAM

Follow me...

He moves on.

TRACK WITH THEM

down the tunnel.

KATHRYN

(whispering)

Where are we?

ROAM

You don't have to whisper... place is soundproof... Old Civil Defense tunnels... built about eighty years ago when all they had to worry about was nuclear disaster... Place is crisscrossed with them. Great during the day when you want to get somewhere without getting the super sunburn.

He stops at a heavy metal door with a red light over the top. Kathryn raises the barrel of her gun so that it loses its benign quality.

KATHRYN

You didn't answer my question.

Eyes the gun, then Kathryn.

ROAM

We're at my downstairs place.

He opens the door and WILD MUSIC suddenly hits them from inside.

INT. UNDERGROUND BAR - DAY

Women dance on tables. The place is wild, hedonistic. Men and women kiss, dance, drink.

Roam leads Kathryn and the kid inside. The boy's eyes widen

at the place. We see that even Kathryn feels discomfort at the blatant sexuality around her. The boy eyes a scantily clad woman dancing. Kathryn puts her hand over the boy's eyes.

KATHRYN

(deadpan, to herself)

Boy...Tommy would've loved this place.

She takes in the wild mix of people. Black, White, Indian, Asian...

KATHRYN (cont'd)

(to Roam)

Some place you got here.

ROAM

Thanks. I won it-in a card game...

A huge MAN reaches out to touch Kathryn's ass. She intercepts his hand and grabs one of his fingers with the same life and death immediacy one would have stopping a striking cobra. She bends back the man's finger, dropping him instantly to his knees.

KATHRYN

You try that again and I'll
break it off and shove it up your ass...

Roam immediately intercedes, carefully releases her grip on the man's finger and guides her off toward the bar.

ROAM

Easy...easy sister...

KATHRYN

What is this, eat drink and
be merry cause tomorrow we'll
all be dead?

ROAM

Maybe, but then-again...
maybe not...You're looking
at survivors...To folks
on the other side of the fence
we're all plague carriers, but
the truth is we're really the
toughest of the human race.
We're the ones out of all our towns
and cities who, for whatever
reason, didn't die when the plagues
came. We're the ones who packed up,
went west and weren't killed by

CONT'D

ROAM(cont'd)
scavengers or the Cross on the road.
I guess a lot of them think they've
earned it.

KATHRYN
Where were they all headed?
Not here.

ROAM
California...where you
just came from...

He holds Kathryn's look. They haven't discussed this.

ROAM(cont'd)
Hey, news travels fast in
a small town...

The bartender places two dinners in front of Kathryn and the
kid. Roam beckons them to eat. The kid doesn't need an
invitation, starts to dig in. Kathryn stops his hand before
the food reaches his mouth.

KATHRYN(cont'd)
(to Roam)
Where'd this food come from?

ROAM
It's clean...some of it we grow...
Some of it we get from the other
side of the fence in exchange for
other...illicit commodities...

His eyes moves subtly to a sexy woman dancing on table.
Kathryn follows his look.

ROAM(cont'd)
Trust me, it's perfectly safe...

He takes a piece of fresh celery off her plate and takes a
bite as he talks. The boy starts eating. Roam pats his
head.

ROAM(cont'd)
So, the question of the hour
has got to be who's your little
friend here and why're Spoor and
his goons after him?

Kathryn takes a tentative bite. Says nothing.

ROAM(cont'd)
Is this going to be twenty

CONT'D

ROAM(cont'd)
questions? I can guess, you
know...You stole him from a
White Cross research lab and
have a buyer somewhere
back east where the going's
gotten rough?

KATHRYN
I didn't steal him.

ROAM
If that's the only part I
got wrong, I'm amazed.

KATHRYN
He was delivered to me and my
partner by the Cross. We've got a
contract to deliver him to their
associates in Salt Lake City.

ROAM
Did anybody tell Spoor about your
contract?...From the looks of things
I'd say he wants the little fella back.

KATHRYN
I don't get my money if I give
him back.

She goes back to eating.

ROAM
What happened to your partner?

KATHRYN
He was killed crossing the fence.
Okay, I told you something, you
tell me something...I'm looking for
a guy named Roam...heard of him?

She looks up and finds him staring intently at her body.
Checking her out.

KATHRYN(cont'd)
(uncomfortably)
What're you doing?

ROAM
(admiringly)
You're an amazing-looking woman.
You know that?.

Kathryn looks at him, shocked. He notices her reaction.

ROAM(cont'd)
 What's the matter?...That's
 called a compliment. Haven't
 you ever been told that before?

He stares into her eyes, seems to hold her fixed.

ROAM(cont'd)
 Yes, sir...I do admire
 California women...

He slowly reaches out to touch her.

ROAM(cont'd)
 They have a certain quality
 about them...what's the word...

Kathryn rockets a swing at him. Like with the White Cross
 Sergeant, Roam is waiting for it and catches her blow in his
 hand.

ROAM(cont'd)
 Feistiness...
 (grins)
 You'll have to move faster
 that that, sister.

WHAM!

She cold cocks him from his blind side with a beer
 bottle--knocking him unconscious at her feet. The blow
 stops the music, dancing, the entire room. The boy eyes the
 downed man, but doesn't miss a beat of eating. She looks
 over the bar at the big bartender.

KATHRYN
 I don't have time for this
 shit...I've got to find someone
 named, Roam...You know him?

BARTENDER
 (nods, grins)
 You just cocked him.

He points to the downed man.

CUT TO:

INT. ROAM'S OFFICE - LATER

CLOSE ON PHOTOGRAPH: Roam and a woman on a farm in
 Oklahoma...ANOTHER...Roam and same woman on street in Border
 Town, outside "Alicia's". FULL BACK TO REVEAL:

Kathryn staring at the photographs in Roam's sparsely furnished office which also serves as his living quarters. Roam lies on a bed across the room. The kid plays with an ancient baseball on the floor, tries to bite it, looks up at her.

KATHRYN

You don't eat it...It's a baseball,
I think...Hell, you're talking
to the wrong person.

Roam comes to and rubs his sore jaw. He focuses on Kathryn.

KATHRYN (cont'd)

(to Roam)

Why didn't you tell me who you were?

