

THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Story & Screenplay

by

Dan O'Bannon

Revision
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Based on a Story & Screenplay by
John Russo, Rudy Ricci & Russell Streiner

Hemdale Presentations/Fox Productions

Registered: WGA West

A WHITE TITLE OVER BLACK:

THE EVENTS PORTRAYED IN THIS FILM
ARE ALL TRUE. AFFADAVITS BY THE
PARTICIPANTS ARE ON FILE WITH
AGENCIES OF THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT. THE NAMES ARE REAL
NAMES OF REAL PEOPLE AND REAL
ORGANIZATIONS.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXTERIOR - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - AFTERNOON

Red sunlight streaks across a WAREHOUSE with a large sign on it:

UNEEDA MEDICAL SUPPLY

"You need it -- We got it"

None Larger

SUPERIMPOSE THE TITLE:

JULY 3, 1983

5:30 P.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME

A rumble of THUNDER.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

A big barn of a place, with rows & rows of shelving and junk stacked around. Not very new, and not very tidy. The employees are leaving.

The BOSS, BURT PENROD, is closing up for the weekend. He calls out to his last two men:

BOSS

Hey, Frank! It's quitting time.
Go home.

FRANK

I'm gonna stick around for a while.
Got some orders to fill. The kid's
gonna stay here with me, and learn
the ropes.

BOSS

Okay, but lock up when you go, will
you? And don't forget it's the
4th of July weekend coming up.

FRANK

Right. Have a nice 4th. See you Sunday for the barbecue, Burt.

BOSS

Lookin' forward to it. You too, kid.

The Boss goes out, leaving FRANK, a 45-year-old factory foreman, alone with FREDDY, a newly-hired shipping clerk who wears a red baseball cap and a little ring in his ear.

FRANK

Okay, Fred, we got an order here from St. Louis University medical school, for two skeletons.

Frank, holding the order form in his hand, walks the kid over to where they keep the skeletons, wrapped in plastic, hanging from a pole like suits.

FRANK (CONT'D)

They want two adult females with perfect teeth. That's an AF-1. So we go to the "A" section here, which is divided into "M"s and "F"s, then we find the "I"s, which are the ones with the perfect teeth.

Frank lifts a skeleton off the pole and carries it over to a coffin-sized wooden packing crate.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Put some excelsior in there, would you?

Freddy quickly stuffs some excelsior into the box.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now pour a bunch of that styrofoam popcorn in there.

Freddy pours, and spreads it around. Frank lays the beautiful, perfect skeleton in the crate.

FREDDY

Where do they get all these skeletons?

FRANK

From India. It's an international treaty. All skeletons come from India.

FREDDY

Is that right? How come?

FRANK

I don't know, but sometimes I wonder how they get all these skeletons with perfect teeth. How many people die with perfect teeth? I think they must have a skeleton farm somewhere over in India.

Frank turns away from the skeleton section and starts walking through the warehouse, showing the kid where things are.

FRANK (CONT'D)

The prosthetic limbs are here, and the wheelchairs are here, and the split dogs are over there. The split dogs are for veterinary schools. We get a lot of orders for split dogs.

Freddy is looking around in morbid fascination. He gazes at the embalmed half-dog -- split down the middle so you can see all its organs in cross-section -- mounted on a stand.

FRANK (CONT'D)

There's the gurneys, and the surgical equipment, and that's where we keep the oxygen. Watch out for that oxygen. It's explosive. Don't smoke around it.

Frank walks Freddy over to a big freezer door.

FRANK (CONT'D)

This is where we keep the fresh cadavers. We sell these to medical schools, and to the U.S. Army for ballistics tests.

Frank opens the freezer door and walks in, followed by Freddy.

INTERIOR - COLD LOCKER - AFTERNOON (NO WINDOWS)

There is only one body in the locker, hanging vertically like a suit at the cleaners, wrapped in plastic.

FRANK
(glancing at his
order sheet)
We're low on inventory. Got a
shipment coming in Monday.

FREDDY
How many bodies are there in
here, usually?

FRANK
Well, we try not to overstock.
It's like the restaurant business --
you don't want your inventory to
lose its freshness. Come on back
and help me nail the lid on that
skeleton, and I'll show you how
to fill out the shipping forms.

They walk out of the locker.

OUTSIDE THE LOCKER

Frank closes the locker DOOR. It CLICKS back open. It
has a big combination padlock, but it's just hanging in
the open hasp.

FRANK
You gotta close this door good.
It pops open.

He slams the door hard, and they walk away.

After they are gone, the door pops back open.

CUT TO:

Frank and Freddy walking back toward the office.

FREDDY
Hey, Frank, how late we gonna work?
Reason I ask is, I've got a date
at eight o'clock.

FRANK
(glancing at his
watch)
Well, we'll work another hour or
so and then knock off. Who you
got a date with?

FREDDY
My girlfriend.

FRANK
What are you gonna do?

FREDDY
Go dancing.

FRANK
Ah, youth.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CITY STREET - AFTERNOON

A group of six PUNK ROCKERS are walking along the sidewalk in a sleazy, run-down section of the city. They are TINA, MEAT, CHUCK, CASEY, DEDE and SCUZ. Tina is a slender, attractive girl in a red plastic miniskirt. Scuz wears a Mohawk haircut. Chuck is relatively normal-looking. Meat is a tall black lad with a reggae haircut. Casey and Dede are weird but extremely sexy girls. Dede wears leather pants with lots of buttons on him.

CASEY
Hey, are we gonna party tonight, or what?

CHUCK
Yeah, we're gonna party.

CASEY
Well, where? Where we gonna party?

CHUCK
I don't know. Somewhere.

CASEY
We could go to the park.

MEAT
The cops said they'd shoot us if we go back in the park.

SCUZ
We could do that. That would be a death trip.

DEDE
I like death.

CHUCK

I like death with sex.
(to Casey:)
How 'bout you, Casey? Do you
like sex and death?

CASEY

Fuck off and die, Chuck.

CHUCK

Will you have sex with me?

CASEY

Go choke a chicken.

DEDE

We could go to the Rat Club.

SCUZ

Naw, they closed it down. And you
gotta be 21 now to get into
Head Cheese.

MEAT

So how 'bout it, Tina? Where can
we party tonight?

TINA

Hey, you guys, that would be really
rad, but I'm supposed to go meet
Freddy when he gets off work.

CASEY

Yeah? Where you spouse to meet him?

TINA

At this medical supply warehouse,
where he's working.

SCUZ

A job? Fuckhead.

CASEY

Well, shit, whyn't you say so?
Why don't we all go pick Freddy up?
Freddy always knows where there's
a party.

TINA

Hey, you guys, that would really
be rad, but Freddy's gonna be
pretty tired.

MEAT

Also, we ain't got no car.

CASEY

(to Tina)

How are you getting there?

TINA

On the bus.

SCUZ

Shit, I ain't takin' no fuckin' bus.

CHUCK

Suicide has a car.

DEDE

Oh, God, not him.

MEAT

Why not? He's got a car.

TINA

(annoyed)

Hey, you guys, this is just me and Freddy.

CASEY

(excited)

Right, let's all go get Suicide and make him drive us over to where Freddy's workin'.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Frank and Freddy are sitting at a desk, poring over stacks of shipping orders. Outside, there is a RUMBLE OF THUNDER.

FRANK

Looks like rain.

FREDDY

Frank ... ?

FRANK

What?

FREDDY

What's the weirdest thing you ever saw in here?

Frank puts down his papers. Looks out the window. Thinks.

FRANK

Well, kid, I've seen weird things come and I've seen weird things go, but I've seen just one weird thing that has to cap them all.

FREDDY

Oh, yeah? What's that?

FRANK

Lemme ask you a question. You ever see that movie, "Night of the Living Dead"?

FREDDY

The one about the corpses eating people? Sure. That was one of the finest movies ever made. What about it?

FRANK

Did you know it was based on a true case?

FREDDY

Naw. Go on. You're shitting me.

FRANK

I'm dead serious.

FREDDY

That's not possible. They showed the zombies taking over the whole world. I would have heard about that.

FRANK

Well, they changed the details for the movie. What really happened was that back about 1966, there was a chemical spill near Pittsburgh. It leaked down into the veteran's cemetery and made some dead bodies act like they was alive.

FREDDY

(skeptical)

What chemical?

FRANK

It's called 2,4,5 Trioxin and they were going to use it on marijuana or something. It was something Darrow Chemical was developing for the Army. They shut it down after the business with the corpses. And they told the guy that made the movie, that if he told the true facts, they'd sue his ass off. So he changed it all around.

FREDDY

So what really happened?

FRANK

Well, they shut it all down, and the Army took away the contaminated dirt and bodies, and they managed to keep it all a secret.

FREDDY

So how come you know about it?

FRANK

The Army transport department got their orders crossed, and they brought the bodies here instead of to Darrow Chemical. Typical Army fuck-up, they put them here and forgot about them.

The PHONE RINGS. Freddy jumps. Frank picks it up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello? Oh, hi, honey. We're gonna be working here about another hour. Keep the pot roast hot for me. Love you too. Kiss.

He hangs up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(to Freddy)

Do you want to see them?

FREDDY

See them?

FRANK

The corpses.

FREDDY

Whadda you mean?

FRANK

They're down in the basement.
Come on.

Frank rises and heads for the basement door. Startled, Freddy gets up quickly and follows him.

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - AFTERNOON

Frank and Freddy start down the basement steps.

FRANK

Watch that third step down. It's
a bastard.

Avoiding the third step, they come down the stairs. The basement is darkened. Frank turns on the lights: a couple of bare bulbs, throwing dim yellow light and black shadows all around.

FREDDY

You mean they just brought those
bodies here and left them?

FRANK

You know the Army.

FREDDY

And they've been here all this time?

FRANK

'Bout eighteen years if I recall.

Frank turns on another light.

FRANK (CONT'D)

There they are.

Over in the corner are half a dozen big METAL DRUMS, cylinders turned on their sides. Stencilled on them, in faded old print, is the legend:

PROPERTY: DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL

1(800)454-8000

They are covered with dust.

FREDDY

There's bodies in there?

By way of answer, Frank walks over to the nearest tank, and lifts up a lid on it. Beneath the lid is a sort of port hole, covered with an eighth of an inch of greasy dirt. He gets a bottle of Windex and some paper towels and wipes it off, exposing the glass. Then he picks up a flashlight and shines it down inside.

Freddy leans over and peers in.

Inside is a blackened, mummy-like corpse.

FREDDY

Oh, shit. Look at that. You say that was alive?

FRANK

So they say.

Freddy eyes some rust stains running down the sides of the tank.

FREDDY

These things don't leak, do they?

FRANK

Leak? Hell, no. These things were made by the Army Corps of Engineers.

To prove his point, Frank SLAPS the side of the tank with the palm of his hand.

With a loud CRACK, a welded seam on the tank SPLITS open, and a cloud of yellowish VAPOR squirts out, under PRESSURE -- hitting Frank and Freddy RIGHT IN THE FACE.

They stagger back, coughing and choking.

FRANK & FREDDY

Argh! Cough-cough-cough-cough!

Both of them fall to the floor, clutching their throats. In a moment, they are unconscious.

CAMERA CRANES UP over the top of the tank, looking down THROUGH the little window. Inside, the corpse is beginning to DISSOLVE -- boil away to a black, nasty liquid, right in front of our eyes, as the oxygen hits it.

The gas in the tank has lost some of its pressure, and is no longer squirting out like a hose. Instead, it is FUMING UP out of the crack in the metal, rising up, and rolling along the ceiling toward the basement STAIRWELL.

The smoky gas RISES up the basement steps, and passes out into the warehouse.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

The GAS rises up out of the open basement door, and travels across the floor of the warehouse, rising to SATURATE EVERYTHING.

Some of the gas rolls along the floor and enters the open DOOR of the COLD LOCKER.

INTERIOR - COLD LOCKER - AFTERNOON

The noxious, toxic GAS crawls in around the edge of the door, and curls up over the plastic-wrapped CADAVER, hanging like a suit in the laundry.

The cadaver starts to TWITCH.

DOLLY toward it.

DISSOLVE TO:

MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE

NEW WAVE MUSIC: "THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR - CLIFF BY THE SEA - AFTERNOON

CAMERA STARTS on the SEA. The cradle of life. Grey, today -- grey and slimy, as the cold surf washes seaweed and jellyfish onto the grey sand.

A TINY CRAB scuttles across the rocks.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL

THE CLIFF

rising up from the ocean.

CAMERA CRANES UP THE FACE OF THE CLIFF, up the side of the rock, until we reach

THE TOP.

On the top of the cliff, overlooking the vast ocean, is
A HOUSE.

It is a private home -- expensive looking -- with a huge
SATELLITE DISH ANTENNA on the roof.

SUPERIMPOSE THE TITLE:

"6:00 P.M. PACIFIC DAYLIGHT TIME"

As we watch, a CAR -- an expensive-looking sedan -- comes
up the driveway -- the electric garage door opens -- and
the CAR pulls in.

INTERIOR - HOUSE ON CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE SEA - AFTERNOON

The driver of the car -- a middle-aged MAN in uniform -- an
ARMY COLONEL -- comes into the house and greets his WIFE
with a kiss on the cheek.

WIFE

Hello, dear. How was your day?

COLONEL

The usual. Shit.

WIFE

I'm sorry.

COLONEL

What's for dinner?

WIFE

Your favorite. Lamb chops.

COLONEL

I had it for lunch.

Throwing his coat on a chair, the Colonel walks out of the
living room -- and as he passes from room to room, we can
SEE -- through the windows -- the CLIFF and the SEA.

Finally he arrives at his study.

INTERIOR - COLONEL'S STUDY - AFTERNOON

He crosses the padded floor to the liquor cabinet, and
opens it. Inside is an impressive array of electronic
COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

He slides a card key into the console, checks his watch, picks up a special TELEPHONE, and presses a button.

COLONEL

(into phone)

Yes, it's me. Checking in from Station Three at eighteen hundred... make that eighteen-oh-one hours. I'll be home all evening. Right.

He hangs up and pours himself a drink, and after loosening his tie, downs it.

Then he wanders into the living room, drink in hand.

INTERIOR - COLONEL'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

He stands, looking out at the ocean and sipping his drink.

In the dining room, his Wife is serving dinner.

WIFE

It's nerve-wracking to live around that equipment all the time.

COLONEL

They have to be able to reach me 24 hours a day, wherever I am. You know that.

WIFE

All that microwave stuff affects my oven.

COLONEL

When we find them, we can take all the equipment out.

WIFE

But when will they find them?

COLONEL

Christ, Ethel, I don't know. Maybe they'll never find them. We've been through all this before. They could be anywhere. Anywhere!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CONVERTIBLE - MOVING - LATE AFTERNOON

SUPER THE TITLE:

"6:30 P.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME"

The PUNKS are riding along, drinking cheap wine and listening to HARD PUNK MUSIC on a portable TAPE DECK -- one of those big, loud things like a suitcase.

SUICIDE is driving. Tina, Meat, Casey, Dede, Chuck and Scuz are piled into the car with him.

Suicide is a SKINHEAD. His skull has been completely shaved and then allowed to grow out for about a week, until it's covered with a uniform growth of stubble about 1/8 inch long. He looks like a coconut.

SUICIDE

Where are we goin', anyway?

CASEY

To party.

TINA

To pick up Freddy.

SUICIDE

Oh, yeah? What the fuck is Freddy up to these days, anyway?

TINA

He got himself a job.

SUICIDE

No shit? What job?

TINA

He's a stockroom clerk.

SUICIDE

Yeah? That sounds like a shitty job.

TINA

Well, it ain't the President of the United States, but he makes enough money to buy dope with.

SUICIDE

Yeah? Maybe he'll buy some from me.

TINA

He don't like PCP, Suicide.

SUICIDE

How come you guys only come over when you need me to drive you someplace?

MEAT

'Cause you're too spooky, Suicide.

SUICIDE

Yeah? You think I'm spooky, do you? What the fuck do you think you are?

MEAT

Just try to get us there alive, okay?

SUICIDE

Are you criticizing my driving?

CASEY

You call this driving?

SUICIDE

You want to see driving? I'll show you driving.

MEAT

Hey, take it easy, man.