ROAM

If I'd known you'd react like
that I'd have introduced myself sooner.

He stands and tentatively extends a hand.

ROAM (cont'd)

Name is Roam Edwards...

She eyes the hand warily a moment then shakes it.

KATHRYN

Kathryn Cosburn...Sorry about that.

Roam nods, apology accepted.

ROAM

So what exactly do you want from me?

KATHRYN

Gas...Enough to get me to
Salt Lake City.

ROAM

I hate to tell you but there
ain't that much gas around here
to get hold of.

Kathryn doesn't flinch. She knows the drill. She pulls out her roll of money.

KATHRYN

Two thousand dollars to get
me there...another three if you
can get me enough to get back.

Roam doesn't even look at the money.

ROAM

Whatever you're going to Salt Lake
for...must be mighty important...

He eyes the kid. She follows his look.

KATHRYN

Can you find me some gas or not?

ROAM

(beat)

Give me an hour to see what
I can arrange.

He pulls himself to his feet and goes to the door.

KATHRYN

I'm going with you.

ROAM

Un...uh...This is my job...if I
was you I'd catch a few winks.
No offense but you look like you
could use it.

KATHRYN

How do I know you won't go
straight for the Cross?

ROAM

Cause, honey, I don't want to get
on your feisty side again.

He grins and rubs his jaw again as he leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. A LARGE TRACTOR TRAILER TRUCK - DAY

On its side is the legend: WHITE CROSS MOBILE HOSPITAL. It
rolls up and stops with HISS of air brakes in front of a
small adobe hospital. A religious cross rises from the
roof.

SEVERAL TECHNICIANS leap out of the truck and open the back.
A ramp is lowered and gleaming high-tech machinery can be
seen inside.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A group of technicians moves a sophisticated series of
medical machines down the dingy hospital corridors.
Followed by nurses and more technicians, they turn into

ROAM
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KATHRYN
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 (beat)
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 Followed by nurses and more technicians, they turn into

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM- DAY

and instantly prepare the machines and the room for an operation:

--IV needles and tubes are lined up on surgical trays.

--Small bottles of drugs are unboxed and lined up along side hypodermic syringes...

ANGLE ON DOORWAY

Spore watches the proceedings from the door when a stately nun, SISTER DR. HELEN, the hospital administrator, approaches.

SISTER HELEN

(demanding)

I'm Sister Helen...what is going on here?

Spore turns and flashes a disarming smile.

SPOOR

(charmingly)

Sister Helen, Dr. General Spoor, White Cross...I apologize for this disruption of your charitable institution, it's simply a part of our continuing commitment to develop a cure for the ultraplague. And I'm happy to inform you we are only this far away from finding the cure...

The nun's hardened demeanor changes instantly.

SISTER HELEN

Why Dr. Spoor that's marvelous news!

SPOOR

You're right...It is.

Spore smiles at her as we

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM'S OFFICE

The child is asleep on the floor. Kathryn wearily rubs her injured hand and watches his chest rise and fall as he breathes. His sleeping form is almost angelic. Kathryn's fights off a yawn but exhaustion racks her. Her eyelids are heavy. She blinks awake then closes them again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A BACKYARD IN WESTWOOD - DAY

Upper-middle class Spanish stucco house, well-groomed backyard. A Child's Birthday (circa 1994) is in progress. We find a little GIRL about 4 years old in a pretty, yellow party dress surrounded by her friends and presents. Her eyes are riveted on a pretty WOMAN with long dark hair who emerges from the house carrying a birthday cake. A handsome MAN, in his 30's tapes the proceedings with a home video camera.

The girl blows out her candles and looks up--sees the man blow her a kiss then put his arm around the woman and kisses her.

There is a BOY about 10, on the edge of the proceedings. He watches like a brother, disinterested but interested. A balloon comes his way and he pops it.

A PAIR OF LITTLE GIRLS' DRESS SHOES

They are now black patent leather. She looks up and her dress is also black. WE PULL BACK TO SEE she stands with her brother in a

LOS ANGELES CEMETERY

They stand in front of a grave. An adult hand shepherds them away from the grave, and as WE PULL BACK, we notice simultaneous funerals are happening all around the cemetery, five, ten, fifteen, twenty...

HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN

DISSOLVE TO:

come off buses, many are crying, clutching toys they are ushered inside a warehouse-like building by men in long white coats.

The Girl and her Brother come off a bus and the brother suddenly grabs her hand and pulls her out of line. Cutting between the buses they disappear before the men in white coats can catch them.

EXT. L.A. DOWNTOWN (PERSHING SQUARE) - NIGHT

A White Cross truck with a searchlight passes by and in its wake our two children dart across the open ground and look for another hiding place. Dirty now, desperate, they have come a long way from the children we saw at the birthday party.

A car suddenly swings to the curb and a MAN gathers them in just before another White Cross truck comes by...We see the

man is Tim Blore. As the car disappears into the night we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE GARAGE - DAY

The girl, now a young woman, drives a fast courier car. It is Kathryn. She waves to her brother in another car. He has grown into a handsome young man. He drives around the corner and is suddenly stopped and surrounded by White Cross trucks.

Armed guards order the boy out of the car, frisk him and force him to place his hands on the roof of the car. A car door opens and we see Spoor emerge from a White Cross Truck. As he moves toward the boy WE PULL BACK TO SEE KATHRYN watching from her car a block away.

With the boy's back turned Spoor takes a pistol from one of his guards and step up to the boy. Coldly he raises the gun to the boy's head...and pulls the trigger

BOOM!

CUT TO:

INT. ROAM'S OFFICE

KATHRYN'S eyes snap open as a loud noise wakes her. Her shotgun involuntarily wipes into position and finds the bartender in its sights. He has stacked a case of beer bottles in the corner, throws his hands up at the sight of the gun. Slowly she lowers the gun and he leaves quickly.

Gradually she relaxes and stares at the boy--still sleeping peacefully at her side. She reaches her hand out tentatively to touch his hair, then withdraws it, then carefully, gently, touches it. Her coarse fingers delicately stroke the soft stubble on his scalp. For a moment something visibly lets down in her. Some instinct takes hold, then A VOICE behind her abruptly brings her out of her thoughts, she snaps back her hand.

ROAM'S VOICE

You know when you get him to
where you're supposed to, he'll
probably have to go back in a box.

She looks up to see Roam, standing in the doorway.

KATHRYN

(hard)

Well, that's his problem...
not mine.

He searches her hard expression for signs of weakening, but it shows nothing.

ROAM

I got your gas...let's go get your car.

She gets up and starts to wake the child, Roam stops her.

ROAM

Why don't you let him sleep?

KATHRYN

He comes with me.

ROAM

He's a hell of a lot safer here than out there with us. I'll put Jaguar on the door.

He grabs the big bartender and brings him over.

ROAM(cont'd)

He likes kids...Really...He had two for lunch...

(seriously)

For his sake...let him rest.

Kathryn hesitates a moment, knows he's right. She picks up her gun and follows him out.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL -

Roam and Kathryn move along the tunnel.

ROAM

Your partner...the one who was killed. Did the two of you ever do it?

KATHRYN

Sex? You don't mince words, do you?

ROAM

Life's too short...if you'll pardon the expression. I believe in coming to the point.

KATHRYN

No. Sex isn't safe.

He searches her hard expression for signs of weakening, but it shows nothing.

ROAM

I got your gas...let's go get your car.

She gets up and starts to wake the child, Roam stops her.

ROAM

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ROAM

You hit me as the type of woman where safety wasn't as important as other risks.

KATHRYN

Like what for instance?

ROAM

Emotion, for instance. I bet you're the kind of person who doesn't allow themselves too near her emotions.

KATHRYN

And you hit me as the kind of guy who can't get enough of his.

ROAM

(laughs)

No...I'm just not afraid of 'em. This is a shitty world right now, but I say there's a lot happiness out there with all the pain. I'm willing to put up with bad in order to enjoy the good. That's life.

He stops at the corner.

ROAM(cont'd)

We gotta wait here a minute... we're early.

He reaches out and motions for Kathryn to give him her injured hand.

ROAM(cont'd)

Here...lets see your flipper.

He unzips a homemade first aid kit and pulls out a clean dressing. She resists.

KATHRYN

It's okay...

ROAM

For Pete's sake, woman...give me your goddamn hand.

He takes her hand and gently unwraps the bandage to clean it. She watches him as he works, then steals a look back down the tunnel in the direction of the boy. Roam notices.

ROAM(cont'd)

He's okay...

KATHRYN

He'd better be, or it'll come out
of your hide.

ROAM

I know it will...Don't worry,
I can be a pretty slimy fella
when I need to be, but I ain't slimy
enough to make a deal with Spoor...

(quieter)

I got my own peace to settle
with him.

KATHRYN

(cutting) -

What, he wreck one of your
bars one night?

ROAM

(quietly, seriously)

No...He killed my wife....

Kathryn suddenly feels uncomfortable, embarrassed. Roam
finishes cleaning the wound and starts to put on a clean
bandage.

KATHRYN

Look...I didn't mean anything...

ROAM

It's alright. She went of her
own accord... 'Bout five years
ago. One day the fence just
opened up and a convoy of trucks
pulled up. Said that White Cross
was opening up California to
"selective immigration". They
took applications, gave people
physicals, so they could go over
the border into the land of milk
and honey...Two hundred of us "passed".
I remember the night before they
were supposed to take us over. My
wife and I fought all night about it.
I told her I wasn't going...something
about it just didn't feel right. She was
dead set it was legit and told
me she was going even if it meant
leaving me behind...I called her
bluff...Next day she left with
the others and I never saw her
again.

He ties off the new bandage and looks at her.

KATHRYN

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ROAM

It's alright. She went of her own accord...Bout five years ago. One day the fence just opened up and a convoy of trucks pulled up. Said that White Cross was opening up California to "selective immigration". They took applications, gave people physicals, so they could go over the border into the land of milk and honey...Two hundred of us "passed". I remember the night before they were supposed to take us over. My wife and I fought all night about it. I told her I wasn't going...something about it just didn't feel right. She was dead set it was legit and told me she was going even if it meant leaving me behind...I called her bluff...Next day she left with the others and I never saw her again.

He ties off the new bandage and looks at her.

KATHRYN

(beat)

What happened to her?

ROAM

They took em over the border
just like they said, then stopped
about five miles the other side...
and shot them all. "Population
control" they called it later.

They lock eyes a moment, share a moment.

ROAM(cont'd)

Hey...we all got a story, don't
we?.

He looks at his watch then points a thumb up the ladder.

ROAM(cont'd)

Let's give it a go.

He starts up the ladder and Kathryn follows.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND BAR

White Cross Guards suddenly burst into the bar. Patrons
dive for cover as they storm through the room and burst
into:

ROAM'S OFFICE - SAME

Guards kill Jaguar and quickly grab up the child who reacts
violently to the abduction before a mask is placed over his
face.

CUT TO:

INT. SHED - DAY

A trap door opens, and Roam climbs out. He reaches down to
help Kathryn out, but she climbs out without his help. Roam
leads the way to the door. He cracks it. The street is
empty. She starts to go, he stops her.

ROAM

Give me the money for the car.

KATHRYN

Are you out of your mind?.

ROAM

There's too many people looking for you. I'll get the car and bring it here. You can pay me for the gas then.

Kathryn hesitates.

ROAM(cont'd)

Hey, maybe I'm wrong, sister, but you've got a lot to lose if I'm right.

She hands over the money and he leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. SALES OFFICE - DAY-

The Salesman looks out the window of his sales office.

HIS POV:

Roam crosses the street warily and moves onto the lot.

CUT TO:

THE SALESMAN

turns to a visitor in his office...Spoor reclining on the sofa. Two guards stand by the back door.

SALESMAN

(nervously)

Okay, he's coming...

SPOOR

(not looking up)

Is she with him?

SALESMAN

No...she's probably across the street.

Spoor turns and looks at the nervous salesman as if to evaluate his theory.

SPOOR

(to guards)

Move in.

A guard relays Spoor's order into a two-way radio.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHED - - DAY

Two White Cross troop trucks wheel to a stop outside the shed, and a squadron of guards leap out the back.