SUICIDE

(points out the window)

See that chicken?

A large CHICKEN is walking by the side of the road.

Suicide TWISTS THE WHEEL and aims the car toward the CHICKEN. Everybody starts screaming.

The chicken takes off RUNNING -- up onto the SIDEWALK. Suicide follows it, and goes CRASHING up onto the sidewalk, hurling everybody around in the car.

The chicken runs crazily across the median divider. Suicide goes crashing across the divider into the other lane. The chicken runs across the street. Suicide chases it across the street. The chicken flies over a fence in a flurry of feathers. It's escaped.

Suicide hits the brake and screeches to a stop. The car sitting on the curb.

Suicide guns the car, and they take off again.

SUICIDE

Now we'll go pick up Freddy.

MEAT

Suicide, you are not only a fool,
you are a fuckin' asshole.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - STREET FACING MEDICAL SUPPLY HOUSE - EVENING

The "UNEEDA MEDICAL SUPPLY" building, with big oil storage tanks beyond.

Suicide pulls to the curb.

MEAT

What a hideous, ugly place.

DEDE

I like it. It's a statement.

Suicide opens the door and starts to get out.

SUICIDE

Well, let's go get the prick.

TINA

(stopping him)

No, I better not bring you guys
inside -- it might freak out his
boss.

CASEY

Well, that's not nice.

MEAT

Yeah, what does he think we are,
weird or something?

CHUCK

What time does Freddy get off?

TINA

Eight o'clock.

Chuck looks around. Across the street from the medical supply warehouse is an old cemetery, surrounded by a high stone wall. The sign above the arched gate says:

+ RESURRECTION CEMETERY +

Chuck points at the sign.

CHUCK
We could wait for him there.

TINA
Isn't that sacrilegious?

SCUZ
Not if we're respectful.

CHUCK
We can see him come out when he gets off work.

SUICIDE
All right, let's check this place out.

They get out of the car and head toward the cemetery.

Suicide gets a wooden box from under the seat.

CHUCK
What's that?

SUICIDE
Road flares.

CHUCK
What are you going to do with those?

TINA
This is really rad.

DEDE
I like graveyards.

They enter through the stone arch.

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - DUSK

They walk around and take a look at the place. This cemetery has been around long enough to get overcrowded, so that gravestone piles upon gravestone, monument on monument. There are numerous crypts and tombs, little stone houses. It is a necropolis, a city of the dead.

SUICIDE
This place is a mess.

Meat turns on the portable TAPE DECK real loud, playing new wave ROCK & ROLL. It echoes out over the cemetery, bouncing from the gravestones.

Dede starts laughing and running around the headstones.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - MEDICAL SUPPLY HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank and Freddy are still lying on the floor.

Freddy stirs. Groans.

FREDDY

Frank?

Freddy picks himself up off the cold concrete. Staggers over to the corner and throws up. Frank wakes up. Groans. Frank gets up and vomits too.

FRANK

Kid? Are you okay?

FREDDY

I don't know. I feel sick. Christ, what a stink.

They go over to the tank and look in. The GLASS that sealed the corpse in is BROKEN -- smashed away. In the bottom of the tank is NOTHING except some black liquid.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What happened to the body?

FRANK

It must have just dissolved when the air hit it.

FREDDY

Close the goddamned thing.

They lower the lid down, closing the tank with a loud CLANK.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What time is it?

FRANK

(looks at watch)
Seven o'clock.

FREDDY

Christ.

Looking pale and waxy, they make their way toward the cellar stairs.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
 Christ, I never smelled anything
 like that in my life. I'm sick.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

They come slowly upstairs. They walk through the darkened warehouse.

Frank spots the freezer door standing slightly open. He closes it and latches it.

They go and sit down at their desks.

FRANK
 I don't guess we ought to tell
 Burt about this. Make us look
 like we were stupid or something.

FREDDY
 I can still smell that stuff.
 It must be in my nose. Either
 that or it's all over everything.

FRANK
 Maybe I better spray some
 deodorant around here.

Frank goes and roots in the stores of medical supplies, and comes out with a giant can of Lysol. He starts to walk around, spraying it everywhere.

Suddenly, from out of the darkness, comes a loud YIPE followed by a CRASH.

Frank spins around, and Freddy jumps to his feet.

FRANK
 What was that?

FREDDY
 Sounded like a dog.

FRANK
 Dog?

They advance toward the direction of the sound. Frank turns on the overhead lights, illuminating the place.

FREDDY

Stop. Listen.

They get very quiet.
A faint PANTING can be HEARD.

Stealthily, Freddy and Frank advance, through the aisles of packed equipment. As they turn a corner, they SEE:

A DOG, lying on its side on the floor, breathing heavily.

FRANK

How'd it get in here?

FREDDY

What's wrong with it?

They go to the dog and crouch by it.
Something looks funny about it.

Freddy starts to turn it over --

It is a SPLIT DOG -- A VETERINARY SPECIMEN -- HALF A DOG ON A STICK -- BUT IT HAS COME BACK TO LIFE.

Freddy and Frank YELL and drop the monstrous dog.

FREDDY

(hand over mouth)

Oh my God. Oh my God.

It SHRIEKS with its one lung, and twists around on the mounting stick. It is in pain.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What are we going to do?

FRANK

We've got to kill it.

Frank looks around for a killing device. He grabs a heavy implement and begins beating at the dog. It just SHRIEKS louder and jumps around. Freddy can't stand it.

FREDDY

Stop!!

(grabs Frank's arm)

FRANK

What are we gonna do?

Suddenly there is a shatteringly loud CRASH from another part of the warehouse, followed by a HOWL of agony.

Frank and Freddy SPIN around, leaving the dog writhing on the floor.

The HOWLING and SCREAMING continue, accompanied by wall-shaking BANGS. They run toward the direction of the NOISE. It is coming from ...

... The COLD LOCKER.

FRANK

Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus.

FREDDY

(over the screaming)

Are we fucked? What's happening?

FRANK

The cadaver. The cadaver.

FREDDY

Oh, fuck. What's it doing in there?

FRANK

I don't know, but it sounds mad!

FREDDY

What are we going to do?!

FRANK

Lock the door!

Frank dashes to the locker door, and snaps the big PADLOCK onto the hasp. Then he backs away.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(running his hand
through his hair)

We've got to think! Think!

He grabs Freddy and drags him away from the locker, into their office.

INTERIOR - FRANK & BURT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

He closes the door. The SCREAMING and POUNDING drop a couple of decibels. Frank and Freddy look dazed. Outside, there is another RUMBLE OF THUNDER, and a flicker of lightning.

FREDDY

Are we going crazy?

FRANK

No, it's that shit from the tank!
The goddamn chemical got all over
everything and it's bringing all
the dead things back to life!

FREDDY

You stupid shit!

FRANK

Shut up!

FREDDY

We've got to call the police!

FRANK

No! No police! Do you know what
this would do to the company --
and to my reputation?

FREDDY

Then what about that telephone
number on the side of the tank?
Where it said to call in case of
emergency.

FRANK

If we call that, we get the Army.
Do you want the Army all over
this place?

FREDDY

Then what are you gonna do?

FRANK

I'll call the boss.

Frank picks up the phone and dials. It rings once.

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)

Hello?

FRANK

Burt? Frank. We got a problem.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT

LOUD ROCK MUSIC in the dark. Dede and Meat sitting by a
gravestone.

DEDE

Do you ever fantasize about being killed?

MEAT

No.

DEDE

Did you ever wonder about all the different ways of dying, you know, violently, and wonder, like, what would be the most horrible way to die?

MEAT

The worst way to die would be to burn to death. They say it hurts like a son of a bitch.

DEDE

For me the worst way would be for a whole bunch of horrible men to get around me ... and start eating me alive.

MEAT

(swigs a beer)

I see what you mean.

DEDE

First they would tear my clothes off.

She RIPS her blouse in two, and throws it to the winds.

MEAT

Hey, let's get some light over here, Dede is taking off her clothes.

Scuz lights a HIGHWAY FLARE and carries it over to them. The sputtering orange light illuminates her gleaming torso in the darkness.

CASEY

Are you high on anything?

DEDE

Antihistamine.

Dede climbs up onto the nearest tomb and begins to dance, stripping off the rest of her clothes.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Boss, BURT PENROD, is standing listening to Frank and Freddy.

BURT
You did what? You opened it?
You stupid morons!! You idiots!!

In the background, the SCREAMING of the CORPSE continues. Frank and Freddy both look sick: pale and waxy.

FRANK
What are we going to do?

BURT
Do? Do? We're going to be sued by Darrow Chemical and be investigated by the government, and become very, very famous, and lose all our business and go to jail, that's what we're going to do!

Burt paces around the room, flinching with every SCREAM from the corpse.

BURT (CONT'D)
On the other hand, if we do not wish for those things to happen, we will destroy all the evidence and then shut our mouths.

FRANK
Yes, that's it! Let's do that!

BURT
Yes, I agree, it's the only way; but before we do, I have just one question: are you absolutely certain that person screaming in there is a dead cadaver?

FRANK
Open the door and find out.

BURT
(running his hands through his hair)
Yes. All right. Well, if it is a re-animated body, we'll have to kill it.

FREDDY
How do you kill something that's already dead?

BURT

Shut up, I'm thinking.

Burt paces some more.

FRANK

In that movie, they killed them
by destroying the brain.

BURT

The brain!! Right!!

Burt looks around. They start rummaging among the
medical supplies.

FREDDY

What do doctors use to crack skulls?

FRANK

Surgical drills.

Freddy shudders.

Burt finds a big red FIRE AXE. The kind with the pointed
SPIKE behind the blade.

BURT

Frank, you take this.

Frank takes the axe apprehensively. Eyes the spike.

BURT (CONT'D)

Now listen carefully. Freddy,
you're going to open the door.
Frank, when it comes out -- you
brain it with the axe.

FRANK

Oh, Jesus.

BURT

We've got to put it out of its
misery.

They all advance toward the FREEZER. The SCREAMING and
POUNDING still come from it.

BURT (CONT'D)

You, kid, go over by the door.

Freddy stations himself by the locker door. Frank hefts
the axe.

FRANK

(sweating)

I don't know if I can do this, Burt.

BURT

You'd better. You got us into this.

Sweat popping out all over Frank's face.

BURT (CONT'D)

The combination on that padlock
is 34 left -- nine right --
12 left.

Freddy gets a grip on himself, and spins the combination dial on the padlock. CLICKETY CLICKETY -- left -- right -- left. Then, with great caution, he slides the padlock open.

CRASH! THE FREEZER DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND A PLASTIC-WRAPPED FIGURE RUNS OUT, SCREAMING.

It runs right past Frank, who stands frozen with the axe raised, and straight toward Burt. It JUMPS on Burt, knocking him down and clawing at him.

Frank and Freddy rush forward and peel it off him.

BURT

It bit me! The son of a bitch!

A STRUGGLE ensues.

Frank and Freddy finally have the cadaver subdued, with both its arms twisted up behind its back; but it is snarling and snapping at them. It is just hideous looking, with yellow, jaundiced skin and dry eyeballs.

BURT (CONT'D)

Hold its shoulders to the floor!

Frank and Freddy pin the thing's shoulders down. Burt takes careful aim, and swings the axe.

POW! CRUNCH. The pick end of the axe goes right through the cadaver's skull, nailing it to the floor. It lets out a tremendous HOWL and begins to struggle. No blood flows -- just formaldehyde.

Frank and Freddy hang on. The axe is stuck right into the floor, through its head, and it squirms like a butterfly on a pin. SCREAMING.

Burt runs over to the medical supplies, and comes back carrying a bone saw -- looks like a hack saw.

BURT

Hang on tight!

Burt gets down on his knees next to them, and starts sawing off the struggling thing's head, while they hold its arms.

As the body separates from the head, two things happen: (1) the screaming STOPS, and (2) the body jumps up, knocking Frank and Freddy loose, and runs off -- leaving the head pinned to the floor by the axe.

The body takes off running, CROAKING like a headless chicken in a barnyard. It immediately SMASHES into something and falls down, but it gets back up and starts running again, blindly.

The three men take off after it and tackle it. They all jump on it and hold it down.

FRANK

Rope! Rope! Get rope!

Freddy runs off and comes back with one. Quickly, they tie up the struggling body.

FRANK

Christ, it's not dying!

BURT

I thought you said if you destroyed the brain it dies!

FRANK

It worked in the movie!

BURT

It ain't working now!!

FREDDY

You mean the movie lied??

They look at the head, still nailed to the floor by the axe. It snaps and snarls silently.

FRANK

So how do we kill it?

FREDDY

Maybe you can't kill it.

They stare at each other. Considering the implications.

BURT
We'll have to destroy it completely.
Until there's nothing left.

FRANK
Acid!

FREDDY
What kind of acid do you dissolve
a body with?

BURT
Sulfuric acid should do it.
Better yet, aqua regia.

FRANK
What if it doesn't dissolve
everything? Like the bones?

Burt paces around the room. Runs his fingers through his hair.

BURT
(thinking)
Sometimes Ernie Kaltenbrunner
works late on Friday nights.

Burt goes over to the window, pulls open the blinds,
and looks out.

FREDDY
Who's Ernie Kaltenbrunner?

BURT
He's the embalmer at the mortuary,
across the street.
(points out the window)

THEIR POV: ACROSS THE STREET. A light burns in one
window in the back of the "RESURRECTION FUNERAL HOME."
A car is parked near the back door.

BURT (CONT'D)
That's his car. He's in.

FREDDY
What the hell's he going to do
for us?

BURT
He's got a crematorium over there.

FRANK

A crematorium, that's good! But do you think he'll go along with it?

BURT

I've known Ernie for 25 years. I think he'll do it out of friendship.

FRANK

But what the fuck are you going to tell him? Can you trust him?

BURT

I'll have to.

FREDDY

How are we gonna transport this thing over there?

Burt studies the struggling corpse and head.

BURT

Get the bone saw.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT

The punks are running around whooping, carrying the road flares.

The portable ghetto-blaster stereo TAPE DECK FM/RADIO is blaring their accompaniment.

RADIO (V.O.)

This is W.A.R. slash-and-gash radio, music for the Immoral Minority. Don't spin that dial, 'cause we're bringin' you "Stomp on My Face" by the Nurds.

PUNK MUSIC THUNDERS.

SUPER THE TITLE:

"7:33 P.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME"

Casey looks over at the mortuary that adjoins the cemetery, and spots a couple of figures carrying something.

CASEY
Hey, is that Freddy?

SCUZ
Where?

CASEY
Over there, going into that
building.

Scuz looks. The figures vanish behind the mortuary.
There is a light in the window of the mortuary.

SCUZ
Naw, that's not Freddy.

CASEY
How do you know?

SCUZ
'Cause Freddy wouldn't be going
into the mortuary.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT

ERNST KALTENBRUNNER is working away on the body of a loved one. Lying on the table in front of him is the body of a middle-aged man with a distinguished head of grey hair. He has a big, long incision running down his belly, which Ernie is just finishing stitching up. On a table next to him is a stainless steel pan, containing all the corpse's internal organs. Tubes lead into and from the arms, draining out blood and putting in embalming fluid.

Ernie wears a jogging suit and smokes a pipe. He appears to be completely absorbed in his work. He is wearing a pair of earphones which go down to a Sony Walkman in his pocket.

There is a KNOCKING on the DOOR. Ernst fails to hear it, because of his Walkman.

The KNOCK is LOUDER.

Still Ernie does not hear.

The door opens, behind Ernie, and Burt sticks his head in.

BURT
Ernie?

Ernie hears nothing. Burt comes into the room, walks up behind Ernie, and taps him on the shoulder.

Ernie starts and spins around, pulling out a Luger.
Burt jumps back.

BURT (CONT'D)

Whoa! Take it easy.

Ernie lowers the gun and pulls off the headphones.

ERNIE

Sorry, I didn't hear you.
(puts the gun away)
Working late tonight?

BURT

Yep, pretty much.

ERNIE

(looks at his watch)
What time is it? Want some coffee?

BURT

Not really.

ERNIE

Well, I'm going to have some.

He goes over to the Mr. Coffee machine and pours himself a steaming cup. He carries it back over to the corpse and goes back to work.