CUT TO:

INT. SHED - SAME

The old wooden doors SLAM open as the guards charge into the shed firing as we

CUT TO:

EXT. SALES OFFICE - - SAME

Roam stops outside the door to the office when he hears machine gun fire across the street. He starts to go back when his retreat is cut off by several armed White Cross Guards. Spoor opens the Sales Office door.

SPOOR

(to Roam)

You'll never know how helpful
you've been.

Roam looks beyond Spoor to the Salesman. Roam realizes he's been set up. Just then a guard comes out of the garage across the street and yells:

GUARD

She's not here!

SPOOR

(furious, to guards)

Find her!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

The narcoticized child is brought out of the bar and loaded into a WHITE CROSS ambulance van. The doors are shut and the van drives off as we:

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - SAME

Kathryn running full tilt down the tunnel, intent on only one thing--getting back to the boy.

KATHRYN
(to herself)
You're so stupid...

Suddenly a White Cross guard steps into her path from a connecting tunnel.

Before he can bring up his gun, Kathryn flattens him with her gun stock, and continues running without breaking stride.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND BAR

Silent, eerie. The Guard's raid has emptied the place. Kathryn appears at the door and carefully moves across the room and kicks open the door to

ROAM'S OFFICE - SAME

and enters...It's empty.

CUT TO:

INT. SALES OFFICE - DAY

Spoor stands in front of Roam and the car Salesman. Both men are tied to chairs. Roam has been badly beaten by the Big Sergeant, who waits for a chance to hit Roam again.

SPOOR
Where is she?

Roam looks up. He's hurting, but still maintains his sharp edge.

ROAM
She's a resourceful woman, Spoor.
She could be anywhere.

Spoor nods to the Sergeant to hit him again when another Guard enters.

GUARD
The host is on its way to the hospital. They're waiting for you, Doctor Spoor.

SPOOR
Tell them to start as soon as it arrives...I'll be right there.

He starts for the door and stops, remembering the two men.

SPOOR

(to Sergeant)

Kill them, then find Cosburn.

Spoor gets into a waiting White Cross truck and leaves. The Big Sergeant pulls out his pistol. Stoically, he shoots the Salesman, then aims at Roam. Suddenly, Roam, still tied to the chair, lowers his head and charges the Sergeant, butting him in the stomach and driving them both through the window and into the parking lot.

EXT. SALES OFFICE - DAY

The SERGEANT and Roam crash out the window and land on the hood of a used car. The force of the blow shatters the wooden chair and before the Sergeant can recover Roam knocks him senseless with a chair leg and grabs a Guard's machine gun. He ducks between the cars and makes his escape.

CUT TO:

EXT. ST. ANDREW'S HOSPITAL - DAY

The hospital is now completely surrounded by a tall chain link fence about ten feet high, topped with barbed wire. White Cross trucks fill the dirt yard.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

The boy sits on a paper covered table. His arms tremble as he is stripped by technicians.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Spoor strides down the corridor to the O.R. Hospital workers and patients barely manage to get out of his way. Sister Dr. Helen intercepts him and hustles to keep up.

SISTER HELEN

Dr. Spoor...I was wondering
if it would be possible for
one of our young doctors to
observe your operation...It would
be most enlightening for us---

She and Spoor turn into the heavily guarded Operating room. She notices the armed guards then sees the boy stretched out on the Operating Table. The sight stops her.

SISTER HELEN

(snocked)

A child...

Attendants immediately go to Spoor and prep him for the operation. His hands are washed by Scrub Nurses as he talks.

SPOOR

(correcting her)

A host, Sister...bred in a
laboratory for one reason...
to produce blood...

Sister Helen watches as the Child's arms and legs are strapped down. He struggles against them. His head is lathered to be shaved. Other Technicians:

--attach electrodes to the boy's stomach, legs and arms...
--put an IV into place.
--roll the pumping machine next to the table.

The CHIEF TECHNICIAN (#414) steps forward to Spoor.

TECHNICIAN 414

He's been checked thoroughly.
He's slightly dehydrated. We
must raise his fluid level
before beginning the process.
Otherwise he's in excellent
condition.

SPOOR

(to Technician)

Good.

SISTER HELEN

Is he sick?

Spoor is gloved and robed..

SPOOR

Sick?...No. Far from it...
Ten years ago, my staff created
a successful anti-plague compound.
Unfortunately, the compound was lethal
to the normal body's immune system.
Through recombinant genetic manipulation
we were able to breed a host body that
could produce the anti-plague without
the early risks...His plasma can be
used as a direct serum into our own
blood stream...Only a small dosage
is necessary for complete immunity.

SISTER HELEN

Why Doctor...that's the answer to
our prayers!...

SPOOR

Mine too. Only someone tried to steal him from me...and I just got him back...Now if you will excuse me. We must proceed with the draining.

SISTER HELEN

(troubled)

Draining?

SPOOR

Yes...I intend to drain the host here, then return to California with the serum.

SISTER HELEN

But surely with proper care the body could produce an unlimited amount of serum, enough to save the world?

SPOOR

Oh, easily...however I have no intentions of saving the world unless the world is willing to pay for it.

SISTER HELEN

Dr. Spoor I would like to say that I'm totally at odds with your plan. I find the killing of anyone, much less a child, reprehensible...

SPOOR

Don't worry, sister, I will leave you a small amount of serum...as an endowment. Now...if you have any further objections please feel free to take them up with my grievance committee.

Sister Helen looks up as Two armed White Cross Guards appear at her sides. She leaves with them.

--A large syringe is placed into Spoor's palm.

--The boy's biceps is swabbed with alcohol and held firmly down.

--The boy's eyes widen as Spoor inserts the needle into the child's arm and injects a huge amount of fluid. The boy's

wild struggle softens, finally stops.

His eyes close and technician's release their grips as the pump starts ...THUMP, THUMP, THUMP... Blood flows quickly out of the boy's arms. A bright red stream of liquid SQUIRTS into a clear reservoir.

Spoor hands the spent syringe to a nurse and watches the pump a moment. Then he notices something...

THE BOY'S CLENCHED FIST

relaxing, it opens to reveal...Tommy's seashell.