He takes the corpse's arm and starts bending it. It appears to be stiff.

BURT

What are you doing?

ERNIE

Breaking out the rigor mortis.

BURT

Oh yeah?

ERNIE

Rigor mortis starts in the brain, then it moves to the internal organs, then finally settles in the muscles. See?

(pinches corpse)

It wears off after a while, but you can "break it out" manually by flexing the muscles.

He continues "breaking out" the rigor mortis from the corpse, while sipping his coffee.

Burt clears his throat.

BURT
Ernie, how long have we been friends?

ERNIE
(adds it up)
Twenty-five years, give or take.

BURT
If I asked you to keep a very important secret, could you?

ERNIE
Sure, what is it?

BURT
Ernie, I need your help in a big way.

ERNIE
You can depend on me. What's wrong?

BURT
I got a couple of my men outside, mind if I bring them in?

ERNIE
What's it about?

BURT
Frank! Fred! Bring it in.

Frank and Freddy come in, carrying a stretcher with a tarpaulin over it. The tarpaulin is WRITHING AND UNDULATING. Ernie's eyes pop out.

Burt closes the door and pulls down the blind on the window.

ERNIE
What is that?!

Burt throws back the tarp.

Under the tarp are SIX OR SEVEN PLASTIC BAGS, all filled with something that STRUGGLES, FLOPPING AROUND.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
What's in those bags??!

BURT

Rabid weasels.

Ernie jumps back from the sacks.

ERNIE

What! What are you doing with
a bunch of rabid weasels?

BURT

I'm trying to explain to you,
Ernie, they came in as part of
a shipment. They weren't
supposed to be rabid, but, you
know how these things happen.

ERNIE

No, I don't! How do they happen?

BURT

Well, like I said --
(cautions him)
Watch it, Ernie, you don't want
to get bit.

Ernie leaps away from the bags.

BURT (CONT'D)

Well, anyway, we've got them,
and we need your help.

ERNIE

What help?

BURT

We have to destroy them.

ERNIE

Why don't you call the animal
shelter?

BURT

If the story got out, it might
hurt my business. You know,
rabies and everything.

ERNIE

I don't think so. So what.
You don't run a pet store. So
some lab animals got rabies.
Take them to the pound!

BURT
 (clears his throat)
 Well, we can't, Ernie. You've
 got to take my word for it.
 I'm asking you as a friend.

ERNIE
 What the hell do you want me
 to do?

BURT
 Ernie, you have a crematorium.

ERNIE
 You want to burn them?

BURT
 That's about the size of it, Ernie.

ERNIE
 But that's cruel!

BURT
 It's the only way, Ernie.

ERNIE
 You can't just burn them alive.
 It's too awful. At least, let
 me kill them first.

Ernie takes out his pistol.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
 Just carry them out to the parking
 lot and I'll put them out of
 their misery.

Burt looks nervously at Frank and Freddy.

BURT
 Well, Ernie, I don't think that
 would work.

ERNIE
 What do you mean? Why not?

He looks back and forth at the three men, who exchange
 a meaningful glance.

BURT
 (finally)
 Ernie, can you swear to keep a
 secret?

ERNIE

I don't know.

BURT

You have to swear or I can't tell you.

ERNIE

All right, I swear.

BURT

Well, Ernie, it's not rabid weasels in the bags.

Ernie stares at the struggling sacks. Grips his pistol.

Burt goes over to one of the sacks and pulls loose the tape that holds it shut. He pulls the bag open a little, revealing -- a HAND, clenching and unclenching.

Ernie REACTS.

Burt picks up the bag and empties its contents onto the floor in front of Ernie. A HUMAN ARM, sawed off at the shoulder, falls to the floor and starts writhing.

Everyone stands and stares down at it for a frozen moment.

Then it whips around like a blind snake, and comes into contact with Ernie's ankle. It GRABS Ernie's ankle and wraps itself around Ernie's leg.

Ernie lets out a strangled scream and jumps back, trying to kick the thing off. Burt and the guys leap forward and start pulling it off him. As it comes off, it holds onto his pants cuff, tearing his pants leg. RRRIPP.

Burt throws it back in the sack.

Ernie is white and shaking, his pants cuff flopping.

BURT

Better sit down, Ernie. I've got a long story to tell you.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT

Dede is making love with Suicide. Scuz and Meat are standing by, swilling beer.

SCUZ

Me next.

TINA

Hey, what time is it?

CHUCK

(looks at his watch)

Goin' on eight o'clock.

TINA

Oh, shit. I'd better get over and find Freddy. He's supposed to be getting off any time now.

CHUCK

Well, you go ahead. We'll wait here.

TINA

Don't go nowhere.

Tina picks her way out of the cemetery, moving past the monuments and crypts. She passes through the archway that is the entrance, and passes out onto the street.

EXTERIOR - STREET - NIGHT

Standing under the street light that hangs above the cemetery entrance, Tina looks across the street.

She SEES: The Uneeda Medical Supply warehouse, on the other side of the street.

The street is totally deserted. It is creepy after dark, with pools of light, piles of garbage, and the distant SOUND of the CITY.

Across the street in the warehouse, the light still burns in a couple of windows, and Frank's car is parked on the lot.

Tina starts across the street.

HIGH ANGLE: Tina crossing the street. Very German Expressionist, long shadows, acute angles -- reflections of lights in wet street, etc.

EXTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Tina arrives at the side door to the warehouse. There is a sign over the doorbell button: "NIGHT BELL." She goes over and rings it.

While she waits for someone to answer the bell, she looks around. She feels spooky.

She rings again, really leans on the bell. Distantly, inside, we can HEAR IT *rrringggg*.

TINA
(impatiently,
rolling her eyes)
Oh, come on! Freddy, where are
you?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT

Ernie, Burt, Frank, and Freddy are sitting looking at each other. Burt has just finished telling the story.

BURT
Well, those are the facts, Ernie.

Ernie looks at the squirming bags.

ERNIE
Frankly, Burt, I think you acted precipitously in cutting up the corpse.

BURT
Well, you may be right. Be that as it may, the question is, now what are we going to do about it?

Burt and the boys look beseechingly at Ernie.

ERNIE
(craftily)
If I let you guys use the crematorium, what'll you give me?

They look at him blankly.

BURT
What do you want?

ERNIE
Well, the way I see it, this is a pretty big favor.

BURT
(frustrated)
Ernie, you got it! Whatever you want, I'll do it, I swear.

ERNIE
(brightly)
Well. Let's take care of your
problem.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

CLOSE: OVEN. Ernie's hands turn the knobs that ignite the gas jets with a loud THUMP.

WIDEN THE ANGLE TO REVEAL Ernie, Burt, Frank and Freddy all standing around. The stretcher with the wiggling plastic bags is on the floor, and Ernie is lighting the oven.

ERNIE
Yes, sir, I reckon you're gonna
owe me a big one.

BURT
This will destroy everything,
right? With nothing left over?

ERNIE
Oh, everything will go.

BURT
Including the bones?

ERNIE
Oh, the bones are no problem. The
hardest thing to burn is the heart.

BURT
The heart? Why?

ERNIE
It's a big, tough, muscle.

BURT
We don't want the heart sticking
around, Ernie.

ERNIE
Don't worry. I'll turn it up
hotter for the heart.

FRANK
And the split dog. That has to
go too.

ERNIE

The split dog will go.

Ernie opens the door of the oven, and pulls out the long, sliding, stainless steel rack that bodies are burned on.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Give me a hand here.

They start transferring the squirming bags from the stretcher to the steel rack.

BURT

So there won't be nothing left then?

ERNIE

Nothing but a little pile of ashes.

BURT

We don't even want the ashes, Ernie.

ERNIE

Then I'll turn it up higher and we'll burn up the ashes too.

They slide the rack into the oven.

SPECIAL CAMERA ANGLE: the camera attached to the head end of the stainless steel rack, looking down the length of it and into the oven. As they shove the rack into the oven, the CAMERA also MOVES INTO ...

INTERIOR - THE CREMATION OVEN - NIGHT

... and, SLAM! The oven door is closed behind us.

WE LOOK ACROSS the surface of the stainless steel, and watch the GAS JETS curl up around the flopping, struggling bags.

The plastic quickly BURNS OFF, revealing the limbs, bits of torso, and head, all squirming, rolling around, hopping -- and the split dog.

The flesh itself begins to BURN AND BLACKEN, as it turns into ash.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

BLACK SMOKE pouring from the SMOKESTACKS.

CAMERA PANS UP the fat column of black, oily SMOKE, following the smoke up toward the SKY, until it reaches ...

... THE CLOUDS.

When the smoke mixes with the clouds, there is a blinding EXPLOSION OF LIGHTNING -- a veritable hydra of electricity -- dancing all over the sky.

The cloud begins to RAIN.

CAMERA FOLLOWS THE RAIN DOWN ...

... to the CEMETERY.

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT

CAMERA CRANES DOWN to the GROUND, to watch the RAIN saturate the GRAVES. Splattering on the gravestones and tombs. The droplets running over the green grass, and down into the rich earth.

As the droplets of cold rain pound on the turf, it seems to steam, as though it were hitting a hot automobile hood.

CUT TO:

THE PUNKS

getting rained on, including Dede, who is still nude.

CASEY

Hey, shit, it's raining!

MEAT

Let's get back to the car!

They turn and run toward the street.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina is caught in the downpour. She tries the door. It's open. She hurries inside.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Tina stands, just inside the door, shivering, brushing the rain off herself.

TINA
(calling)
Freddy? Hello, anybody.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - PUNKS' CAR - NIGHT - RAIN

The punks bolt for the car, and jump in.

Outside is a blinding downpour.

Suicide tries to start the car. It won't.

DEDE
Hey, my skin burns.

SCUZ
Me too.

CASEY
It's that rain, it's like acid rain.

DEDE
Oh, shit! It's all over me. A towel! Somebody give me a towel!

MEAT
Ain't got no towel.

DEDE
Then give me your shirt!

She tears it off him and begins to towel herself dry.

DEDE (CONT'D)
Oh, crap! I wonder what's in that rain?

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - RAIN

TELEPHOTO SHOT -- to get a really COMPRESSED look -- of dense clusters of gravestones with RAIN BOUNCING OFF THEM. Loud, stereophonic RAIN SOUND.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CREMATORIUM - NIGHT - RAIN

Outside the window, the rain is coming down in sheets, and lightning is flickering.

The OVEN is CRACKLING merrily. Ernie goes over and looks out the window.

ERNIE

Look at it. It's coming down like a bastard.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - SKY - NIGHT - RAIN

The CLOUDS pouring down rain.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - RAIN

CAMERA MOVES DOWN to the GROUND, where the rain is beginning to pool up.

CAMERA SINKS DOWN INTO THE GROUND, past tree roots, where WE SEE the RAINWATER trickling down, through beds of pebbles, trickling over stones. The chemical-laden WATER HISSES as it sinks through the ground, filling the empty spaces in the ground with smoke and steam ... causing a pebble to drop and CLATTER ... weakening the earth ...

... Until the water reaches a COFFIN.

The water pools on the lid of the coffin ... eating a little air pocket in the dirt above the coffin ... and begins to SEEP THROUGH the lid of the coffin.

The rainwater drips through the corroded coffin lid and down INTO THE COFFIN.

INTERIOR - COFFIN - NIGHT

Drip.

Drip.

Drip.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CREMATORIUM - NIGHT - RAIN

ERNIE is poking around inside the oven with a poker, while BURT peers anxiously over his shoulder.

BURT

Is the heart gone?

ERNIE

Yep. All burnt up.

BURT

Are you sure?

ERNIE

It's all gone. Right up the chimney.

BURT

(visibly relaxing)

Thank God that's over. Maybe this is going to come out all right after all.

Burt lights a shaky cigarette and inhales deeply. He claps his hands together and rubs them briskly.

BURT (CONT'D)

Well, let's get back over to the warehouse and clean up the mess. Ernie, we're forever in your debt.

ERNIE

I know.

FRANK AND FREDDY are sitting, slumped on a bench. They look very sick.

FRANK

Just a minute, Burt. Let us just catch our breath here and we'll go do it.

FREDDY

Hey, man, I don't know about you, but I'm really sick.

BURT

What's wrong?

FREDDY

I feel like shit, is what. I'm really sick.

FRANK

Yeah, I feel sick too.

Burt squats in front of Freddy and Frank.

BURT

Sick how?

FREDDY

Like I just want to puke. Oh god, and I feel weak. Weak, like my arms are made of lead.

FRANK

Yeah, me too. But I've got a headache on top of it.

FREDDY

And cold. I've got a terrible chill.
(shivers and wraps
his coat tighter)
It's that stuff. We breathed that stuff.

BURT

What stuff?

FREDDY

When the cannister cracked, this gas squirted out. It hit us right in the face. Oh, god, we breathed it. It knocked us out. We were out cold, unconscious, for almost an hour.

BURT

Christ.

Burt and Ernie edge back from Frank and Freddy, uneasily.

FREDDY

Man, we'd better get to a doctor.

FRANK

(holding his head)
Yeah, I guess so.

BURT

I'll go get my car, and take you guys to the emergency ward.

Suddenly, Frank stumbles to his feet, runs to the door, throws it open, sticks his head out into the rain, and vomits. Outside, THUNDER and lightning and wind.

They pull him back inside and push the door shut, against the MOANING WIND.

FRANK
 (wiping his mouth --
 half-delirious)
 Gotta call my wife, tell her I'm
 going to the hospital ...

ERNIE
 Listen, you can't go running around
 in this storm. You're too sick.
 I'll call an ambulance.

FRANK
 (nauseous)
 Get paramedics.

Ernie picks up the phone and dials 411.

ERNIE
 (into phone)
 Can I have the number of the city
 paramedics? Fire department?
 What's that number?
 (writes it down)

He hangs up and dials the number.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Hello, yes, can we get some
 paramedics over here?
 (pause)
 The Resurrection Funeral Home,
 at 21702 East Central. Tell
 them to come around the back,
 to the embalming room.
 (pause)
 Uh -- poisoning. We've got two
 men poisoned here.
 (pause)
 No, we don't know what kind of
 poison.
 (pause)
 Right, okay.

Ernie hangs up.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
 They're on their way.

Frank and Freddy hold their heads in their hands and MOAN.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - SUICIDE'S CAR - NIGHT - RAIN

Suicide is GRINDING the IGNITION.

SUICIDE
This car ain't going nowhere.
(kicks it)

CASEY
Hey, do you hear something?

MEAT
Hear what?

CASEY
Something.

They listen.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - DOWNPOUR

CAMERA begins to DRIFT OVER THE TOMBSTONES ...

... Dozens and dozens of names, dates of birth, death ...
Dozens and dozens of gravestones ...

Distantly, muffled, behind the rain, we begin to HEAR A
SOUND --

The SOUND comes from below the ground ... soft ... almost
too muted to hear.

It is the SOUND of KICKING ...

And SCREAMING ...

Dozens ... hundreds ... of CORPSES in their coffins, six
feet down, screaming and kicking ...

LONG SHOT -- row upon row of rain-swept monuments and crypts --
their OCCUPANTS SCREAMING AND POUNDING IN STEREOPHONIC SOUND.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - COFFIN - NIGHT

Terrible SCREAMING and SCUFFLING and KICKING.

With clawed fingers, a CORPSE is tearing away the lid of
the coffin. DIRT falls in, and the corpse claws its way up,
OUT of the coffin.

Like a giant earthworm, the corpse DIGS its way upward through the wet earth. CLOUDS of dirt falling into the CAMERA: SOUNDS of digging and scuffling -- and choking, gasping, SCREAMING. Total claustrophobia. Sensation of being crushed.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CAR - NIGHT - RAIN

The CRASHING of the RAIN and the storm make it impossible to hear the screaming corpses.

MEAT

Naw, I don't hear nothing.

CASEY

This roof's leaking.

The car is a convertible, and there is a tear in the roof. Scuz picks at it. Water gushes in.

DEDE

Don't do that! Shit!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina hears a slight SOUND. She comes inside, looking around carefully.

TINA

Hello, is there anybody in here?
Hey. Hello!

Tina moves through dark shadows. She comes out into the warehouse proper.

HER POV: THE WAREHOUSE. It is in semi-darkness -- a few lights on, here and there -- and utter quiet.

She starts walking through the warehouse -- past the piled crates -- through the shadows --

TINA (CONT'D)

Freddy? Anybody? Hello there.

She looks over and sees FREDDY'S HAT -- his RED BASEBALL CAP -- lying on the floor, next to the cellar door.

She walks over and picks it up.

TINA (CONT'D)
(frowning at the hat)
Freddy? Are you here?

The CELLAR DOOR stands open. Light pours from it.

Tina peers into the cellar, craning her neck. The lights are on below.

She HEARS a slight SOUND.

TINA (CONT'D)
Hello? Is somebody there?

She starts down into the cellar.

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - NIGHT - RAIN

As she steps on the third STEP down, it CREAKS and shifts under her foot. She glances down at it, and keeps descending the stairs.

At the bottom of the steps she looks around. Bare electric bulbs glowing, dust all over the place.

TINA
Jeez, what a smell. Anybody here?

She looks over and sees the huge CANNISTERS -- the ones labeled "PROPERTY: DEPT. OF THE ARMY." She walks over to them.

The nearest one has obviously been opened. Its lid is UP -- with signs of disturbance in the dust that coats it.

Curiosity overtakes her. She raises the lid of the tank and looks down into it.

The glass that formerly sealed it is shattered, smashed away. In the bottom of the tank is nothing except some black sludge. She wrinkles her nose at the stench, stronger here.

Her eye goes from the black slime in the tank to the floor next to the tank. There is more of the slime on the floor, and a trail of it leads away from the tank.

The trail of black liquid, which has a smeared appearance, leads over to the corner of the cellar ... back behind some crates, in the black shadows.

SOMETHING MOVES IN THE SHADOWS.

Tina STIFFENS.

TINA

(tense)

Who's there?

Something starts to shuffle forward out of the shadows. First WE SEE its feet. Then the rest of it comes into the light,

It is a hideous horrible monstrosity. It is the body that was in the tank. It is a skeleton covered with black, tarry glop, wobbly and loathesome. It SPEAKS, in a voice like vomit.

TAR MAN

Brains. Brains.

It SHUFFLES toward Tina, waving its arms at her.

She does NOT scream -- instead, she GASPS -- a huge intake of air that fills her entire chest cavity -- and her eyes get huge and round as saucers.

She turns and RUNS for the stairs -- DASHES up them, gasping and panting in horror.

As she hits that THIRD STEP FROM THE TOP -- coming down on it with all her weight -- it gives way, SPLINTERING with a LOUD NOISE and collapsing.

Tina's LEG goes right through the step as it caves in, and FALLS down to her hip. She hangs there a second, with one leg poking through, kicking and trying to find a purchase. She clutches at the stairs and walls with her arms, and turns and LOOKS back down the stairs behind her.

THE THING IS STARTING UP THE STEPS, leaving a black trail behind it.

TAR MAN

Brains.

She SCREAMS now and tries to claw herself upright, but at that second another step gives in and she FALLS THROUGH THE STAIRS.

She lands -- THUD! -- on the concrete below the steps. She lies there, gasping in pain, trying to pull herself upright.

TINA

(in pain)

Oh. Oh.

The Tar Man turns and starts back down the steps, toward her, slopping along.

Tina pulls herself upright and limps out from under the steps. The Tar Man is blocking her way to the stairs.

It starts toward her, reaching for her.

TAR MAN
LIVE brains.

TINA
(screams)
NOOOOO!!!

Tina looks around. She spies a little closet standing open -- a little alcove with a door. She runs into it and slams the door shut.

INTERIOR - CLOSET - IN BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tina pulls the heavy steel door shut as tight as she can and hangs onto the knob. Light filters in through little round ventilation holes drilled in the door.

The Tar Man slops up to the door and starts pulling on it.

She grabs a rope and ties it to the knob. Then she ties the other end to a pipe in the back wall. The Tar Man tugs at the door in vain; it won't come open.

TINA
(screams)
FREDDYYYY! FREDDDDDDYYYYYYY!!!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - PUNKS' CAR - NIGHT - RAIN

CHUCK
I gotta get out of here. Let's
go over where Tina and Freddy are.

SUICIDE
Yeah, damn right.

SCUZ
Fuckin' A.

They jump out of the car and dash across the street, through the downpour, their shoes splashing in deep puddles of water. CAMERA LOOKS DOWN FROM A HIGH ANGLE as street lights reflect in the water, and their footfalls create rings of ripples.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CLOSET IN WAREHOUSE CELLAR - NIGHT

Tina crouches in the darkness, sobbing with fear and hanging onto the doorknob with all her might.

Outside, the Tar Man pounds on the door, rhythmically, repetitively. BANG. Pause. BANG. Pause. BANG.

Suddenly, the pounding stops. The SHADOW of the Tar Man MOVES AWAY from the little holes in the door.

Tina moves up and PEEKS through the vent holes.

HER POV: The cellar. The Tar Man can be SEEN, moving about.

INTERIOR - CELLAR - NIGHT - RAIN

The Tar Man, slurping as he moves, is going over to a big WINCH which dangles from the ceiling.

He gets ahold of the end of the chain and brings it over to the closet door, where he hangs the big HOOK through a bar on the door.

Then he slops over and starts WINDING the crank. The winch starts turning, and the chain draws tight. CLINKETA CLINKETA CLINKETA.

CREAKING AND GROANING, the DOOR FRAME starts to give.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

The punks arrive at the warehouse. They don't bother to knock, they just charge in through the door -- the same door Tina went in.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

They rush inside, brushing the rain off themselves.

DEDE

My skin really burns! Ouch
ouch!

She grabs some cloth and begins to dry herself off.

CHUCK

(shouts)

Hey, Tina!

Tina's voice comes back in reply, a distant shout:

TINA'S VOICE (O.S.)

*Yesss!! Here!! Help me!! I'm
in the cellar!! Oh Goddd!!!*

They break into a run, toward the sound of her voice, toward the basement door. They're all yelling at the same time, running over each other's lines:

CHUCK

-- Is that Tina? --

CASEY

-- What's she yellin' about? --

MEAT

-- Where the fuck is she? --

SUICIDE

Through that door!

They charge into the door to the basement.

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - NIGHT - RAIN

The punks come thundering down the stairs -- taking care to mind the third step from the top -- Suicide in the lead.

They hit the bottom of the stairs in time to SEE:

The DOOR Tina's hiding behind SPLINTER and give way with a loud CRACKING AND SPLITTING SOUND -- as the WINCH is turned tighter --

-- The winch is being turned by the TAR MAN.

The punks STARE, not sure what they're seeing -- some kind of dirty, filthy, horrible, rotten --

SUICIDE

What the fuck.

The Tar Man turns its hideous head and looks at him.

TAR MAN

Brains.

It reaches over, grabs Suicide by the ears, YANKS his head down, and BITES into the top of his (stubbly shaved) head -- like eating a melon without slicing it first -- or an egg in the shell. CRACK.

Suicide SCREAMS horribly but briefly, and his whole body TWITCHES -- his arms and legs fly out -- in a reflex reaction to having a piece bitten out of his brain.

The other punks stare in unbelieving horror at what is taking place in front of them. Tina screams and runs out of the closet, past them and up the stairs. She's not waiting around to see what happens. The others stare stupidly, as the Tar Man takes another BITE out of Suicide's skull. CHOMP!

MEAT

Fuck.

Meat grabs a brick and throws it at the Tar Man. The brick hits on its shoulder, knocking off part of it. The Tar Man looks up at Meat and the rest of the punks.

TAR MAN

(sees them)

More brains.

At that, they all BOLT for the stairs.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - HEAD OF STAIRS - NIGHT - RAIN

The punks come running out. The last one out, Meat, turns and SLAMS the basement door shut.

MEAT

(screams)

Help me! Bar this door! Don't
run away! You fuckers!

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

A city ambulance, its emergency lights flashing, pulls up in the mortuary back lot.

Two PARAMEDICS in raincoats jump out and run in, through the rain.

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie lets the two Paramedics in, brushing rain off themselves.

PARAMEDIC #1

Who took the poison?

ERNIE

Those guys there.

He points to Frank and Freddy, who sit wrapped in blankets, shivering. Each of them has a puke bucket next to him. Their complexions are grey and greasy, with purple circles under their yellow, bloodshot eyes.

PARAMEDIC #1

What did you guys take?

BURT

It was some kind of industrial chemical, something in a tank.

PARAMEDIC #1

What tank? Where?

BURT

(nervously)

Uh -- we're not sure.

PARAMEDIC #2

Can you find out? Your friends' lives may depend on it.

BURT

Uh -- I can make phone calls, but not before morning.

PARAMEDIC #1

(unpacking equipment)

Let's take some vital signs.

They put thermometers in Frank and Freddy's mouths -- the new, fancy kind with digital readouts. Paramedic #1 wraps a blood pressure cuff around Frank's arm, while #2 takes Freddy's pulse.

Both paramedics adjust their instruments, trying to get a better reading. Both look puzzled.

PARAMEDIC #1

(to #2)

Can I borrow your stethoscope?

PARAMEDIC #2

What's wrong?

PARAMEDIC #1

I can't hear anything through mine.

PARAMEDIC #2

Are you sure it's the stethoscope?

PARAMEDIC #1
What do you mean?

PARAMEDIC #2
I'm having trouble getting a pulse
on this one, too.

The Paramedics switch patients.

FREDDY
What do you mean? What's wrong?

The Paramedics do not answer, they just continue to listen
to Frank and Freddy's pulses.

PARAMEDIC #1
No blood pressure.

PARAMEDIC #2
No pulse.

FREDDY
What do you mean, "no blood
pressure, no pulse"?

FRANK
Yeah.

PARAMEDIC #1
Shh.

The two Paramedics bend over their instruments in silent
concentration. Frank and Freddy stare at them with growing
horror.

One of the THERMOMETERS BEEPS -- then the other. The
Paramedics take them out of their patients' mouths and
look at them.

PARAMEDIC #1
What do you have?

PARAMEDIC #2
Seventy.

FREDDY
Seventy what?

PARAMEDIC #1
Seventy degrees.

FREDDY
What's that?

PARAMEDIC #1
 That's your temperature.
 (to Paramedic #2)
 Come over here a second, I want
 to talk to you.

The two Paramedics walk over to the corner of the room and hold a whispered conference, glancing over at Freddy and Frank.

FREDDY
 What? What are you guys saying?
 (pause)
 Seventy degrees is room temperature.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - STORM OUTSIDE

The punks (Tina, Meat, Dede, Chuck, Casey, Scuz) are finishing hammering a bunch of nails into the cellar door. They get quiet.

DEDE
 Oh God. Oh God. What was that
 hideous horrible thing?

MEAT
 What the fuck we gonna do?

CHUCK
 Suicide is down there.

SCUZ
 Oh, he's gone, man, it ate his
 head.

MEAT
 I don't hear nothing down there,
 do you?

CASEY
 We gotta call somebody.

MEAT
 Who?

TINA
 The cops!

SCUZ
 I don't want to call no cops.
 The cops are just gonna kick our
 ass.

CHUCK

Just let's get out of here.

CASEY

We gotta call somebody.

MEAT

Where's Freddy?

TINA

He was gone! He wasn't here when I showed up!

CASEY

That musta been him that went into the funeral parlor.

TINA

When??

CASEY

A while ago. He was with some other guys. Scuz and me saw them.

TINA

Well, why the fuck didn't you say something?

CASEY

Hey, don't yell at me!! It was Scuz said not to do anything!

SCUZ

(defensive)

Hey, I didn't think it was him! I mean, what the fuck is Freddy doing in the funeral parlor?

MEAT

All right, listen, we'll go over to that funeral house and see if Freddy's there. And we'll call somebody from there.

SCUZ

I don't want to call no cops.

CHUCK

Hey, get fucked, Scuz, with your cop paranoia! We're in deep shit!

TINA

Let's go, let's get out of here.

They turn and run through the darkened warehouse, toward the back door.

EXTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

The six punks hurry across the back parking lot, toward the cemetery.

A tree limb lies across the middle of the street.

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - STORM

The rain is coming down in sheets. The wind blows it in gusts. LIGHTNING flashes and explodes. The graveyard is running with mud -- slippery, slimy, horrible MUD.

The six punks come through the main gate, and Casey POINTS across to the other side of the cemetery, where the MORTUARY is. They start across, taking a circuitous path to avoid the pools of water and mud.

In the middle of the cemetery, they find themselves temporarily stranded by a huge lake of water. They huddle under the overhanging eaves of a large crypt.

MEAT

Jesus shit. We're gonna have to swim to get over there.

Suddenly, out of the darkness and rain, comes a HORRIBLE SCREAM.

The punks FREEZE with fear.

DEDE

What the fuck is that?

In front of them, out of the liquid mud above one grave, a pair of ROTTED HANDS claw up into the air.

TINA

Look! Something there!

Frantically, the HANDS pull the compacted dirt out of the way, and a CORPSE sticks its head up out of the mud.

The corpse tilts its head back, fills its lungs with air, and lets out a terrible HOWL OF AGONY.

The punks SCREAM in unison, and turn and bolt in different directions, oblivious now of the water they must run through.

CHUCK and CASEY turn back toward the WAREHOUSE.

TINA, MEAT and SCUZ run toward the MORTUARY.

Tina TRIPS and falls flat on her nose in the mud. As she is getting up, she looks out across the graveyard and SEES:

WIDE SHOT: of forty or fifty graves -- out of each of which is crawling a CORPSE -- an ARMY OF CORPSES -- almost all of them SCREAMING their heads off in hysterical panic.

Meat pulls her to her feet and they run on.

CUT TO:

DEDE

stumbling through the graveyard, alone, her shirt sticking to her.

DEDE

Hey, wait, you guys, wait! I
got no shoes!

Dede splashes through a pool of silvery water, foaming in the rain.

DEDE (CONT'D)

(screams)

Wait, you guys!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

The Paramedics come back over from their huddle. #1 takes out a rubber hammer and hits Freddy's knee. No response. He goes and hits Frank's knee. No response. He takes a penlight from his pocket and shines it in Freddy's eyes. He and #2 stare at Freddy's eyes. Then they do the same to Frank.

Finally, #1 switches off the penlight and straightens up.

PARAMEDIC #1

You have no pulse, your blood pressure is zero over zero, you have no pupillary response, no reflexes, and your temperature is seventy degrees.

FREDDY
 (horrified)
 What does that mean?

PARAMEDIC #1
 Well, technically, you're not
 alive. Except you're conscious.
 So we don't know what it means
 except we obviously have to get
 you to a hospital.

There is a long silence.

FRANK
 You say we're dead?

PARAMEDIC #2
 (clearing his
 throat nervously)
 Well, let's not get carried away
 here. We don't know what it means.

PARAMEDIC #1
 Obviously I didn't mean you were
 dead. Dead people don't move
 around and talk.

Suddenly, there is a TREMENDOUSLY LOUD HAMMERING on the
 FRONT DOOR of the mortuary. Everybody jumps.

BURT
 What the hell is that?

ERNIE
 (surprised)
 Somebody at the front door.

BURT
 What the fuck are they doing?

ERNIE
 I'll go find out.

Ernie draws his Luger and heads out of the room.

PARAMEDIC #1
 We're going to go get a couple of
 stretchers and radio in to the
 hospital. Hang in there. We won't
 be a second.

The two medics trot to the door and throw it open. The
 rain blows in, and they trot out.

CAMERA MOVES IN ON FRANK AND FREDDY'S FACES, staring at each other in horror.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - HALLWAYS - NIGHT - RAIN

ERNIE hurries through the hallways of the funeral home, quiet and empty of human life. He's heading for the front entrance, and as he goes, the POUNDING on the front door is continual and hysterical.

INTERIOR - ENTRANCE FOYER - NIGHT - RAIN

The entrance foyer is DARK as Ernie steps into it, his GUN raised. With great caution, in the darkness, he approaches the front door.

SILHOUETTED FIGURES can be SEEN through the glass in the door, banging and screaming.

Ernie CROUCHES down behind a chair, and props the gun on the chair back, AIMING it at the figures on the other side of the glass. Then, with his free hand, he reaches over and turns on the outside PORCH LIGHT.