Spoor opens the boy's tiny fingers and removes the shell.

TECHNICIAN

Wonder where he picked that up?

Spoor studies it. It reminds him of his other unfinished business.

SPOOR

I know.

(to Technician 414)

How long will it take?

TECHNICIAN 414

Once his fluid level is stabilized the body will be completely drained in four hours. We have to be careful...He must be kept alive until the last moment to keep the antibodies active.

Spoor puts the shell on the child's chest.

SPOOR

Call me when it's finished.

He leaves AS WE

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DUSK

Armed Guards patrol the fence surrounding the hospital. An ancient high-backed pickup truck ambles toward the gate. An Old Desert Rat GARBAGE MAN rubs his chin at the sight of all the trucks. He stops at the gate, but the smell is so bad the guards wave him through.

ANGLE ON LOADING DOCK

A slight, middle-aged sister, SISTER AGNES, comes out as the old GARBAGE MAN PULLS UP.

GARBAGE MAN

What's all the fuss about?

SISTER AGNES

White Cross...something special...
They have the cure.

The Garbage man stops emptying the trash, looks at her queerly, then grins.

GARBAGE MAN

Here?...

The sister nods.

GARBAGE MAN (cont'd)

(delicately)

I see...Sister, you been sipping
some of that medicinal vintage
again?

ANGLE ON REAR OF TRUCK

As the two talk, Kathryn climbs out the back of the truck and slips undetected into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - DUSK

White Cross Guards are stationed all over. Kathryn moves carefully around each corner, stops when she sees a pair of guards moving her way. She backs up until she slips into a room off the hall.

INT. A NUN'S PERSONAL QUARTERS - SAME

Dark. Kathryn listens at the door until the guards outside have passed, then notices a Nun's habit hanging on the door.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

The Big Sergeant stands in the hall with a group of other guards when a group of Nuns passes by.

The men laugh among themselves at the sisters, then suddenly the Big Sergeant notices something.

ANGLE ON NUN'S FEET

as they shuffle by. One in the group is wearing heavy leather boots.

THE BIG SERGEANT

looks up suddenly for a face, but the group turns into the chapel across the hall along with many other sisters.

BIG SERGEANT

Hey! Stop!

He leads the other guards across the hall and into:

HOSPITAL CHAPEL - SAME

now filled for evening prayers. Candlelit, about fifteen sisters sit in pews around the chapel. Sister Helen stands at the front. She looks up as the Big Sergeant and others move into the Chapel searching for Kathryn.

SISTER HELEN

Sergeant, what is the meaning of this intrusion?

BIG SERGEANT

We're looking for a criminal, sister...a nun wearing motorcycle boots.

He moves down the center aisle slowly, eying every nun as he passes. Some stand, others sit, heads bowed...he passes one kneeling, her head bowed in prayer--her feet are hidden under the pew.

The Big Sergeant smiles reaches down and yanks the sister to her feet...It is not Kathryn, but a young nun. She looks up, terrified, at the Big Sergeant.

SISTER HELEN

Please!

The Big Sergeant releases the young nun, who begins crying.

SERGEANT

Sorry, sister....

SISTER HELEN

There is only one criminal in our midst, Sergeant...and I'm looking at him.

She locks eyes with the Big Sergeant who turns and storms

out of the room. The other guards follow.

Sister Helen and the other nuns immediately comfort the young nun, then notice another "nun" leaving the aisle--a shotgun extends from under the blouse of the nun's habit. The "nun" quickly hides it, but we see it is Kathryn.

At the sight of the gun the other sisters move toward Sister Helen. She protects them like a mother hen. Kathryn looks up at the group.

KATHRYN

Don't panic...I'm not going to hurt anybody...I just want--

SISTER HELEN

You're here for the child.

Kathryn stops.

KATHRYN

Yes ma'am...Is he okay?

SISTER HELEN

(beat)

His blood is being removed.

Kathryn's heart sinks. She's too late.

KATHRYN

He's dead...

SISTER HELEN

Not yet. They must keep him alive in order for the process to work.

This gives Kathryn new hope.

KATHRYN

Where is he?

SISTER HELEN

(beat)

It is better if you don't know. They'll only kill you if they find you.

KATHRYN

Lady...you aren't telling me nothing I don't already know. You can either tell me where he is or not, but either way I'm going after him.

Sister Helen studies her for a moment. This is not a woman to mess with.

SISTER HELEN

He is in the Operating Room, down the hall and to the left.

Kathryn start for the door. Sister Helen watches her a moment, then stops her.

SISTER HELEN (cont'd)

Wait...you forgot something.

Kathryn stops at the door and looks back. Sister Helen reaches down and removes her shoes.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

CLOSE ON SISTER HELEN'S SHOES now on Kathryn's feet. She moves carefully down the hallway toward the O.R., past Guards...including the Big Sergeant.

WE TILT UP as she walks and notice her quietly disengage the safety on her shotgun as she moves toward her target.

WIDE

Kathryn moves closer to the door and the two guards that flank the door. The unsuspecting guards talk to each other.

Twenty feet away, fifteen, ten...she starts to raise her weapon. Suddenly, we hear VIOLENT COUGHING behind her.

THE TWO GUARDS LOOK UP

and notice Kathryn and a MAN hunched over in wheelchair behind her at the end of the hall.

MAN

(in pain)

Help me...Sister, help me...

KATHRYN

freezes. She can't continue forward, but she can't help the man...she's not a nurse.

MAN

(worse pain)

Sister, help...

GUARD

(to Kathryn)

Hey, nurse...he sounds pretty bad.

She nods and slowly walks back to the man in the wheelchair.

ANGLE ON MAN IN WHEELCHAIR

He pulls her close and looks up--it's Roam. He has a pistol in his lap.

ROAM

(low)

Get me out of the hallway and don't even think about hitting me...

KATHRYN

What the hell you--

ROAM

(faking pain)

Ohhhh...please help me!

Kathryn looks back at the guards and rolls him out of sight.

INT. PATIENT'S ROOM - SAME

Kathryn rolls Roam into the empty room and immediately Roam comes out of the chair.

INT. TUNNEL

Roam moves along tunnel. He comes to the underground bar and sees what's happened. He looks up to see Kathryn. She aims her shotgun at him.