It comes on, illuminating TINA, MEAT and SCUZ. They look terrifying with their weird appearance, drenched in rain, jumping up and down and banging and screaming.

Cautiously, Ernie emerges from behind the chair and creeps toward the front door. He is still invisible to them, as there is no light inside the entryway. Suddenly he leaps forward, yanks the door open, shoves the gun out, and shouts:

ERNIE

Freeze or you're dead!

The punks leap back.

MEAT

Don't shoot, don't shoot, you've got to let us in, they're after us!!

ERNIE

Are you crazy? Are you on drugs?

TINA

Oh, God, mister, let us in that door.

ERNIE

All right, come in! But don't make any funny moves!

He waves them in with the gun, keeping it trained on them.
As soon as they are inside, Meat slams the door shut.

MEAT

You've gotta lock all the doors!
And the windows! And call the
cops! They're out there!

ERNIE

(electrified)

What? Who? Who's out there?

TINA

(grabs Ernie by
the arm)

Do you hear that?

ERNIE

Hear what?

SCUZ

Shut up and listen, man!

They get quiet. The rain is loud, but behind it can be
HEARD a chilling SCREECHING.

ERNIE

(chilled)

What is that?

MEAT

It's monsters, screaming.

ERNIE

What? What? Monsters, you say?

TINA

Yes, they all came up out of the
ground, hundreds and hundreds of
them, and they came after us.

ERNIE

Out of the ground?

TINA

And our friends took off the
other way, back to the warehouse,
and they're out there, now!

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - MEDICAL WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - STORM

CASEY and CHUCK come running across the street, pursued by CORPSES from the graveyard.

The two humans run up to the back door of the warehouse, yank it open, RUN inside, and SLAM it shut.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Frantically, Chuck and Casey LOCK the door. Corpses leer through the barred windows.

CASEY

Dede! Where's Dede?

CHUCK

Didn't she go with them?

CASEY

I thought she was with us!

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - STORM

DEDE is still in the cemetery; lost and alone, she runs blindly through the mud, careening off gravestones. Her only garment, the shirt she took from Meat, is soaked and falling off her.

She stumbles and falls. When she gets up, she is surrounded by a DOZEN CORPSES. They SCREAM. She screams. They all crawl toward her, surrounding her. Dozens of hands reach for her -- in the driving rain -- rotting, melting arms -- grabbing her as she SCREAMS and pulling her down -- in the the MUD ...

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - MORTUARY - BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT - RAIN

The two Paramedics are heading for their ambulance/truck.

PARAMEDIC #1

Hey, do you hear that?

PARAMEDIC #2

Hear what?

Dimly audible through the rain, come the SCREAMS and MOANS of the CORPSES in the graveyard.

PARAMEDIC #2 (CONT'D)

Christ Jesus.

PARAMEDIC #1

What is that?

PARAMEDIC #2

Sounds like people screaming.

PARAMEDIC #1

You get the stretchers, I'll get
on the radio and call this in.

Paramedic #1 heads for the front of the truck; #2 starts
for the back.

Paramedic #1 pulls open the driver's door and climbs into
the cab.

INTERIOR - FRONT OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT - RAIN

Paramedic #1 slides behind the wheel, dripping rain everywhere.

He turns the key in the ignition, turning over the engine.
Then he turns on the HEADLIGHTS.

The HEADLIGHTS REVEAL A BUNCH OF CORPSES standing right in
front of the ambulance, covered with mud and filth.

Paramedic #1 GASPS and freezes.

Immediately, the DOOR on the right-hand side is YANKED OPEN;
and a CORPSE starts coming in.

Paramedic #1 instantly throws open the opposite DOOR --
on the driver's side -- and LEAPS OUT -- straight into
the arms of a CORPSE.

They drag him out onto the ground and bend over him.
One of the corpses gets its mouth on the back of
Paramedic #1's head and BITES. CRUNCH! The medic SCREAMS
hoarsely and jerks like a sledgehammered horse.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BACK OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT - RAIN

Paramedic #2, who is picking up stretchers, hears the
scream and looks up.

PARAMEDIC #2

Jerry?

The rain blurred the scream, making it hard to be sure what he heard.

He drops the stretcher and climbs out of the back of the ambulance.

EXTERIOR - REAR OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT - RAIN

He starts to walk AROUND THE OPEN REAR DOOR of the truck, heading toward the front.

As he comes around the open DOOR, he walks right into a CORPSE.

He starts BACKING AWAY from the corpse -- and backs right INTO ANOTHER CORPSE, behind him. It GRABS him.

The corpses WRESTLE with him and get control of him. Then they bite through his skull and eat his brain.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

ERNIE comes hustling into the room where BURT is watching over FRANK and FREDDY.

ERNIE
Burt, we got a problem.

BURT
(pales)
Another one?

ERNIE
You ain't heard nothing yet.

Ernie gestures for him to come in the other room. Burt follows him out, leaving Frank and Freddy alone, sick.

INTERIOR - HALLWAYS/ENTRANCE FOYER - NIGHT - RAIN

BURT follows ERNIE in and sees the PUNKS (TINA, MEAT, SCUZ) standing there, drenched in rain and jumping around nervously.

BURT
What's going on here?

MEAT
Mister, that graveyard out there is full of people that are coming up out of the ground.

BURT

What?

TINA

Out of the ground! They're horrible, and they scream and you've got to do something!

BURT

Scream?

TINA

Mister, they're out there, and there's one of them over in that warehouse, and they've been eating people.

BURT

Warehouse?

TINA

That medical supply house on the other side of the graveyard.

BURT

(puts his hands
over his mouth)

Oh my God. Oh my God.

ERNIE

You get the point, Burt? Lots of screaming bodies coming up out of the graveyard?

BURT

Oh my God. Oh my God.

ERNIE

I think things are out of hand, Burt.

BURT

But how'd it happen? How'd it happen?

MEAT

Fuck, mister, I don't know. All I know is we gotta call the cops fast.

BURT

(blanching)

No cops!

TINA

Mister, we gotta call the cops.
There's a hundred of those things
out there.

BURT

A hundred?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

CASEY and CHUCK are standing in the darkness, listening to corpses POUNDING on the door and SCREAMING for brains.

CASEY

(desperate)

The cops. We gotta call the cops.

CHUCK

Yeah, no shit. Where the fuck
is the phone?

They start looking around for a phone. Their eyes glow moistly with fear in the semi-darkness. The POUNDING and SCREECHING of the corpses is nerve-wracking.

CASEY

There! There's an office!

She has spotted FRANK'S OFFICE. They hurry toward it.

INTERIOR - FRANK (AND BURT'S) OFFICE - NIGHT - RAIN

The PHONE sits on Burt's desk, next to the window. Casey rushes to it and picks it up. She dials "0".

CASEY

(into phone)

Hello, Operator, get me the
police! This is an emergency!

Suddenly the WINDOW IS SMASHED IN, and a CORPSE reaches in for Casey. She SCREAMS and leaps back.

The corpse crawls in the broken window. It SEES THE PHONE on the desk, and grabs it and YANKS it out of the wall. Then it THROWS it at Casey and Chuck.

Casey and Chuck shoot out of the office and slam the door shut.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

Chuck quickly pushes over a big FILING CABINET in front of the door to Burt's office. It hits the floor with a resounding CRASH, making furniture jump.

CHUCK

(looking around
wildly)

Where's that hammer and nails??

Casey runs to get it.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY (FOYER/HALLWAYS) - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie, Burt, Meat, Scuz and Tina. Arguing.

BURT

Forget the police! Let's just get out of here!

MEAT

Do you have a car?

ERNIE

I have a car.

MEAT

Then grab your keys and let's get our ass in gear.

ERNIE

Wait, how many of us are there? I've only got one car.

BURT

No, wait, there's the ambulance!

ERNIE

That's it, the ambulance! Some of us can go in the ambulance!

MEAT

Where's the ambulance?

ERNIE

This way!

They hurry into the embalming room.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

FRANK and FREDDY are sitting in great pain, gasping for breath, when the others (Ernie, Burt, Meat, Scuz, Tina) come hurrying in.

TINA

Freddy!

She runs to him.

FREDDY

'Lo, Tina.

BURT

You two know each other?

TINA

Oh my God, Freddy, what did they do to you?

BURT

(looking around)

Where's the paramedics?

Freddy just shakes his head, hurting too much to talk.

ERNIE

I'll go get them, and get my own car started.

Ernie gets his keys from the pocket of his coat, hanging on a hook, and throws the door open and strides out into the rain.

EXTERIOR - REAR OF MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

ERNIE hustles out into the driving rain, GUN in hand, fishing amongst the keys on the ring for his car key. Up ahead of him sits the AMBULANCE, its doors standing open.

The ambulance's LIGHTS are on. Ernie hurries toward it.

He hurries up to the DOOR ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE, which is OPEN. He LOOKS into the front seat -- it is EMPTY.

Puzzled, he CLOSES the car door. As the DOOR SWINGS SHUT, it REVEALS PARAMEDIC #1's BODY, which is lying on the wet cement, with a CORPSE EATING ON ITS HEAD.

Ernie's cheeks puff out with vomit, and he makes a noise like URP.

The CORPSE looks up right into his eyes, with blood all over its mouth and chin. It is an awful sight. It's an old corpse, mostly a skeleton held together by tendons and dried skin. It is an especially hideous corpse.

Ernie FIRES at the corpse. The bullet STRIKES it, knocking it over.

It JUMPS RIGHT BACK UP AGAIN, and comes at him.

Ernie SCREAMS and turns around and RUNS, back toward the mortuary.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie comes through the door like a Rams tailback, and spins around and SLAMS the door shut. Fortunately, it is a big, heavy door. There is a security bolt, which he throws. Then he slams shut the shutters on the windows.

ERNIE

Ohgod. Ohgod.

BURT

What, Ernie, what?

ERNIE

(pointing)

It. It.

BURT

"It" what, Ernie? What the fuck is it?

Ernie looks around wildly, crazed-looking. Everybody is riveted, staring at him.

ERNIE

Horrible. All over the cars. They're out there. We can't take the cars. We've got to call the police.

Ernie turns and runs down the hall, to his office.

INTERIOR - ERNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie turns the light on, rushes over to the desk, and grabs the PHONE. Burt, Meat and Scuz come in the door after him.

Ernie holds it to his ear and starts to dial. Then he STOPS, and jiggles the cradle button.

ERNIE

(stunned)

It's dead.

BURT

Do you have another line?

ERNIE

No.

Meat pushes his way into the office.

MEAT

What do you mean, the phone is dead?

ERNIE

It doesn't work.

BURT

Why?

Ernie goes to the steel rollup shutter on the window -- slides it up an inch and peers out.

HIS POV - OUTSIDE THE MORTUARY - RAIN

Several corpses are crawling around on the wall of the mortuary -- using a tree to get up -- and RIPPING OUT WIRES that connect from phone poles to the mortuary.

MEAT

What is it, what's happening?

Meat crouches next to Ernie and looks out.

ERNIE

They're ripping out the wires.

MEAT

But -- Christ! -- what if they rip out the electric wires too? We'll be in the dark!

ERNIE

No, they can't do that. The power lines are buried. They'll never find them.

MEAT

Lock that fuckin' window, will you?

Ernie does so.

Suddenly, from the front of the mortuary, comes the SOUND of BREAKING GLASS.

Ernie goes charging out of the room. The others follow him.

INTERIOR - ENTRANCE FOYER - NIGHT - RAIN

Several CORPSES are on the FRONT PORCH, trying to get in through the glass in the door. They've already BROKEN some of it out, and are hanging through it, WAVING their arms. The corpses SEE the HUMANS.

CORPSES

(scream)

Brains! Brains! Brains!

Ernie FIRES TWO SHOTS at the corpses, and turns and grabs hold of a huge piece of furniture.

ERNIE

(screams)

Help me!

Burt, Meat and Scuz help him PUSH the great big piece of furniture -- a big highboy -- against the door, blocking it.

MEAT

Nail it shut! Get a hammer and nails!

Ernie runs out to the storeroom and comes back with the hammer and some big ten-penny nails. They NAIL the highboy to the door, solidly.

BURT

Where else can they get in here?

ERNIE

The windows in the chapel!

They run into the CHAPEL and frantically begin BOARDING UP THE WINDOWS, using whatever materials come to hand.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - MORTUARY PARKING LOT - NIGHT - RAIN (DRIZZLE)

The ambulance is sitting with its doors open. Several corpses sit and lie around it, like drunken men. They look satiated.

One CORPSE sits on the ground, holding the body of Paramedic #2 in its lap. It is munching calmly on the back of the medic's head, getting out the last scraps of brain.

It raises its head, wipes its mouth, and belches. Its eyes look like it's just had a shot of heroin. Blink, blink. Yawn.

It gets to its feet and wobbles over to the ambulance, where it crawls in through the open door.

INTERIOR - CAB OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

The CORPSE turns on the RADIO and picks up the microphone. After some fumbling, it gets a VOICE to come out of the SPEAKER:

DISPATCHER'S VOICE (V.O.)
(on radio)
Rescue Twelve, Rescue Twelve,
come in, this is Dispatch. Over.

The corpse raises the microphone to its lips.

CORPSE
(into radio)
Come in, Dispatch. Send more
paramedics.

The corpse hangs up.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - COFFIN STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

They (Burt, Ernie, Meat, Scuz) nail shut the single window.

MEAT
What else? Where's the rest of
the windows?

ERNIE
No more windows. That's all.

MEAT
Now what are we going to do?

BURT
We've got to check on Frank and
Freddy.

They hurry out of the room, toward the back of the mortuary.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

Tina is sitting holding Freddy. Both Freddy and Frank are curled up in pain, as Burt, Ernie, Meat and Scuz come in.

BURT

(anxious)

How are they doing?

FREDDY

Oh, god. The pain.

TINA

What did you do to Freddy?
What's wrong with him -- and with
this man?

MEAT

Yeah, I think you better tell us
what's going on.

BURT

We don't have to tell you anything.

Scuz opens a big SWITCHBLADE KNIFE under Burt's chin.

SCUZ

We think you should.

FREDDY

Tell them, god damn it!

Burt gives in.

BURT

It's a chemical. Some kind of
chemical that soaked into the soil
of the graveyard and made the
corpses come back to life.

A long pause.

MEAT

What chemical?

BURT

(shakes his head)

I don't know what chemical. It
was developed for the U.S. Army.

MEAT

Well, what does the chemical do?

BURT

Somehow -- I don't know how -- it
makes dead bodies come back to life.

SCUZ

Christ. Christ.

MEAT

How the fuck did it get all over
the graveyard?

BURT

(miserably)

I don't know. All I know is we
were storing it over in the medical
supply warehouse -- where you were --
and these two geniuses managed to
open the tank and let it out.

(indicates Frank & Freddy)

TINA

Is that why Freddy's sick?

MEAT

Sick?

FREDDY

I breathed it, Meat.
(with difficulty)
So did Frank, there.

Frank MOANS.

MEAT

What did it do to you?

FREDDY

I'm freezing. My muscles are
stiffening up. And I got no
heartbeat.

Reactions of horror.

TINA

(bursts into tears)

Oh, Freddy!

ERNIE

(professional interest)

Stiffening up now?

Ernie kneels by Freddy.

FREDDY

First I got a really terrible headache. Then my stomach cramped up into a knot. And now my arms and legs are cramping.

ERNIE

Let me see.

Ernie flexes Freddy's arms and legs.

FREDDY

Oh God, that hurts. Oh, God.

BURT

(pats his back)

Take it easy, kid.

Freddy is clenching his fists and sitting half doubled up. So is Frank. Ernie looks back and forth at them.

ERNIE

You know -- it sounds just like rigor mortis setting in.

Tina GASPS. Everyone falls silent.

Ernie stares at Freddy and Frank. So does everybody else. Then Ernie kneels by Freddy again.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Help me get his shirt off.

Tina helps Ernie slip off Freddy's shirt. Freddy screams and complains the whole time.

When Freddy's chest is exposed, Ernie points to some big purple BRUISES on Freddy's back.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Those bruises are where he was lying down. That's the blood pooling up.

Ernie stands back. Rests his chin on his fingertips. Studies Freddy like a great painting.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Fascinating.