KATHRYN

(livid)

What the hell you trying to do!

ROAM

Save your life, that's what!

KATHRYN

You set me up!

ROAM

(pointing to his
bruised face)

Does this look like I set you

CONT'D

ROAM(cont'd)
 up! Spoor's waiting to trap you.
 There're six guards inside the
 kid's room and even if you did get to
 him, you can't make it out alone.

KATHRYN
 I'll take my chances.

She starts to leave.

ROAM
 (angrily)
 Why don't you take something
 else for once in your
 goddamn life...Some help.

Kathryn stops, looks back.

ROAM(cont'd)
 If you really want the kid...
 there's only one way to get him.

CUT TO:

INT. SPOOR'S OFFICE (SISTER HELEN'S OFFICE)

Spoor's dog sleeps on the floor next to Spoor. He rubs its head as he looks through the nude photographs of a medical text.

He leans back in chair until his head brushes against the end of a gun barrel. WE PULL back to see Kathryn behind him through the open window.

KATHRYN
 That's far enough.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DUSK

Kathryn leads Spoor down the hallway. Guards freeze at the sight of her holding the shotgun to Spoor.

SPOOR
 This won't work...Cosburn.
 You kill me, and they'll
 hunt you down.

KATHRYN
 So what else is new?

She pushes the door open to the O.R.

INT. O.R.

Kathryn and Spoor enter. The guards spring into position, train their weapons on Kathryn and Spoor.

KATHRYN

(to Spoor)

Get rid of them.

Spoor motions them all out of the room. Kathryn stops Technician #414.

KATHRYN

Unhook him.

Technician 414 looks at Spoor. The Doctor nods. Technician 414 turns off the pump. The blood in the pump returns to the child's system. One test tube of blood rests in a rack. Kathryn pockets it.

KATHRYN

How long will it take him to travel?

TECHNICIAN

He'll be groggy but there is no difficulty.

SPOOR

You're a smart driver, Cosburn you should have known when to quit...

KATHRYN

When I start a job, I finish it.

TECHNICIAN

He's ready.

KATHRYN

Turn it off and get the damn needles out of his arms.

The technician turns the machine off. He removes the IV and fistula, then places a mask over the child's face.

ON THE CHILD

as he slowly breathes in the oxygen, his eyes blink awake. Kathryn reaches over and takes the shell off his chest.

SPOOR

You'll never make it...

Kathryn looks from the waking child to Spoor and grins.

KATHRYN

Maybe...but at least you'll be
along to find out...C'mon.

She pushes him toward the doors as we

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE O.R.

The doors open, and Spoor leads the way out. He is followed by Kathryn, holding the child, whose head rests sleepily on her shoulder.

KATHRYN

Straight down the hall.

Spoor moves on. Suddenly, a Nurse unaware of the action steps out of a room between Spoor and Kathryn. Spoor reacts immediately, diving for cover.

SPOOR

Get her!

Kathryn breaks down the other hall and rushes through a doorway marked by a CD sign.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL

Kathryn, carrying the still groggy child over her shoulder, moves through a large tunnel. When she reaches a pair of heavy doors Roam is waiting. He takes the child and helps her lock the doors.

KATHRYN

You sure these will hold?

ROAM

Suppose to withstand an A-bomb

They share a dubious look.

ROAM

Right...Keep your fingers crossed.

They start down the dimly lit tunnel.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL

Spoor leads the charge of guards to the doors of the tunnel.

SPOOR

Break them down!

He grabs the Big Sergeant.

SPOOR

Quick...head back up. They'll go for the trucks.

INT. TUNNEL

Kathryn leads the way down the tunnel. She comes to a fork in the tunnel.

ROAM

To the left!

They move off in that direction.

INT. TUNNEL DOORS

The doors explode inward as the Guard troops follow. Their flashlights shine on the wet walls of the tunnel as we

CUT TO:

TUNNEL FARTHER IN

Kathryn comes to a ladder. Roam stops her.

ROAM

Up.

Kathryn starts climbing. He listens, we can faintly hear the sounds of THE GUARDS following.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

A door opens in this garage and Kathryn appears. She takes the child from Roam, who emerges from the tunnel after her. They turn around to see a fleet of White Cross four-wheel-drive vehicles parked in front of them.

ROAM

Get in.

She loads the child into the back and notices three, twenty-gallon cans of gas in the back part of the truck.

KATHRYN

Where'd you get the gas?

ROAM

I have my sources...Start it up!

Kathryn runs to the driver's side. Roam goes to the door. Just as he opens it, a White Cross Guard steps inside the shed and levels his gun at Roam.

GUARD

Freeze!

Roam does. The guard motions Kathryn away from the truck toward him.

GUARD

Toss your weapons in the dirt.

At first Kathryn hesitates, then both do as instructed. The Guard picks up the guns and for the first time allows himself a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - SAME

The other guards move down the tunnel toward the ladder.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE

The Guard aims his gun at them both.

GUARD

Well, look what I got here...
All they said was not to harm
the kid...You two are fair game.

He pulls back the bolt on his machine gun when suddenly:

THE LIGHTS of the Truck come on, blinding him, and the HORN
BLARES

The Guard looks up through the lights to see:

HIS POV:

THE KID sits in the driver's seat.

WIDER

The break is all Roam needs. He tackles the guard and Kathryn knocks him unconscious. Roam drags the body out of the way as Kathryn climbs in behind the wheel next to the kid.

KATHRYN
(to kid)

...What took you so long?

The kid grins as she throws the truck in gear and pulls out. Roam hops aboard as they leave the garage.

ROAM
Let's see how good a driver
you really are.

KATHRYN
Hold on.

She whips it around the corner into the street. She's back in her element.

ROAM
This way.

KATHRYN
But that's back toward the
hospital!

ROAM
Trust me, okay?

They lock eyes a beat, and then Kathryn turns sharply in the way Roam's directed.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPOOR'S VEHICLE - SAME

Kathryn's truck can be seen ahead. She turns sharply and the lead White Cross truck can't take the turn. It goes skidding through the side of a building.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR

Roam and the child watch the White Cross truck slam into the building behind them. The Child laughs, Roam looks back at her impressed.

INT. SPOOR'S CAR - SAME

Now the lead pursuit car. The Big Sergeant's VOICE comes

over the radio.

BIG SERGEANT'S VOICE (V.O.)
We're ready for them, sir.

SPOOR
(to radio)
Don't fire on them. Don't
hurt the host!

Suddenly his truck starts to stutter and stall. Spoor looks
at the driver.

SPOOR
What's wrong?

DRIVER
Out of gas, sir...

SPOOR
What!

All around him other vehicles stall, stop. All out of gas.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHRYN'S TRUCK - SAME

Kathryn sees them in the rear view mirror.

KATHRYN
What the hell?

She looks at Roam.

ROAM
Well, where'd you think I
was going to get all that gas?

Suddenly another White Cross Truck is directly behind theirs
and moving in fast.

CUT TO:

INT. BIG SERGEANT'S TRUCK - SAME

Through the windshield we can see Kathryn's truck a hundred
feet ahead. The Big Sergeant talks to Spoor on the radio.

BIG SERGEANT
Closing in.

SPOOR (V.O., on radio)
Don't lose them!

The Big Sergeant's driver punches it.

INT. KATHRYN'S TRUCK - SAME

Roam holding on for dear life. So is the kid in the back with the gas cans.

ROAM
Turn at this corner.

KATHRYN
But...

ROAM
Do it!

KATHRYN
Hang on.

He and the kid brace themselves as she turns the wheel.

CUT TO:

WIDE

Her truck turns up a blind corner as we

CUT TO:

INT. BIG SERGEANT'S TRUCK - SAME

He sees Kathryn's truck turn the corner.

BIG SERGEANT
Faster!

The driver pushes the last little bit of speed out of the already straining engine. They wheel around the blind corner--right into the back of Kathryn's truck!

ON THE BIG SERGEANT'S SURPRISED EXPRESSION AS

BOTH VEHICLES EXPLODE in twin balls of flame. The following trucks that still have gas stop behind the inferno.

SPOOR'S TRUCK pulls up. He can't believe his eyes.

SPOOR
No...

He climbs out and moves forward. He has to be restrained by guards.

SPOOR (cont'd)
Put it out!...Put it out!

But no one moves. They look at him, helpless to do anything but let the cars burn. Spoor looks down...An empty, broken test tube lies on the ground several feet away. It has traces of blood. Spoor picks it up and stares at it.

SPOOR (cont'd)
(a whisper)
It's gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A truck without headlights pounds down the highway. It slows to a stop beneath an abandoned freeway bridge.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Kathryn, Roam and the child ride.

KATHRYN
What'll you do?

ROAM
Oh, I'll hunker down out here a while. I know a cabin up the road a ways. I'll stay up there till things quiet down... maybe head back...

She looks to the east. Clouds move fast over the mountains.

KATHRYN
(beat)
Things are going to get bad soon...

ROAM
I figured that's why you're heading to Salt Lake...

She nods, then reaches into her pocket and removes the test tube of the boy's blood. She looks back at the child, then hands it to Roam.

KATHRYN
I think he'd want you to have this.

Roam takes it. It's an awkward moment.

ROAM
Drive carefully.

KATHRYN
I will.

He opens the door, then stops and looks at her. She leans across the seat and kisses him awkwardly, tenderly...a first kiss. When they part, Kathryn smiles.

ROAM
Could use a little work, but feisty...I like that.

He smiles at her. She puts the truck in gear and pulls away.

ROAM

looks at the small vial of blood in his hand, then watches the truck until it is a little dot on the highway.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEVADA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A long, dark ribbon of highway extending east for twenty miles. Kathryn's truck stands out, tiny and alone in the moonlight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Kathryn's truck winds its way through a small range of mountains, coming over a pass that sends her on a long descent to a great basin.

INT. KATHRYN'S TRUCK - NIGHT

CLOSE ON CLOCK -- It is down to four hours left.

ON KATHRYN

She glances at the clock, then the sleeping child next to her and finally on her injured hand. She runs a finger over the bandage...thinking of Roam. Her eyes go back to the road.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SALT LAKE BASIN - NIGHT

A pink glow rises from behind the Wasatch Range. A pair of headlights moves toward the glow of the rising sun.

INT. CAR - SAME

CLOSE ON CLOCK -- It is down to two hours and twenty-minutes.

WIDEN to reveal KATHRYN

driving. She looks over at the sleeping form of the child, then says softly, not intending to wake him.

KATHRYN
You're here, kid.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR - PRE DAWN

The car rolls to stop in the middle of the Salt Flats. The lights go out. We hold on the car as we

DISSOLVE NIGHT TO DAWN

and we see the massive expanse of the basin.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAWN (SAME)

ON KATHRYN. She is asleep with the child. We PAN to include the Clock. It counts down the last ten seconds, then beeps with high electronic BEEP, waking Kathryn. She gives it an angry look, and it stops, as if reading her intentions. She looks out the window...soon they'll be coming.

She looks back at the child. A breeze stirs his clothes. Tentatively, she reaches out to touch him. The child stirs. He looks at her with sleep in his eyes, smiles.

KATHRYN
Well, kid...we made it. This
is the place where you've got
to do your stuff.

She looks out at the barren plain, then her watch.

KATHRYN
(an afterthought)
...if there's anyone still alive.

She looks back at the child.

KATHRYN

...Hungry?

She pulls out a can of beans and starts to open it. The child watches the can expectantly.

KATHRYN

I know this has been a tough road...and I've said a lot of rough things to you... but you've been a good trooper...

Suddenly her voice is choked with emotion. The kid looks up from the can of beans in her hands to her face, reacting to the emotion in her voice. Tears well up in her eyes, and she can't stop them.

KATHRYN

Well, what're you looking at... I'm tired that's all. And I can't stand the smell of beans...

The child suddenly reaches up, driven by some primal instinct, and hugs her long and hard around the neck.

Kathryn resists for a moment, unsure. Then tentatively, desperately, she clutches the boy. They hold each other for a long beat, alone on the vast desert. Then the boy releases her and looks again at the can of beans. She wipes away a tear and laughs.

KATHRYN

Right...Let's get our priorities straight...