FREDDY
 (flies into a rage)
 Fascinating! Is that what we are!
 You vultures arggggghhh ...
 (doubles up in pain)

The import of all this finally sinks in on the punks.

SCUZ
 (explodes)
 You're dead! And you're gonna
 turn into them!

FREDDY
 NOOOO!

They all start backing away from him -- except for Tina,
 who hangs onto him.

TINA
 (angrily, to the
 others)
 If you're going to be scared of
 Freddy, you'd better be scared
 of me, too -- because I breathed
 it too!

FREDDY
 When?

TINA
 When I went down in the basement
 of the warehouse. The tank was
 standing open, and I sniffed it.

FREDDY
 The pressure was all gone by then,
 Tina. Frank and I caught it full
 in the face.

ERNIE
 Listen. What's that?

SOUND OF A SIREN.

They all go to the door and look out through the little
 peephole.

THEIR POV: THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE - DRIZZLE

ANOTHER PARAMEDIC TRUCK is driving toward the mortuary,
 its flashers and SIREN going.

MEAT

What is that?

ERNIE

It's another paramedic ambulance.

As they watch, the ambulance pulls up next to the first ambulance, which is still sitting with its doors open.

TWO NEW PARAMEDICS get out, and walk around to look at the first ambulance.

A bunch of corpses lurch out of the darkness, grab the new paramedics, and eat their brains.

INSIDE THE EMBALMING ROOM

The humans groan and curse.

TINA

Oh my God, they're gonna kill everybody that comes here. There's got to be some way we can warn them. We've got to phone out!

BURT

The phone's dead, lady.

MEAT

Then we got to run for the cars!

ERNIE

Who wants to go first?

TINA

What are we gonna doooo?

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

One of the corpses -- the one who called in on the first ambulance -- goes to the new ambulance, picks up the radio, and calls in:

CORPSE

Send more paramedics.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN PICKS UP AGAIN

Ernie, Burt, Meat, Scuz, Tina. They're all looking at Freddy and Frank, who are clenched up like they're having seizures. Tina is weeping and holding Freddy.

SCUZ

I ain't stayin' in here with them.

MEAT

Yeah, that's right, we gotta do something about them.

(means Freddy and Frank)

TINA

(angrily)

Do? Do what?

SCUZ

Throw 'em out.

TINA

You bastard. Why don't we throw you out?

BURT

(intervenes)

Look, look, we don't have to throw anybody out. But it would be a lot wiser if we, say, contained Frank and Freddy.

TINA

(belligerently)

What do you mean, contain?

BURT

Well, let's lock them up in a room somewhere, so if they start acting funny, they can't hurt anybody.

TINA

Why don't you lock yourself up?

BURT

Because I didn't breathe that gas.

Freddy speaks up -- with great difficulty.

FREDDY

(in great pain)

No, you didn't breathe it, Burt.
But you got bit. Remember?

Burt goes pale.

TINA

What do you mean, bit?

BURT

(agitated)

Well, yeah, it's true. One of
those things bit me. But I ain't
going into seizures like those
guys, 'cause I didn't breathe it.

Everybody is looking at him peculiarly.

ERNIE

Where did you get bit, Burt?

BURT

Well, on the leg.

ERNIE

How does your leg feel?

BURT

It feels fine.

MEAT

Let us see it.

ERNIE

Let's look at your leg, Burt.

Burt sees there is no way around it. He reaches down and
pulls up his pants cuff. BITE MARKS are visible on his
ankle. The ankle has SWOLLEN and started to TURN GREY.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

(worried)

Looks pretty nasty, Burt.

BURT

Yeah, well, that's right, so I've
got to get medical attention.

ERNIE

(nods at Freddy
and Frank)

So do they.

BURT

Yeah, that's right, but in the meantime, they're a much worse danger than I am, and anyway, I'm not proposing doing anything to them, for Christ's sake! Let's just lock them up in another room for a while till we can figure out how to get help! And if I start acting funny, lock me up with them!

MEAT

Hey, listen, he's got a point.
(to Ernie)
Is there some room where we can put them where we can lock it?

ERNIE

Yes, all right. The chapel.

They all go and get around Frank and Freddy.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

We're going to have to carry them. Here, give me a hand.

They all pick up the two paralyzed men, who start SCREAMING.

FRANK & FREDDY

NOOO! OH GOD IT HURTS! IT HURTS!!!

Unnerved, they hustle them out of the room and down the hallway.

INTERIOR - CHAPEL - NIGHT - RAIN

The chapel is not a separate building, it is a room in the mortuary. Ernie flicks on the lights.

They (Burt, Meat, Scuz, Tina) carry Frank and Freddy in.

ERNIE

Just lay them down on the carpet, there.

Frank and Freddy are still SCREAMING.

TINA

Oh, Freddy! Oh, Freddy!

SCUZ

That's it, just leave them here, and let's get out!

TINA
I'm not leaving Freddy!

BURT
Then you stay here with him, but
we're locking the door.

TINA
(defiant)
I'm staying.

BURT
Do what you want.

Suddenly a TREMENDOUS CRASH comes from another room,
accompanied by frenzied CRIES.

Ernie, Burt, Meat, Scuz -- everybody except Frank, Freddy
and Tina -- run out of the chapel. Ernie stops long enough
to SLAM shut the chapel doors and lock them.

INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie, Burt, Meat and Scuz gather in the hall.

MEAT
Weapons, we gotta have weapons!

ERNIE
This way.

He hurriedly leads them to the store room.

INTERIOR - STORE ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie turns on the light -- a bare bulb with a pull cord,
and grabs a bunch of objects that can be used as weapons.
A SLEDGE HAMMER, a small hand AXE, and whatever. They are
passed around. Meat takes the sledge hammer. Ernie hangs
onto his claw hammer and GUN.

Just in time. There is another CRASH from the coffin
storage room.

They run out of the store room.

INTERIOR - COFFIN STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie, Burt, Meat and Scuz come in to find CORPSES coming
in through the window. They rush over and start BASHING
the limbs of the corpses as they come in. Between the
hammers and the axe, they make a real mess and leave some
TWITCHING PIECES on the floor.

Scuz tries to push back a board that had come free, and as he does so, a CORPSE GRABS HIS WRIST.

SCUZ STRUGGLES, squealing.

SCUZ

Make it let go! Make it let go!

Before he can pull free, the corpse BITES INTO HIS HEAD.

With a SHRIEK, Scuz throws himself back from the window, PULLING THE CORPSE halfway inside, its hands and mouth fastened to his head.

The others leap to the rescue, attacking the corpse. Burt swings his AXE, STRIKING the things's midsection. It continues to EAT SCUZ'S HEAD. Burt CHOPS and CHOPS, until he HACKS THE CORPSE IN TWO.

IT FALLS INTO THE ROOM, just the upper half, still clutching Scuz's head.

MEAT jams his sledgehammer down against the corpse, pinning it to the floor. BURT and ERNIE grab Scuz by the feet and drag him away from the corpse, which lets go its grip on Scuz's head and lies there, arms outstretched.

Burt bends over Scuz's twitching body while Ernie nails the window back shut.

BURT

It got him! Christ, it got him!

MEAT

(screams)

What are we gonna do with this thing?!

Meat is leaning his weight on the end of the sledgehammer, to keep the corpse from crawling away. It is squirming like a harp seal.

ERNIE

Wait there for a second.

Ernie runs out of the room.

MEAT

What the fuck is he doing?!

Ernie comes back in with a long POLE with a hook on the end, like a boat hook.

ERNIE

Let me take it.

Ernie reaches out with the boat hook and snags the half-corpse.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

You can let it go now.

MEAT

Are you kidding!?

ERNIE

Take a look at it.

Meat looks. The corpse has RELAXED. It's no longer screaming or struggling. It has a contented look on its bloody face.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

It feels better now.

Surprised, Meat removes the sledgehammer.

Using the hook, Ernie drags the half-corpse from the room, accompanied by Meat and Burt.

INTERIOR - HALL OUTSIDE COFFIN STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

ERNIE

Better nail that door shut.

Hastily, Meat goes to nail the door shut, while Ernie and Burt drag the quiescent corpse into the embalming room.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt and Ernie drag the HALF CORPSE into the room, and using the long hook, get it up onto a STAINLESS STEEL EMBALMING TABLE.

Ernie gets some ROPE and they wrap it around and around the table, thoroughly TYING THE CORPSE so it can't get away. Meat comes in and joins them while they're doing this.

Ernie turns on a bright LIGHT over the table, illuminating the half corpse in all its hideousness.

The HALF CORPSE looks back at them, with heavy-lidded junkie's eyes, and a small smile.

The humans can hardly contain their horror.

MEAT

Are you sure it's tied securely?

ERNIE

I don't see why not. They're no stronger than humans.

BURT

(nervously)

Well, Ernie, I don't understand what you want with it. I mean, what are we doing?

ERNIE

I want to examine it.

Ernie leans over the corpse and stares at it.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

(to corpse)

Can you hear me?

Shockingly, the corpse SPEAKS.

CORPSE

Yes, I hear you.

Ernie shoots the others a triumphant look.

ERNIE

(to corpse)

Why do you eat people?

CORPSE

Not people. Brains.

ERNIE

(surprised)

Brains only?

CORPSE

Right.

ERNIE

Why?

CORPSE

The pain.

ERNIE

(surprised)

What about the pain?

CORPSE
The pain of being dead.

ERNIE
It hurts to be dead?

CORPSE
Yesssss ...

The humans stare at the corpse -- and each other -- for a moment -- digesting this piece of information.

ERNIE
(finally)
So what does eating brains have to do with it?

CORPSE
It makes the pain go away.

Another pause.

Meat interrupts the discussion.

MEAT
Hey, come out in the hall a minute.
I want to talk to you guys.

Burt and Ernie follow him out of the room, leaving the placid corpse bound to the table.

INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie, Burt and Meat cluster together, panting, sweating, totally freaked out.

MEAT
How do you kill those things?

ERNIE
You don't.

MEAT
(turns pale)
What do you mean?

Ernie jerks his head at Burt.

ERNIE
Ask him.

All eyes turn to Burt.

BURT

They're already dead. They can't be killed again. You've got to understand that they're not alive -- they're animated. You can chop them up into pieces and the pieces keep coming after you.

MEAT

Oh, fuck. Jesus shit.

BURT

The only thing you can do is burn them. You have to totally reduce them to ash, to where there's nothing left to come after you.

ERNIE

How are we gonna burn all those things?

MEAT

There's hundreds of the fuckers!

BURT

That is the question.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - HARD RAIN

The rain has turned the graveyard into a SEA OF MUD.

As we watch, SOMETHING begins to rise up out of the black slime.

SOMETHING -- unfolding like a big muddy flower -- UP out of the MUD.

The rain, pouring down, begins to WASH THE MUD from the thing ... revealing WHITE FLESH underneath ... until gradually it becomes apparent it is DEDE. Up out of the mud like the birth of Venus.

There she stands, the rain washing the mud from her body, totally nude except for a pair of muddy leg warmers.

The color of her skin has changed from a healthy pink glow to a ghastly alabaster white ... but her body still retains its voluptuousness. Her FACE, however, has hollowed and shrivelled until it looks like the Phantom of the Opera. An exquisitely EROTIC but at the same time GHASTLY image.

EXTERIOR - STREET ADJOINING CEMETERY - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

The rain has slowed to a drizzle.

A TRANSIENT, down on his luck, comes hobbling down the opposite side of the street. He's 40 going on 70, matted yellowish-grey hair, stubble chin, with a seamy face that life has carved its cares on. His clothing is shabby and skimpy, and he hugs himself as he hobbles along, to whatever sad destination.

Suddenly, across the street, a FIGURE steps out into the light cast by the street light.

It is DEDE standing in the arched entrance to the graveyard, in her muddy grey leg warmers. She is a startling sight. It takes the Transient a moment to notice her, out of the corner of his eye.

When he sees her, his head snaps around, and his pace slows. He does not altogether stop walking. He is torn between two courses of action: stopping dead where he is and staring at Dede, or continuing on his way, perhaps in a hurry. As a result he sort of hesitantly moves along the sidewalk, staring hypnotized at Dede on the other side of the pavement.

She starts crossing the street toward him, her movements those of a slinky lizard. Very sensuous, very predatory. The closer she gets the clearer her face gets, and as it gets clearer it gets uglier. But it isn't until she's all the way across the street that he can see how ghastly her face really is, and by then she's thrown her arms around his neck and bit the back of his head off.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - POLICE STATION - DISPATCH ROOM - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

The DISPATCHER sits at her little console, wearing her headphones, surrounded by other dispatchers. Phones ring and people talk at the same time.

DISPATCHER

(into radio)

We have a Code Five from the Fire Department -- two, repeat, two paramedic vehicles missing in the Kennington district. Available units near the 20 thousand block of East Central, please respond.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

Casey and Chuck are huddled in a dark corner. Outside, corpses scream.

CHUCK

Do you think they'll rescue us?

CASEY

They better, man, that's all I got to say.

Long pause.

CHUCK

Yeah, but do you think they will?

Casey looks at him.

CASEY

Chuck, I never did like your face, but under the circumstances, hold me tight.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - POLICE CAR - NIGHT (NO RAIN)

Heading up the driveway toward the mortuary. TWO COPS in the cruiser.

COP #1

(into radio)

Dispatch, Dispatch, this is Bravo 16. We're at the mortuary. We see two, that is two, paramedic vehicles parked in the rear parking lot.

The prowl car pulls to a halt and sits with the motor running. The two ambulances are highlighted ahead in the headlights.

COP #1 (CONT'D)

(into radio)

The doors of one vehicle are hanging open. Stand by while we investigate. Over.

CRACKLING and SQUAWKING from the RADIO.

EXTERIOR - POLICE CAR - NIGHT (NO RAIN)

The two Cops step from the black and white. Cop #2 draws his gun, while #1 gets the shotgun from the dashboard.

The headlights, and the spotlight, of the prowl car pin both ambulances in a pool of light. Cautiously, the Cops approach.

STEADY CAM

coming up on the second ambulance

They SEE a BODY on the ground.

COP #1
Hold it, what's that?

They approach the body. Carefully, Cop #1 turns it over.

It is one of the second group of Paramedics. There is a big HOLE in the side of his head, where his brains have been eaten.

COP #1 (CONT'D)
Holy Christopher.

Carefully, they back away from the body. They are moving back to the police car to call it in.

But before they get there, SIX CORPSES step out into the light, barring their way.

The Cops snap to firing position.

COP #1 (CONT'D)
FREEZE OR I'LL BLOW YOUR FUCKING
BRAINS OUT!

CORPSES
Brains! Brains!

They come at the police, hands outstretched.

The Cops FIRE, both at the same time. The SHOTGUN goes off, blowing the head clean off a corpse, which just keeps coming.

The corpses overwhelm Cop #1, who goes down screaming in a pile of rotting bodies.

Cop #2 turns and runs. They drag him down.

CUT TO:

THE OPEN MIKE DANGLING IN THE COP CAR

picking up the SCREAMS of the dying officers in the background.

CUT TO:

ONE OF THE CORPSES

which limps toward the cop car. It reaches in the open door, grabs the dangling mike, and speaks into it:

CORPSE

(into mike)

Send more cops.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - DRIZZLE

The humans (Ernie, Burt, Meat) are looking out through the peephole, watching the cops die.

ERNIE

This place is like a black hole, everybody that comes in gets swallowed up!

MEAT

So what are we gonna do, just stand around here beating our meat till the corpses kick their way in? Man, they ain't no way we can stop those things! We gotta get out of here!

BURT

We gotta get to the cars.

MEAT

There's corpses all over the cars.

BURT

(snaps)

I know that.

ERNIE

(to Meat)

What are you proposing?

MEAT

How the fuck should I know? Somebody do some thinking for fuck's sake!

Ernie looks around. Looks up at the CEILING.

ERNIE

There's a crawlspace above the ceiling.

They all LOOK. In the ceiling, a HATCH.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

We could go up there and barricade ourselves in. The only way up is through that hatch. We could go in and board it shut.

MEAT

Fuck, I ain't barricading myself up in the roof! I'm for the cars!

BURT

Right! Then we drive to the police station and get the cops.