She hands him a spoon, and takes one herself, and the boy starts eating out of the can. Kathryn takes a bite, then looks out her window. A thought begins to grow.

KATHRYN

Maybe we're too late...You know?
Maybe there's no one left...I guess
if they don't meet us...we could strike
out on our own...What do you say?

The kid looks up and smiles. Kathryn stares back out at the road as the thought picks up momentum.

KATHRYN

There's got to be a place out there
somewhere that'd be glad to see you...

She looks at her bandage and allows an even quieter thought.

KATHRYN

Maybe even...head back to border
town...find Roam.

The child nods. Kathryn smiles, then sees the Child's look go from her eyes to something behind her. Kathryn turns and follows his look.

HER POV:

A mile away, a plume of dust rises from the white plain. A car. It comes toward them from the mountains.

THE CHILD

watches fascinated.

KATHRYN

watches coldly. We can almost see her dream suddenly evaporate. She looks back at the boy.

KATHRYN

Eat up, kid...we got a minute.

EXT. THE APPROACHING CAR - DAWN

It moves close to Kathryn's...The door opens and a man in a green jumpsuit and mask leaps out and runs to Kathryn's car.

ANGLE - KATHRYN'S CAR

Kathryn drops her window and stops the man with her shotgun.

KATHRYN

Whoa...boy...

The man stops.

KATHRYN

Let me see some credentials.

The man opens the briefcase and shows it to her...it's full of cash.

MAN(filtered thru gasmask)

Twenty thousand...as arranged.

She motions with the gun.

KATHRYN

Got something else for me?...

The man hesitates a moment...

MAN

Today the sun will rise from
the west...

Kathryn hesitates...not from doubt but from the realization
that it is time to say goodbye. The man pulls her out of
her thoughts.

MAN

(desperately)

Hurry, please...every minute
means more people will die.

KATHRYN

Get back in your car...and
give me a moment...

The man moves back to the other vehicle.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR - SAME

She looks back at the boy. Wipes a spot of bean sauce from
his mouth, then presses the seashell in his small hand.

KATHRYN

You got a big job ahead of
you kid...I know you ain't
got the slightest idea what
I'm saying but...it's more
important than anything we
feel. Soon you won't feel
anything, but you'll be
appreciated...and I'll make
sure no one forgets...

She starts the engine and pulls over to make the transfer.

The passenger door opens and two men stand outside,
hesitate. The boy looks at Kathryn a moment, confused.

KATHRYN

Goddamnit...what's everybody
standing around for?! Do it!

The men take the child and put him in the back of the truck.
Kathryn puts her head on the steering wheel. She can't
look.

EXT. OTHER TRUCK - DAWN

The two workers climb inside with the child and pull the door closed.

The SPOKESMAN places the briefcase of cash on the ground at his feet. Then climbs inside and the van pulls away.

INT. CLOSE ON KATHRYN - DAWN

her head is down on the steering wheel. She looks up red eyed at the disappearing van. Then wipes her face and focuses on the briefcase.

It stands alone.

Kathryn stares at it a long beat then puts the car in gear and turns toward home...leaving it.

EXT. HIGH AND WIDE - DAWN

The two cars moving in opposite directions. The briefcase, a small dot between them. We hold on shot for a moment, then suddenly the briefcase explodes in a fireball five stories high.

INT. VAN -- DAWN

The spokesman removes his mask--it is Spoor. He smiles and looks in the sideview mirror.

ANGLE ON SIDEVIEW MIRROR

The huge explosion leaves a dark cloud of smoke behind. Suddenly Kathryn's car rips through the curtain of smoke after them.

ON SPOOR

Reacts to the sight of the car. He can't believe it.

INT. REAR OF VAN

The child, restrained in his seat, feels the increase in speed as do the handlers. One of the handlers gets up and pulls down the metal shield over the window.

POV: thru the window. Kathryn's car gaining on the van.

THE CHILD REACTS

smiles at the sight.

One of the handler's pulls a rifle out of storage. He takes

careful aim.

The child lunges forward out of the other's grasp and bumps the shooter hard enough to knock the back door open...the shooter grabs on to keep from falling and the other leaves the child to go over and help pull the first back in.

The child watches this a moment then moves slowly, carefully over and -- pushes the second, sending both men flying from the van.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR - DAY

She pulls wide and floors it, moving around to the passenger side.

INT. SPOOR'S VAN - SAME

Spoor aims a RIFLE out the window and fires.

ON KATHRYN

bullets rip through her doors. She concentrates on her mission. Pulls her gun up and fires a blast at Spoor.

Spoor fires again and this time hits her. She slumps against the wheel.

INT. TRUCK

Spoor turns around and watches her car slow to a stop.

SPOOR

(to Driver)

Go back...I want to be sure.

The driver turns the wheel and heads back.

INT. KATHRYN'S CAR.

She lays on the seat, holding her shoulder, blood runs out of the wound.

On the floor is her gun, her fingers can almost reach. She hears Spoor's truck pull to a stop and a door open.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The driver moves slowly toward the car. Opens the door and BOOM!

Kathryn blows him away. She pulls herself up on the seat in time to see Spoor -- He has the child in front of him as a shield.

SPOOR

Drop your gun...

Kathryn hesitates, then shakes her head.

KATHRYN

What are you going
to do if I don't...Kill him?

She moves toward him slowly. Spoor backs up slowly as Kathryn keeps coming.

SPOOR

You're a fool, Cosburn...There's nothing left here. Salt Lake is gone...Wiped out. A ghost town. You brought the child all the way here for nothing. A total waste... except to find a new place to die.

He moves his gun from the child's head to Kathryn. Kathryn raises her gun at Spoor.

SPOOR

(confidently)

You won't do it...You won't risk it.

KATHRYN

Your mistake.

At that moment the boy bites Spoor with everything he's got and breaks away. Kathryn fires, hitting Spoor twice, killing him. Kathryn slumps, weak but not hit.

The boy rushes to Kathryn and holds her. She wraps an arm around him and looks to the west across the plain.

KATHRYN

Let's go find a home, kid.

As they begin walking back to her truck, we pull back, further and further until the two tiny figures below us appear as one.

THE END