MEAT

And what the fuck are they gonna do, if I might ask?

ERNIE

What we need is a way to fight them.

Ernie picks up a glass bottle off a shelf.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Maybe we could use this against them.

MEAT

What is it?

ERNIE

Nitric acid. It will dissolve anything.

Burt looks at the small bottle of liquid.

BURT

Not that amount.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CHAPEL - NIGHT - RAIN

TINA is still trying to comfort FREDDY.

But Freddy is now beyond comforting. He is just a rigid fetus, his teeth bared in a horrid rictus. Out of both HIS and FRANK'S mouths comes an agonized GROWLING that is unnerving to hear.

FRANK begins to FOAM AT THE MOUTH and roll around on the floor, like a dog with hydrophobia. Tina watches this with horror.

FREDDY turns around slowly and looks at her.

FREDDY

Tina, it hurts more than anything you can imagine. And all of a sudden I can see that one thing, and only one thing, can relieve this horrible suffering.

TINA

What, Freddy, what?

FREDDY

Live brains.
(grabs her)

Tina SCREAMS and knocks Freddy away. Now all three of them start SCREAMING.

Tina runs to the chapel doors and tries to open them. But they're LOCKED.

Freddy comes after her. He scarcely looks like Freddy anymore -- snarling, wild-eyed. They do a little dance around the pews. Deadly hide-and-seek. Screaming the whole time.

The KEY begins to RATTLE on the other side of the lock.

Freddy gets an opening -- reaches out swiftly and grabs Tina by the hair. Pulls her toward him -- mouth open to bite. Tina pushes over a pew, knocking him down.

She runs to another part of the room. He grabs her blouse -- RRRRRIP.

The door BURSTS OPEN.

In rush Ernie, Burt and Meat, with their weapons --
 Ernie carrying the nitric acid.
 Tina dashes for the door.
 Freddy attacks.
 They beat him back with their weapons -- a horrendous
 fight.

While they're fighting -- FRANK -- unnoticed --
 slips out of the chapel.

INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - RAIN

Frank rushes down the hall into ...

INTERIOR - ERNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT - RAIN

Where he slams the door and bolts it.

INTERIOR - CHAPEL - NIGHT - RAIN

They're still battling Freddy.

BURT

Blind him!

Ernie FLINGS the beaker of ACID in Freddy's EYES.

Freddy staggers back, grabbing his eyes.
 Smoke rises from his face.
 He blunders into a pew, blind.

Ernie, Burt and Meat rush out, slamming the door.

INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - RAIN

Ernie quickly re-locks the chapel doors.

Tina is slouched on the floor, weeping hysterically.

BURT

Let's get back in the embalming
 room!

The others are too shaken to move.

BURT (CONT'D)

(herding them)

Come on, everybody in the other
 room! Let's go!

They pick up Tina and hustle back to the embalming room.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

BURT, MEAT, TINA, and ERNIE hurry back into the room.
Tina is hysterical.

MEAT

(white)

That was horrible. Horrible.
That was Freddy.

ERNIE

Don't you worry about Freddy and
Frank, they've gone to Heaven.
Those things are just their dead
bodies that want to eat our brains.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - ERNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT - RAIN

Frank looks hideous. His skin is grey-green, his eyes
are bloodshot with purple bruises around them, and he's
sweating and shaking. He's in agony. Death withdrawal.

CLOSE: RAT HOLE

A big brown RAT pokes its head out.
It twitches its whiskers.

TWO-SHOT

Frank and the rat LOOKING at each other.

Quick as a striking snake, Frank GRABS the rat
and BITES ITS HEAD OFF.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt, Meat and Ernie are putting Tina back together.

On the table, the HALF CORPSE is writhing under its bonds.

HALF CORPSE

(groaning)

Oh, God. Brains. Brains. Give
me brains!

Meat takes a stick and POKES the moaning corpse.

MEAT
 (to half corpse)
 Hey, what's the matter with you,
 man?

HALF CORPSE
 The pain! It's coming back!

The half corpse is WRITHING AND MOANING.

MEAT
 Can't you make it shut up?

There is a tremendous CRASH from the direction of the chapel.
 Burt, Meat and Ernie exchange a look -- and run out,
 brandishing their weapons.

INTERIOR - HALL OUTSIDE CHAPEL - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt, Meat and Ernie rush out.
 The CHAPEL DOORS are RATTLING.

MEAT
 Oh, shit. He's trying to get out.

Suddenly, SMASH! SPLINTERS fly out of the door, and a
 section of wood protrudes out.

BURT
 Oh, shit.

Ernie begins to pound nails into the door.
 Burt and Meat grab a piece of furniture and carry
 it to shove against the door.
 In so doing, they DROP THE PIECE OF FURNITURE ON
 ERNIE'S FOOT.
 Ernie lets out a groan and falls.

Burt and Meat pick him up and rush back to the embalming
 room.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina is sitting in the corner sobbing. Burt and Meat
 rush in with Ernie. They close the door to the hall
 and bolt it.

MEAT
 We can't stay here no more. He's
 comin' through that door in a
 minute.

BURT

We'll have to run for the cars.

MEAT

How do we get past the zombies
that are outside?

BURT

We'll just have to storm them.
Fight our way through. Once
we're in the car and moving
we'll be okay.

MEAT

That's a fuck of a big "if".

BURT

You got a better idea?

MEAT

No. I'll do it.

ERNIE

(holding his
cracked foot)

Christ, I can't help you. I
can't do no running.

BURT

(kneels by him)

How bad is your foot?

ERNIE

Broke, I guess.

INTERIOR - ERNIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT - RAIN

Frank looks better.
The rat brain helped.
Not much, but a little.

Frank goes to the window and slides the shutter up.
The rain beats against the glass.
He tries to open the window.
It won't budge.
He throws his weight against it.

EXTERIOR - MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

CRASH! The window of Ernie's office explodes out,
and FRANK comes tumbling out, surrounded by shards
of glass.

He hits the ground -- THUD.
 He picks himself up and starts to run across the
 graveyard.

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - RAIN

Frank -- driven -- stumbles through the rain and blackness.
 A corpse, feebler than he, tries to jump him.
 He knocks it down and keep running.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt, Meat, Ernie, Tina.
 Burt and Meat are preparing themselves, with the sledge and
 claw hammers.

BURT

(to Ernie)

You'll have to stay here with
 Tina, while --

(looks at Meat)

What's your name?

MEAT

Meat.

BURT

While Meat and I go get one of
 the cars. We'll drive right up
 to the door. You got any more
 of that nitric acid?

ERNIE

(shakes his head no)

That was it.

MEAT

(to Burt)

Speakin' of feet, man, how's
your leg?

BURT

(snaps)

Don't worry about me.

MEAT

Which car do we take?

ERNIE

Take mine. Here's the keys.

MEAT
I'll drive. I'm good.

BURT
(takes the keys)
No. I'll drive.

Burt and Meat look at Tina and Ernie. Moment of truth.

BURT (CONT'D)
Be ready to move when we pull up
to the door. We don't want to sit
out there with the motor running
any longer than necessary.

Grim nods from Tina and Ernie. They get the message.

TINA
(scared)
What if you guys don't make it?

BURT
That will be a great shame.

Burt and Meat take the SLEDGE and the CLAW HAMMER. They
position themselves by the back door.
Everyone grows very tense.

EXTERIOR - BACK OF MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

The door BURSTS OPEN and MEAT and BURT charge out,
brandishing their weapons. Burt is LIMPING.

The door is just as quickly SLAMMED shut again behind them.

They run toward the vehicles, SEEING Ernie's CAR.
Numerous CORPSES are lurking around it. Meat and Burt
charge right into their midst, swinging hammers, knocking
the corpses aside like bowling pins.

They DIVE into the open doors of the car -- SLAM the
doors behind them, and lock them. It's almost a miracle;
they are unscratched.

INTERIOR - CAR - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt instantly shoves the keys into the ignition and REVS
the car up. Corpses are beginning to shake the door
handles of the car.

Burt SQUEALS away, RUNNING OVER one corpse. CRUNCH.

He pulls the car in a circle, around toward the back door to the mortuary. He tries to drive right up against the door, so Tina and Ernie, inside, can come out and jump in. But there are CORPSES running around near the door.

Burt stops the car. Immediately, corpses cluster around the car, staring in at them.

The corpses start to ROCK THE CAR. In a moment, they're going to tip it over.

BURT

Fuck!

Burt FLOORS the accelerator, zooming away. Corpses run after them.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina and Ernie can't believe it.

TINA

They left us! Those fucks!
They left us!

ERNIE

What the hell do you expect them to do? The corpses would have got them. They couldn't stop.

TINA

Those fucks!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CAR - MOVING - NIGHT - RAIN

Shooting down the driveway on their way out of the graveyard.

MEAT

(looking back)
We can't just leave them!

BURT

We can't do anything else! They would've turned the goddamn car over! We'll have to send help!

MEAT

Mister, those are my friends back there!

BURT

We'll send help.

As they rocket down the driveway, a number of CORPSES run into their HEADLIGHTS. They have to run over them. BANG, THUMP. Then they're out of the graveyard and heading down the street.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

TINA and Ernie are huddled together in the middle of the room, listening to assorted WAILING and POUNDING coming from various walls. The half corpse WRITHES on the table. From the chapel comes the SOUND of SMASHING.

TINA

They won't just leave us. I can't believe it. They'll send help.

ERNIE

Yes. Sure. Eventually.

They look at each other. Ernie has no answers. There is moist fear in his eyes.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - CAR - NIGHT - MOVING - RAIN

MEAT

Where the fuck do we get help?

BURT

We gotta find a phone. Call the cops. There's a phone in my warehouse.

Burt twists the wheel and they SQUEAL around the corner, their headlights sweeping desolate industrial district.

Suddenly, a CORPSE leaps onto the hood of the car. CRASH. And clings there, staring in the windshield at them.

They REACT. The corpse starts BEATING on the windshield, trying to break it. Burt SWERVES the car, trying to hurl the corpse off. The corpse clings, and BREAKS THE WINDSHIELD with its fist.

The corpse SLIPS to one side, and is hanging partway off one fender. When Burt sees that, he cuts the wheel and drives right up ONTO THE SIDEWALK, bringing the side of the car into contact with the cemetery WALL. The corpse is SCRAPED off.

Burt cuts the wheel and they go back onto the pavement.

MEAT

Christ almighty.

The MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE looms up in the headlights.

BURT

There!

Burt guns the car straight for the door. Several CORPSES stand around outside the door.

BURT (CONT'D)

Get ready!

Burt floors it, running over the corpses and SMASHING them right into a wall, CRUSHING THE FRONT OF THE CAR in the process.

Meat and Burt leap out of the car, which EXPLODES, and run up to the warehouse back door. Burt fishes out his keys and opens the door hurriedly.

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

As they rush into the semi-darkness, two FIGURES jump them. There is struggling and cursing.

SOMEBODY

Hold it, hold it, we're human!

The fighting abruptly ceases. A LIGHT is turned on. CHUCK and CASEY stand there, panting and bruised. They stare at each other in amazement.

CASEY

Oh, thank God! We thought you were more of them!

CHUCK

Where's everybody else?

MEAT

Listen, we're screwed, that was the car and it blew up.

BURT

Not to worry, I've still got my
car. It's parked out there.

There is a SECOND EXPLOSION and a flash of light.
They run and look out the barred window.

MEAT

Not any more.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - HALLWAY - NIGHT - RAIN

CRASH! Freddy smashes a hole in the CHAPEL DOORS.

Snarling, wild-eyed, Freddy shoves his body through the
shattered door panels, ignoring the damage it does to his
body. His eyes are glazed over -- blind.

He feels his way down the hall to the embalming room and
tries the door. It is locked.

INTERIOR - EMBALMING ROOM - NIGHT - RAIN

TINA and ERNIE both jump as Freddy smashes against
the door.

Desperate, Ernie looks UP -- at the CRAWLSPACE HATCH in
the CEILING.

CRASH! The DOOR to the hall starts to SPLIT.

Ernie limps over to a STEPLADDER. Tina helps him move it
under the hatch. He hustles her up the ladder, to the
HATCH in the CEILING. She goes up into it, and he follows
her up the ladder -- crawling painfully because of his
broken foot. Tina pulls him up.

Once they are up inside the ATTIC CRAWLWAY, Ernie reaches
back down and pushes the stepladder over, so that it falls
away from the hatch.

Just as the ladder hits the floor, BANG! The HALL DOOR
bursts open and FREDDY rushes in, crashing blindly into
furniture.

FREDDY

Tina, where are you, where's
your brains?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - ATTIC CRAWLSPACE - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina and Ernie huddle in the dark rafters, listening to Freddy below.

Quickly, Ernie props a short piece of two-by-four against the hatch, blocking it shut.

TINA

Listen.

Ernie listens. They HEAR the SOUND of a HELICOPTER.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - NIGHT - RAIN

The BEAM of a SEARCHLIGHT cuts down through the rain, and walks eerily around in the cemetery, while from the wet blackness above comes the BEATING of HELICOPTER BLADES.

In the distance, MANY SIRENS.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

SIX SQUAD CARS are converging on the mortuary, their flashers and SIRENS going.

Up ahead, they see a COP barring the way. The cop is flagging them down with a red flashlight.

The six squad cars converge on the officer in the driveway. He is one of the DEAD OFFICERS.

The doors of the squad cars pop open, and twelve cops jump out.

CORPSE COP

This way.
(beckons)

The corpse cop turns and runs into the darkness. Several of the live cops follow him into the shadows. A moment later, comes a multiple SCREAM. The cops who remained by their cars pull their guns. Before they can do anything else, TWENTY CORPSES run out of the darkness and grab them.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY WALL - NIGHT - RAIN

FRANK scrambles up to the top of the stone wall.
 It's a great effort.
 He's barely able to pull himself to the top of the wall.
 He rolls over it and falls nine feet to the sidewalk.

THUD!

Quivering, he picks himself up and starts limping
 across the street.

FRANK'S POV - MOVING (STEADYCAM)

Across the street is a PHONE BOOTH.

Frank limps up to the phone booth and grabs the telephone.
 He digs in his pocket, turning it inside out and spilling
 change all over the street.

He finds a dime. With shaking hands, he inserts it in
 the phone. DING.

He dials "0".

FRANK
 (into phone)
 Get me a taxi.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - SKY ABOVE THE CEMETERY - NIGHT - RAIN

AERIAL SHOT circling over the graveyard, SEEING what the
 SEARCHLIGHT (the 'Night Sun') sees as it cuts down through
 the rain. Raindrops on copter bubble, illuminated red by
 the chopper's lights. STEREOPHONIC BEATING of helicopter
 ROTORS.

HELICOPTER COPS'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (over - filtered)
 Ground, this is Air Three, we've
 got a really bad situation here,
 we've got officers down, we have
 just witnessed six ground units
 attacked, repeat, attacked and
 overwhelmed by bands of assailants.

The SPOTLIGHT moves across gravestones and crypts,
 illuminating wandering, fighting corpses.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt, Meat, Casey and Chuck HEAR the SOUND of the HELICOPTER APPROACHING.

CASEY

Listen! Hear that?

MEAT

Helicopter.

The HELICOPTER gets LOUDER. Suddenly, a VOICE pierces out of the sky, a voice on the HELICOPTER LOUDSPEAKER, coming right through the walls.

CASEY

Listen, listen!

HELICOPTER LOUDSPEAKER

"Attention. Attention. This is the police. This area is under police blockade. All persons within this area are under arrest. All persons wishing to surrender should make their way to the perimeter at once."

The helicopter moves on.

MEAT

Lordy Jesus.

CHUCK

Sounds like the shit is really hitting the fan out there.

BURT

We gotta get through to the police. Let them know we're in here.

Burt limps toward his OFFICE.

CASEY & CHUCK

Mister, mister, don't go in there!

They grab him. He sees his door boarded shut.

CASEY

There's a thing in there. It ripped out the phone.

A tense moment.

BURT
There's another phone in the
basement.

CHUCK
The basement! Fuck! Do you know
what's in the basement!?

BURT
(cagey)
What do you mean?

MEAT
One of the fucking corpses, man!
A real ugly one! All black and
runny!

BURT
(thinks)
I don't care what's in the basement,
we've got to get to that telephone.
(thinks some more)
Blinding them seems to work well.

Burt gets an idea. He walks over to near his office,
and comes back with a BASEBALL BAT.

BURT (CONT'D)
Open the door and let the thing out.
I'll knock its goddamn block off.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - ATTIC OF MORTUARY - NIGHT - RAIN

Tina and Ernie crouch in the dusty darkness of the
crawlspace.

Suddenly, muffled, comes the SOUND of a VOICE.

FREDDY'S VOICE (O.S.)
(from below)
Tina? This is Freddy. Where
are you?

Tina GASPS.

TINA
(face contorting
with grief & horror)
Oh, God.

FREDDY'S VOICE (O.S.)

(from below)

Tina, it was wrong for you to lock me up. I had to hurt myself to get out. But I forgive you, Tina, and I know you're here, because I can smell your brains.

Tina MOANS and buries her face in Ernie's shoulder.

FREDDY'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'm coming up, Tina.

A pause. A scraping noise. Then, the hatch RATTLES as Freddy tries to open it. Tina and Ernie FREEZE, staring at the hatch.

FREDDY'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(just below hatch)

Tina, listen to me, we always meant so much to each other, so please open the hatch, it's wrong that you should keep me locked out like this.

CRASH! The blocked HATCH SHAKES as something smashes against it from below. Tina and Ernie scuttle away from the hatch like crabs.

FREDDY'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

See, now you made me hurt myself again. In fact, you made me break my hand completely off this time. But I don't care, Darling, because I love you, and you've got to let me eat your brains!

WHAM! Again Freddy hurls himself against the hatch.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

Meat has the claw hammer and is pulling the nails out of the door. One by one. CREEAAK.

Burt is poised before the basement door with his ball bat.

Casey & Chuck have armed themselves with various types of blunt instruments and long poles.

Finally, the last nail is out of the door. Meat leaps back.

Nothing happens. The humans look at each other tensely.

Sweating, Meat advances forward, takes hold of the door knob -- and --

YANKS IT OPEN.

And there stands the TAR MAN.

TAR MAN

BRAINS!

It charges straight out.

Burt SWINGS his bat.

SMACKO! The Tar Man's HEAD FLIES OFF.

The BODY blunders about.

Chuck, Casey and Meat charge the body, knocking it over.

Then they all scurry into the basement.

BURT

Come on! Hurry!

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - NIGHT - RAIN

Burt hurriedly locks the basement door with his key.

Down the stairs -- minding that third step -- come Burt, Casey, Chuck & Meat, looking around nervously into the shadows.

Past the body of Suicide.

Again we SEE the half-dozen METAL TANKS, one of them standing open, the rest still sealed.

Cautiously but quickly, they make their way through the basement, following Burt, who is going toward the TELEPHONE on the wall.

Burt hurries up to the phone and picks it up. He dials "0".

BURT

Hello, get me the police. This is an emergency.

(waits)

Yes, is this the police?

(pause)

Thank God! I'm calling from the Uneeda Medical Supply Warehouse on East Central. We're inside your blockade. We need help.

(waits; to the others)

They've got me on hold.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - POLICE BLOCKADE - PERIMETER - NIGHT - RAIN

A city street in the warehouse district.

POLICE SAWHORSES AND ROPES stretch down the block and around the corner. Half a dozen cop cars curve out of sight into the rain, implying many more. Cops stride around in yellow raincoats, talking into hand radios.

More cops guard the sawhorses, with shotguns in their hands. HELICOPTER SOUNDS can be HEARD up in the black, wet sky.

A MAN'S HAND picks up a blinking PHONE from a console in a police vehicle. The hand belongs to a TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN, a grim-faced man in his 50's.

TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN

(into phone)

Yes, go ahead. Yes, I hear you.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT OF WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

BURT

You've got to help us! There's a bunch of us trapped inside your police barricade and we can't get out!

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - POLICE BARRICADE - NIGHT - RAIN

TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN

First of all, Mister, tell me what's going on in there! Some crazy people's killing my officers in there at one hellacious rate, is all I know!

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT OF WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

BURT

Well, it's -- it's -- rabies!
If you don't get bit, you're okay!

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - POLICE BARRICADE - NIGHT - RAIN

TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN

Rabies, huh?

(shouts)

Hey, Mike, I got a guy here says
it's rabies! Get the Medical
Examiner's office down here in
one helluva hurry!

(back to phone)

Okay, just sit tight. We're
gonna send somebody in to get
you out. First of all, you
gotta tell me exactly where you
are.

(picks up pencil)

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT OF WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

BURT

We're at the Uneeda Medical Supply
Warehouse at 21706 East Central!
Do you know where that is?

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - POLICE BARRICADE - NIGHT - RAIN

The Tac Squad Captain has his free finger stuck in his
free ear, trying to shut out distracting NOISES.

TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN

(into phone, to Burt)

Hold it just a second, I can't
hear you, there's a bunch of
noise here.

There is SHOUTING in the background. The Tac Squad Captain
turns to see what it is.

TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Hey, what's going on?

A shotgun-toting COP, manning the line, yells to him:

RIOT COP #1

Somebody comin'!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Out of the darkness trot a BUNCH OF CORPSES.
One of them is DEDE.

RIOT COP #2
All right, hold it right there!

The CORPSES do not hold it. They head right for him.

RIOT COP #3
Watch it Steve, it's rabies!

RIOT COP #2
I said HALT!!

He fires -- BOOM!

The corpses are on him before he knows it. One of them pulls off his riot helmet. Another starts choking him.

The NEXT COP runs up and grabs the corpse around the neck, trying to use a CHOKE HOLD on it; the HEAD COMES OFF IN HIS ARMS -- leaving the body still choking Riot Cop #2.

Pandemonium. Gunshots. The TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN is STARING aghast, phone in hand, not knowing what to do. He draws his gun.

Suddenly, a CORPSE LUNGES INTO FRAME AND GRABS THE TAC SQUAD CAPTAIN.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT OF WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN SLACKING OFF

BURT stands with the phone to his ear. LISTENING to the horrible SCREAMS of the dying policemen.

BURT
Hello! Hello!

CASEY
What?

MEAT
What is it?

He holds the phone out, so Casey, Chuck and Meat can HEAR the TINNY SHRIEKS coming from the earpiece.

Their faces show their feelings clearly.

Burt sags against the wall, letting the phone drop to his side.

BURT

The cops. They got the cops. That means they're breaking out of the police blockade.

In desperation, Burt's eyes light on the nearest TANK.

Stencilled on the side is:

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL

1(800)454-8000

Burt slams the phone down. Then he lifts the receiver again and starts redialing, reading it off the tank.

CASEY

(to Meat & Chuck)

What's he doing?

BURT

(silencing her)

Sh!

Burt finishes dialing the lengthy number. Then he stands waiting, very tensely, with the phone to his ear.

It RINGS. Once.

CLICK. It is picked up.

FEMALE VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)

Hello?

BURT

Yes, I'm calling the number stencilled on the side of the tank.

FEMALE VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)

Stay on the line.

The PHONE BURRS in Burt's ear again.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - A ROOM - NIGHT

[The decor can only be described as vintage missile silo. Concrete walls, banks of equipment painted battleship-grey, cheap red plastic chairs. The clock on the wall reads 3:43 A.M.]

AN ARMY OFFICER sits with his feet up on the console, smoking a cigarette, drinking a cup of coffee, and reading Volume 4 of "Remembrance of Things Past."]

On the console, a RED LIGHT flashes on, and a BUZZER SOUNDS.

He snaps awake, as if from a long wait. Years. He stares at the red light. Can't believe it. Then he sits upright and grabs the phone. TIGHT ON the gold braid on his sleeve.

OFFICER

(into phone)

Captain Turner speaking.

(listens)

Put him through.

(pause)

Go ahead, sir. Yes, you've called the right number. Your name, please? ...

He punches a button in front of him. Transferring the call.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - DENVER, COLORADO - NIGHT

A microwave TRANSMITTER -- framed against a moonlit SKY and the ROCKIES.

OFFICER'S VOICE (V.O.)

(filtered)

Please stay on the line, Mr. Penrod, you're being transferred.

(CLICK; BEEP)

VOICE #2 (V.O.)

(filtered)

This is Comm-Q, Denver, go ahead.

OFFICER'S VOICE (V.O.)

(filtered)

Denver, this is Wichita. I've got a CLY priority on a one-one-three. Who's up?

VOICE #2 (V.O.)
 (filtered)
 That would be Colonel Grover ...
 San Diego ... I'll put you through.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - COLONEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Through the bedroom window is a spectacular view of --

The CLIFF AND THE SEA. The SURF POUNDING below.
 The weather here is clear and beautiful.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL

The COLONEL sound asleep with his wife. Their bedside
 CLOCK says: 1:45 A.M.

The special PHONE next to the bed BEEP-BEEPS.

The Colonel SITS UP, WIDE AWAKE.

He STARES at the BEEPING PHONE. His wife is slowly coming
 awake.

WIFE
 (sleepy)
 Horace ... ? What is it ... ?

The Colonel GRABS the phone and sticks it to his ear.

COLONEL
 (into phone - tersely)
 Yes. Yes, Captain.
 (listens)
 I see. Very well. Put that call
 through to me. Yes, put him on.

The Colonel turns on the bedside light and PUNCHES buttons
 on the phone console, lighting up the board, and grabs
 for a pencil.

COLONEL (CONT'D)
 Yes, Mr. Penrod? Where are you
 speaking from?
 (taking notes)
 Mm-hm. Yes. I see. When did
 this take place?
 (listens, scribbling)
 When was the tank first breached?
 (MORE)

COLONEL (CONT'D)

(listens - scribbles)

Why didn't you call this number immediately?

(listens)

I see. It's understandable. What happened next? Uh-huh. I see. I see. And did you try to stop them?

(scribbles)

Were you able to stop them?

(pause)

I see. Nothing short of total reduction to ash. I see.

(pause)

Yes, I see. Of course. Thank you for your assistance, Mr. Penrod. I'm going to switch you back to Captain Turner now, and he'll talk to you.

Shaken, the Colonel punches them over to another line on his phone set, and swings his legs out of bed. Our Colonel is tense.

WIFE

(clutching her throat)

Dear ... ? Is it ... ?

He pulls on his robe and goes into the other room.

INTERIOR - COLONEL'S STUDY - NIGHT

The Colonel goes to his COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT and punches a single RED BUTTON, picking up the PHONE and putting it to his ear. He waits, glancing at the clock, and at some TELETYPE COPY coming out of a slot.

Someone picks up at the other end.

COLONEL

(into phone)

Sir, this is Colonel Grover. Sorry to disturb you at this hour, sir, but we're at Q-2 status. It looks like we've found that lost consignment of Easter Eggs.

(tears out a hard copy teletype as he talks)

Yes, sir, pretty sure. They've turned up in Louisville. I'm getting confirmations on this from the Louisville Police Department.

(MORE)

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Louisville, Kentucky, sir.

(listens)

Well, it would be good news, sir,
except that "the eggs have hatched."

(pause)

Yes, sir. I'm afraid so, sir. It
looks like our worst case scenario.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - NIGHT - NO RAIN (DRIPPING)

Burt is still on the phone. Meat, Chuck and Casey listen
with exhausted intensity.

MEAT

Listen, what's happening on the
other end of that line?

BURT

(into phone)

Just a second.

(to the others:)

These people seem to say they've
been waiting for this to happen.
Apparently they've got a contingency
plan to deal with it.

A palpable wave of RELIEF runs through the room.

CASEY

That's great!

MEAT

What is this plan?

BURT

I'm not sure.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - RAILWAY CAR - DAWN

CLOSE: A TELEPHONE, BEEPING.

A HAND picks up the phone. The hand belongs to a
22-year-old U.S. ARMY GUNNERY SERGEANT. Behind him,
through the window of the railway car, we can SEE the
dawn breaking through some trees.

SERGEANT

(into phone)

Hello. Good morning. Yes, sir.

Good morning to you too, sir.

What's that you say, sir?

(pause -- he gets
very nervous)

Real alert, sir? Not a test?

Yes, sir. All right, sir.

Whatever you say, sir. You just
give me the code numbers.

(listens; writes
it down)

Archimedes. Hotdog. Rhubarb.

Niner. Zero. Niner. Gotcha, sir.

The Sergeant looks it up in the day's code books.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - RAILWAY CAR - IN THE COUNTRY - DAWN

We now SEE the VEHICLE the Sergeant is sitting in. It is a little cab on the end of a LONG, FLAT RAILWAY CAR, sitting on a quiet spur, out in the middle of nowhere, in a forest of low scrub pines.

On the bed of the flatcar is a HUGE CANNON, a 150 mm Howitzer.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

(over - filtered)

Bearing - Mark - two two zero.

SERGEANT'S VOICE (V.O.)

(over)

Bearing two two zero.

CLOSE: SERGEANT'S HANDS, dialing the numbers into the Howitzer's mini-computer.

ANGLE, CANNON. It SWIVELS AROUND, rotating from one compass point to another, on giant PURRING GIMBALS.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

(over - filtered)

Range. Thirty-four miles.

SERGEANT'S VOICE (V.O.)

(over)

Range thirty-four miles.

The long muzzle slowly DROPS, until it has reached the desired arc on the horizon.

CLOSE: A COMPUTER SCREEN. The word "LOCKED" flashes, with a BEEP.

INTERIOR - BREECH OF CANNON

A huge ARTILLERY SHELL -- bearing a red-&-yellow RADIATION SYMBOL -- rolls into the breech and is chambered. CLING! CLANG! CLUNK!

EXTERIOR - CANNON - DAWN

SERGEANT'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

All ready here, sir.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

(over - filtered)

Fire.

WHOMP! The giant cannon kicks and belches flame, rocking the railroad car back on its springs.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CITY SKYLINE - DAWN - NO RAIN

LONG SHOT of the city, seen from a distance.

THE WHISTLING SOUND of a 150 mm artillery shell.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CEMETERY - DAWN - NO RAIN

CORPSES, including DEDE, raise their dead eyes toward the dawn light, instinctively turning toward the WHISTLING of the SHELL ...

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - STREET ADJOINING CEMETERY - DAWN - NO RAIN

FRANK stands next to the pay phone, shading his eyes and looking into the sky.

Behind him, a taxi cruises up the wet street.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - MORTUARY - ATTIC CRAWLWAY - DAWN - NO RAIN

A little light seeps in from outside, revealing TINA and ERNIE backed up as far as they can get.

BANG! The HATCH is knocked open, and FREDDY sticks his scarred head up into the crawlspace.

FREDDY

Tina?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - BASEMENT - WAREHOUSE - DAWN - NO RAIN

Burt, Meat, Casey and Chuck crouch by the phone.

BURT

Listen! Do you hear something?

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - CITY SKYLINE - DAWN

KA - B00000000000000000000000000000000000M!!!

A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION LIGHTS THE DAWN SKY. Throwing its glare over the whole city. The shock wave shatters windows. Lights start going on.

SUPER THE TITLE:

5:01 A.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME

The fireball climbs toward the sky like a hideous flower.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(over)

The image you are seeing is the fireball cast by a one-half kiloton tactical nuclear artillery shell, fired from a distance of thirty-four miles. More than 20 square blocks of industrial Louisville were destroyed in this explosion, which was officially described as a "chemical refinery explosion." Over 4,000 persons died from the immediate effects of the blast.

TOP-QUALITY STOCK FOOTAGE OF A REFINERY FIRE or similar flaming disaster: seen as a column of flame and smoke as wide as a football field, rising over a MILE into the air above an industrial district. AERIAL FOOTAGE.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(over)

Studies by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, as well as the Jefferson County Health Inspector, have shown a 300% increase in the incidence of leukemia and infant mortality among residents of the area. These and other complaints from survivors of the Fourth of July 1983 Louisville Refinery Disaster have led the Environmental Protection Agency to order 900 tons of soil removed from the area. At the time of this filming, that soil is residing in 175 railroad cars, parked on an unused railway line in South Dakota.

EXTERIOR - SOUTH DAKOTA - DUSK

A railroad car loaded with dirt -- the last in a long chain -- rolls up and stops against a bumper with a CLANK.

THE END.

THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD