

ZOMBIE DAD & THE BIZARRO PLAGUE

Written by

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INT. DEN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON:

A FLICKERING BLACK AND WHITE VHS IMAGE of a confidant, handsome, Rock Hudson type lecturer.

DR. SCIENCE

The first stage of decomposition begins with the cessation of the heart. The absence of blood being pumped through the body creates discoloration.

A teen age boy, DREW (18) leans forward intently.

DREW

Awesome. Where did you get these?

DR. SCIENCE

At ninety hours maggots will hatch and begin to feed on body tissue. Skin will slip and hair detach.

Lit only in silhouette by the light from the TV screen a teenage girl, TRACEY (16) crosses the room.

TRACEY

Gross.

CLOSE ON:

The girl's hand literally pulling the plug. Darkness. A woman's voice calls out.

MOM (O.S.)

What's going on in there?

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - DAY

A WINTRY SUN SHINES through the metal slats of a basement window, half illuminating A CROWDED AND CHAOTIC MORGUE.

NAKED BODIES lie on gurneys in varying shades of decomposition. METAL BUCKETS OVERFLOW with the offal and organs of rapid autopsy.

The slat of light casts a POOL OVER TWO BODIES. A WOMAN, with large breasts, and a roughly sutured gash from her chest down to her belly.

Beside her, a man, MATT, his SKIN GLISTENING PALE, his body still awaiting autopsy.

Two morgue attendants, NASTY and COFF, are trying halfheartedly to keep up with their work. Nasty lifts Matt's arm and drops it.

NASTY

Fucker out of rigor. Lot easier to chop 'em when they stiff.

COFF

Came in Friday. You think they paying time and half to cut up that sorry ass?

NASTY

This gonna be messy.

COFF

I'm goin' to burn one.

NASTY

Like these fuckers gonna object?

Coff looks around at the bloody filth.

COFF

Gotta maintain a 'pristine work environment'.

He pauses by the door and DEXTEROUSLY EXTRACTS A SINGLE COOL CIGARETTE from the soft pack in the chest pocket of his scrubs. Nasty picks up a circular saw and gives it a quick double rev.

COFF (CONT'D)

Told you to infib them first.

NASTY

Like he just resting?

COFF

That's the protocol. Follow protocol.

Nasty reluctantly puts down the saw and REACHES FOR THE PADDLES OF AN INFIBULATOR. He rubs them together to charge them. He watches as Coff leaves.

He moves towards Matt but IS DISTRACTED BY THE NAKED FEMALE BODY. He looks guiltily towards the door. He APPLIES THE PADDLES TO THE WOMAN'S CHEST AND ZAPS HER. Her breasts jiggle.

NASTY
Yeah, baby.

He gives her a longer blast and her breasts wobble again.

NASTY (CONT'D)
Dance for daddy.

He licks his lips. He turns to Matt - RUBBING THE TWO PADDLES AGAINST EACH OTHER TO RE-CHARGE THEM. He presses the paddles against Matt's chest.

CLOSE ON: Matt's eyes. His eye lids begin to blink rapidly.

As Nasty goes to remove the paddles, Matt's hands grab his wrists, pushing the paddles back against his chest.

NASTY (CONT'D)
What the fuck!

He struggles to break free - LOCKED IN THE ARM WRESTLING MATCH FROM HELL. Matt's eyes are fully alive now and locked on Nasty's. Matt relaxes his arms for a moment allowing Nasty's arms to double up - the paddles ending inches from each side of his head.

MATT'S MUSCLES BULGE as he jams both paddles against Nasty's temples.

Nasty's body convulses as the surge passes through his head. HIS EYES BEGIN TO SWELL.

HIS BRAIN EXPLODES driving his EYEBALLS RIGHT OUT OF HIS HEAD.

LIQUIDIZED BRAIN MATTER SHOOTS THROUGH HIS EYE SOCKETS and splashes on Matt's face.

Matt release Nasty's arms and he drops to the floor. Matt goes to clean the brain mess from his face BUT HIS HAND WIPES SOME GREY GOO INTO HIS MOUTH. He pauses.

HIS TONGUE EXTRUDES AND SWIPES a little more BRAIN into his mouth. HE SMACKS HIS LIPS IN PLEASURE.

He goes to wipe more brains into his mouth but stops. He looks at the GOO on his fingers. He likes the taste but the moral part of his brain is signaling distaste. He wipes his hand on his body. He sits up on the gurney.

There is a TAG tied to his big toe.

He pulls it off and studies it. It read's "John Doe" and a series of letters and numbers.

He studies the code carefully as if he could decipher it. As he does so another SERIES OF LETTERS AND NUMBERS runs across his vision. A message from deep in his brain. Matt blinks and the code disappears. He shakes his head to clear it. He drops the tag.

He climbs down off the gurney and stands naked above Nasty. MATT'S FRONT IS WHITE BUT HIS BACK IS BLACK AND BLUE WHERE HIS BLOOD HAS POOLED. He looks at Nasty's corpse. A look of confusion crosses Matt's face. He seems unsure as to whether he has anything to do with Nasty's destroyed head.

He looks around at the other bodies. He shakes his head and moves towards the door. His steps are unsteady, unbalanced, LIKE A GIANT NAKED TODDLER JUST LEARNING TO WALK.

He opens the door and looks down a long basement corridor. An orderly and a nurse, both dressed in scrubs, are walking away from him. He looks down at his naked body. He closes the door.

A SET OF CLEAN SCRUBS ARE HANGING ON A NEARBY HOOK. Matt reaches for them.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY

Dressed in scrubs, but still moving like an overgrown baby, Matt stumbles his way down the hallway. He steadies himself by SLIDING ONE HAND ALONG THE WALL. An elevator door startles him by sliding open. Coff emerges from the elevator, head down, ignoring Matt. Matt steps into the elevator. The door closes.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Matt looks around what appears to him to be a tiny room. His attention is drawn to the LIGHTED CONTROL PANEL - the usual confusing jumble of letters, P3 next to 1 etc. As he studies the panel another series of numbers run past his eyes. Matt tries to focus - the number sequence 4 8 2 0 9, runs repeatedly through the series. He blinks the numbers away and stabs randomly at the panel.

INT. EMERGENCY ADMISSIONS - DAY

The elevator door opens and Matt stumbles into a chaotic scene of nurses and doctors wearing face masks, EMT teams DRESSED IN HAZMAT SUITS, AND FRIGHTENED, BEWILDERED PATIENTS - most holding paper masks over their mouths.

Anywhere else Matt, DEATHLY PALLOR AND STUMBLING GAIT, would draw attention - but his uniform scrubs render him practically invisible. He stumbles awkwardly toward the main entrance.

A HISPANIC TODDLER watches him with curiosity. Matt sees the toddler and is immediately drawn towards him - one toddler recognizing another.

TWO SECURITY GUARDS are trying to maintain some control over the entrance. One of them sees Matt approaching.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey, buddy, where's your mask?

This means nothing to Matt. The guard begins to move towards him as a SPEAKER voice blares out.

SPEAKER (O.S.)

Code Orange. Code Orange. Security
Personnel to the morgue. Code
Orange.

The two Security Guards hurry to the stairs as Matt stumbles through the doorway.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

MATT SLIPS AND SLIDES DOWN AN ICY STREET. The biting wind seems to have no effect on him. Other pedestrians are having as much trouble keeping their footing so his appearance is not so unusual. He watches as a man across the street falls to the ground - BLOOD LEAKING FROM HIS FACE MASK.

Pedestrians scurry to get away from him but a young samaritan woman approaches the victim and turns him onto his back. The woman seems to be checking for vital signs.

MATT'S POV AS the young samaritan woman lifts the victim's wallet and slides it into her coat.

SAMARITAN

Bizarro Plague! Stay back!

People cross the street in fear, the samaritan disappearing into their midst.

A POLICE CAR comes hurtling down the street, its siren wailing.

Matt covers his ears as the car blares past heading towards the distant hospital.

Matt uncovers his ears just as another police cruiser slides around the corner, LIGHTS FLASHING AND SIREN SCREAMING. Matt scurries through the nearest doorway.

INT. STARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS

Matt looks around in confusion. It's a normal Starbuck's except most customers are wearing face masks and seem even more totally isolated and focused on their lap tops. Matt instinctively joins the end of the waiting line. HE SLIGHTLY BUMPS against the woman in front of him. She turns snarling, ready to reprimand him. Then she notices his hospital scrubs.

SNARLER

Oh my God! It's one of our heroes!
One of our hospital heroes! You
don't have to wait in line.

She starts to push him forward along the line. Other customers clap him on the back and applaud.

CUSTOMERS

One of our heroes!

Matt arrives at the head of the line. A BORED BARISTA repeats the corporate mantra.

BARISTA

Welcome to Starbuck's, even the
Plague won't shut us down. How can
I serve you today?

Matt looks up at the sign board and it's infinite offerings of variations. The number sequence 4 8 2 0 9, runs past his eyes. The barista drones again.

BARISTA (CONT'D)

Welcome to Starbuck's, even the
Plague won't shut us down. How can
I serve you today?

SNARLER

Can't you see he's exhausted. Give
this guy a mocha on me.

BARISTA

Grande?

SNARLER

What the hell do you think! A
Triple Grande!

Other customers applaud. Matt notices a NERDY young woman move away from her open computer. He ignores the growing debate over who should have the honor of buying him what coffee.

ALL
Vendi... frappacino... double
decaf... with the slightest touch
of cinnamon...

Matt gazes at the computer. He types 4 8 2 0 9, into the Google search box. His movements are awkward - like an old person trying to type on a blackberry. The computer owner returns.

NERDY
Excuse me! What the hell--

Matt ignores her and presses return. The answer pops up ZIP CODE - Detroit, Michigan.

NERDY (CONT'D)
I said excuse me.

SNARLER
Don't you address our hero like
that!

The other Facebook addicts rise to Nerdy's defense.

FACEBOOKER
You don't touch someone else's
interface!

SNARLER
He could be saving a life, ya dumb
shit.

Matt is confused and threatened by the rising din. HE PICKS UP A LARGE STEAMING COFFEE. He tries to escape. His elbow is jogged and the BURNING COFFEE SPLATTERS OVER NERDY. She screams.

FACEBOOKER
Oh my God! He burned her! He burned
her!

The deep sublimated rage that exists in all Starbuck's erupts.

SNARLER
Get him!

FACEBOOKER
Get the hacker!

They've turned into Frankenstein's villagers.

NERDY
Burn him! Burn him back!

Matt struggles through the mob. The barista drones on.

BARISTA
Welcome to Starbuck's, even the
Plague won't shut us down. How can
I serve you today?

The mob pursues Matt out the door.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

Matt stumbles into the street. A CHECKER CAB SLIDES
SCREECHING ACROSS A PATCH OF ICE AND HITS HIM, DOUBLING HIM
OVER THE HOOD. He locks eyes with the cab driver, GARRULOSOV.

The enraged Starbuckers start to beat him with their fists.
He slides along the side of the cab and manages to open the
rear door and flings himself into the cab.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

The driver hits the gas and scatters the mob.

GARRULOSOV
Crazy fucking Americans!

He glances at Matt stretched across his back seat.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
You medical man? Me too! Back in
Soviet I am scientist. Respected.
Here I drive fucking Americans!

He mimics a woman's voice.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
Take the Harbor Tunnel! Don't take
the Harbor Tunnel!

Matt is sitting up.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
Where you go? Where to tovarich?

Matt makes a flying gesture with his hand.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
 Logan? Sure thing. Get the fuck out
 of this crazy shit before they
 close the airports. Bizarro Plague
 all over North East now. Soon all
 over country. You know the cause?

Matt looks at him blankly.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
 CIA. No question. Same as Aids.
 Caused by monkey in Africa.
 Bullsheet! CIA spread Bizarro
 Plague to wipe out poor. Then no
 problem welfare, no problem health
 insurance. Dead don't need no
 health insurance. Just like KGB.

He blares his horn as he narrowly misses a bus.

GARRULOSOV (CONT'D)
 How come no needle! How come no
 vaccinate! Capitalist big shot get
 vaccinate you bet your ass!

Matt looks at his arm where a PLASTER COVERS A COTTON WOOL
 SWAB.

He picks at the plaster till it tears off - TAKING A SWATHE
 OF SKIN WITH IT. He examines the SMALL PUNCTURE WOUND
 curiously.

His attention is drawn to a TATTOO on his arm, just above the
 puncture wound.

He lifts the sleeve of his scrubs. He examines the
 EXQUISITELY RENDERED PORTRAIT OF A SMILING, BLOND EIGHT YEAR
 OLD GIRL.

He leans back against the seat and looks out the window. His
 POV OF AN ENORMOUS CEMETERY - THE ROWS OF GLEAMING HEADSTONES
 reflected in the window glass.

He reaches with two fingers of his right hand and feels for
 his pulse in his left wrist. He looks confused. He reaches
 two fingers of his left hand to his throat and searches
 again.

EXT. APPROACH ROAD, LOGAN AIRPORT - DAY

The taxi is snarled in the middle of an ENORMOUS TRAFFIC JAM. Matt abandons the cab and stumbles towards the terminal. The Russian jumps out after him.

GARRULOSOV

Thirty dollar! Thirty dollar!

But the traffic has started to move and a blare of horns forces him back to his cab.

EXT. TERMINAL - DAY

Matt joins the crowds of PANICKED, ANGRY, PASSENGERS who are backed up into the streets. Masked cops are trying to keep order. Matt's weird movement is not so obvious in the milling mob. The inane loudspeaker announcement repeats endlessly.

LOUD (O.S.)

This is a no parking zone.

Vehicles will be towed. This is a no parking zone. Vehicles will be towed.

AIRPORT COP

Ticketed passengers only. Ya gotta have a ticket!

PEOPLE WAVE THEIR PRECIOUS TICKETS IN THE AIR. Matt makes his way through the frustrated, pushing crowd into the packed Departures terminal.

INT. TERMINAL - DAY

Matt is pulled along by the movement of the crowd. He spots a departures board. Almost every flight is marked 'Delayed' or 'Canceled. He tries to focus on the sign but numbers start to run across his vision - the dominant sequence is 8 M 1 1 3

He shakes his head and looks again at the board. Just as the crowd pushes him past he spots "DETROIT" and 'GATE TEN'. He runs his hands over his empty pockets as if he has just remembered the existence of money. He doesn't have any. The crowd propels him around a corner.

INT. ESCALATORS - DAY

The crowd becomes even more jam packed as people try to force their way onto a DOWN escalator - some even sliding down the center divider.

Matt's attention is drawn to the almost empty UP stairs. He fights his way out of the crowd and onto the UP stairs. HE GRABS FOR THE HANDRAIL AS HE IS PROPELLED BACKWARDS.

He looks confused but steps on again. After two steps he is moving backwards again. He starts to run down the UP steps. People on the center divide follow his example and spill onto the UP steps. A harried TSA officer is shocked by the outbreak of anarchy.

TSA WOMAN

That is an UP facilitator. You
cannot use the UP facilitator!

She is overwhelmed by the rush of bodies accelerating as their FEET HIT UNMOVING GROUND. Matt is carried past her.

INT. AIRPORT SECURITY - DAY

The mob is funneled into a brightly lit tunnel - reminiscent of an enormous MRI machine. TSA operatives harry and bully the unfortunate supplicants.

HARRY

Remove your shoes!

BULLY

Dispose of all liquids!

A metallic computer voice adds to the cacophony.

COMPUTER (O.S.)

Move calmly through the temperature
scanner. Move calmly through the
temperature scanner.

TSA agents are watching monitors. Matt appears in the crowd on the monitor - only as an outline as he has no temperature.

THE AGENT PUTS HIS FINGER ON THE OUTLINE - ABOUT TO BUST HIM -

When another agent spots a woman's outline which is glowing red with a high temperature.

TSA

Stop that woman!

The agent is pointing at an Asian woman.

TSA (CONT'D)

Plague carrier!

The Asian woman panics and starts to push her way through the crowd. An ALARM SIREN STARTS TO BLAST and ORANGE LIGHTS FLASH. Panic spreads. A concealed door bursts open and a SWAT team joins the chaos.

As the door swings shut Matt sticks his foot into the gap. The sudden appearance of the SWAT team has unleashed total terror. The Asian woman runs. She is breaking out of the crowd. The SWAT team shoots her. As she spins around dying BLOOD FLIES OUT OF HER EYES, MOUTH, NOSE, AND EARS.

SWAT

Don't touch the blood!

TSA

Don't touch the blood!

Passengers cower on the floor - terrified of being shot, terrified of being infected. Matt pushes his way through the door.

INT. LUGGAGE HANDLING - CONTINUOUS

Matt stumbles down a metal staircase. THE WHINE OF LUGGAGE CONVEYOR BELTS AND THE NEARBY ROAR OF JET ENGINES DEAFENS HIM. The workers ignore him as he stumbles across the floor. A SUPERVISOR spots him and roars above the noise.

SUPERVISOR

Yo, buddy! Restricted area!

Matt sees the Supervisor hurrying towards him. He retreats and bumps into a conveyor belt. The Supervisor is almost on him. Matt tries to scramble across the conveyor belt. The flow of luggage knocks him off his feet and onto his back. THE BELT PROPELS HIM THROUGH AN OPENING IN THE WALL.

The Supervisor presses a kill switch for the belt. He grabs a microphone.

SUPERVISOR (CONT'D)

Security breach! Security breach!

Sirens blare.

INT. CONVEYOR BELT - CONTINUOUS

The belt is carrying Matt down a ramp to the tarmac level. He tries to get to his hands and knees. THE BELT'S SUDDEN HALT TUMBLES HIM DOWNWARDS.

EXT. TARMAC - DAY

A blast of icy wind hits Matt as he clambers to his feet.

SNOW PLOWS ARE STRAINING TO KEEP THE RUNWAYS CLEAR. The roar of jet engines is deafening. Matt covers his ears with his hands as he passes below a jet. The suction of the jet engines threatens to knock him down but he keeps his feet. His movements are becoming slower, more confused.

He sees a giant GATE TEN painted on the wall. Workers are spraying the wings of the plane to de-ice it, causing a fine liquid mist to envelop the jet. THE ENGINES ARE REVVING.

MATT DISAPPEARS INTO THE MIST.

Matt rests against the wheel of the plane. It is almost taller than he is. In the distance he sees a SWAT team emerge onto the tarmac, led by TWO BAYING SEARCH DOGS. He looks around hopelessly. The noise of the engine grows and the wheels begin to move. The plane is pulling back from the Gate.

Matt tries to keep up with the moving wheel, using it to hide his presence from the approaching SWAT team.

THE K-9 HANDLERS RELEASE THEIR DOGS.

The plane is moving faster. Matt makes a lunge upwards. ONE FOOT HITS THE SPINNING AXLE HUB OF THE WHEEL AS HIS HANDS GRAB FOR THE UNDER CARRIAGE. He hoists himself upwards, his feet spinning on the wheel like a cartoon character.

THE DOGS APPEAR SNARLING AT HIS FEET. He pulls himself higher, clear of the wheel and the snapping teeth. The dogs follow along, barking madly. The SWAT team can see their dogs chasing the plane.

K-9 HANDLER
What the hell are they doing?

The wheels are throwing up enough mist and snow to hide Matt.

EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

MATT CLINGS TO THE UNDERCARRIAGE as the plane halts momentarily. The dogs seize their moment, jumping closer and closer to Matt's feet. The plane begins to roll forward as the engines whine louder.

MATT HOLDS ON WITH DESPERATION as the plane accelerates rapidly. The entire under carriage starts to vibrate as the plane tops a hundred miles an hour. MATT'S ARM MUSCLES BEGIN TO VIBRATE IN TIME WITH THE UNDERCARRIAGE.

THE PICTURE OF THE GIRL SHAKING, TAUNTING HIM.

As the speed grows only the air pressure holds Matt jammed against the under carriage. THE WHEELS LEAVE THE GROUND.

EXT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Matt watches the frozen ground fall away beneath him. Then the mix of sleet and mist wipes out the sight of everything but the SLOWING SPIN OF THE WHEEL.

A new whine, higher in tone than the engines, signals the retraction of the under carriage. Matt holds on as the under carriage tips sideways and retracts into the wing. THE FLAPS CLOSE OVER THE WING BAY, ENTOMBING MATT.

EXT. RUNWAY - DAY

The dogs lope happily back to their handlers.

K-9 HANDLER

You think he could have been on there?

SWAT LEADER

He's an icepop if he was. Thirty thousand feet. Without oxygen.

K-9 HANDLER

Tower could call it back.

SWAT LEADER

Screw it. It's my daughter's birthday, I gotta get home.

They lead the dogs back toward the terminal.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

CLOSE ON a hand tearing a leg from a fried CHINESE CHICKEN.

TRACEY (O.S.)

It's like the Auschwitz of chickens.

ANGLE ON DREW BITING INTO THE CHICKEN, GREASE RUNNING DOWN his chin. He wipes it away with the back of his hand.

Tracey regards him with weary condescension. In their unbalanced relationship his meat eating is almost the sole concession she has granted him.

DREW
(muffled)
It's good Mrs. S.

Tracey's MOM looks across the take out carton strewn table at her daughter.

Tracey has DYED BLACK HAIR WITH WILD PURPLE AND GREEN PATCHES. Her face is almost white but for her BLACK LIPSTICK RACCOON EYES. She has lip and nose piercings - total Goth.

Drew wears a torn black Repugnant Fetus 2 Return of The Fetus T-shirt, his hair is uncombed. His fashion choices are his attempt to adopt her look. He has a long way to go. But it reveals just how smitten he is.

Mom (36) is angry. She's been angry for a long time.

MOM
Stop picking on Drew. Eat your
tofu.

TRACEY
Thought you 'disapproved' of Drew.

MOM
I disapprove of you dating a boy
who's in college. That's natural.

TRACEY
You and Dad were married at twenty.

MOM
We know how well that worked out.

TRACEY
(sarcasm)
Can we go if we promise not to have
sex?

Drew nearly chokes on his chicken.

MOM
You are not going to a Grateful
Dead--

TRACEY
Rising Dead, mom, Rising Dead.
God! Get with it.

MOM
You are not going to New Mexico
with your inappropriately aged boy
friend.

Before she can respond.

MOM (CONT'D)
Or anybody else. That's final.

A PIECE OF CHICKEN SKIN shoots out of Drew's mouth landing on
the table. The half chewed flesh sitting there, the boy not
knowing what the proper move is.

TRACEY
Get it, Drew!

He reaches for it, pops it back in his mouth.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Revolting. Just revolting.

EXT. DETROIT AIRPORT - EVENING

A SWAT team and a Medical team dressed in hazmat suits wait
on the tarmac. It's raining. They react to the sound of an
approaching plane.

EXT. SKY - EVENING

The jet descends through the clouds and into the rain. It
banks to line up its approach.

THE JET LOWERS ITS UNDERCARRIAGE.

Matt is frozen to the undercarriage, HIS ENTIRE BODY ENCASED
IN ICE. Rain water STREAMS ACROSS HIS ICED FACE.

EXT. RUNWAY - EVENING

The wheels touch down hard. THE ICE AROUND MATT'S ARMS CRACKS
OPEN. The plane decelerates hard, THE WHEELS THROWING SPUMES
OF WATER.

At a hundred miles an hour the ice cracks further and MATT'S
FROZEN BODY FALLS FROM THE UNDER CARRIAGE.

His ice encased body SLIDES across the tarmac and slows to a halt in the grassy verge. The rain is melting the ice.

EXT. TARMAC - EVENING

The plane halts clear of the gates. The SWAT and Medical teams swarm around it examining the undercarriage. A SPOT LIGHT PLAYS ON THE SHINY METAL. It focuses on one dull splotch.

SPOT OPERATOR

What's that?

Two Swat team members hoist a MEDIC up to the under carriage. He examines the spot with a flashlight. He produces a tweezers and carefully removes the dull film. They lower him to the ground.

MEDIC

Oh shit.

SWAT LEADER

What is it?

MEDIC

Skin. I think it's the skin off his left palm.

The team look at it with disgust.

EXT. GRASSY VERGE - EVENING

The rain has done its work. MATT'S EYES FLICKER OPEN. He tries to rise but can't. He flops back down. He looks to the right - to the distant terminal. He looks to the left.

THE IMAGE IS BLURRED - there is something wrong with his left eye.

He raises his left hand to wipe his eye. The move brings his hand into clear vision. He can see where the skin has been torn away EXPOSING SINEW AND MUSCLE. There is a patch of ice still stuck to his inner arm. He pulls at it and it COMES AWAY BRINGING A LARGE SWATCH OF SKIN WITH IT. He throws the messy ice aside.

The move brings the TATTOOED IMAGE OF YOUNG TRACEY INTO FOCUS. He can see a fence in the distance. HE STARTS TO CRAWL TOWARDS IT.

EXT. FENCE - EVENING

Matt arrives at the fence. He lies exhausted against it. HE LOOKS AROUND - confused by the blurring in his left eye.

HE CLOSSES THAT EYE AND SQUINTS UP AT THE FENCE.

It seems impossibly high. But half way up there is a metal sign - a LIGHTNING BOLT warning of an electrified fence. He hauls himself to his feet. He sways back and forth, steadying himself against the fence. He gathers the little strength he has left and FORCES HIMSELF TO CLIMB UP THE FENCE.

He has almost reached the top when his strength gives out. He can't go any higher. HE HANGS BY HIS RIGHT ARM, LETTING HIS INJURED LEFT HAND FALL. He tries to view the top of the fence through his injured eye. IT IS A BLUR.

He makes a final effort, slowly raising his left arm towards the top of the fence, as with a supreme effort he pulls himself inches higher with his right arm.

He turns his head and the tattoo appears quivering, taunting. He clenches his teeth and the INJURED HAND GRASPS THE ELECTRIC FEED.

A rush of electricity surges through him. HIS BODY GLOWS BLUE as the fence sparkles brightly. He pulls himself up and lies for a moment along the top of the fence - letting the current flow through him, reviving himself. He swings down the other side of the fence.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

He stumbles through Long Term parking trying car door handles. His movement is brisker, more alert. He finds a Subaru with an unlocked door.

INT. SUBARU - EVENING

He climbs in out of the rain. HE EXAMINES HIS WOUNDED HAND AGAIN. He reaches automatically to turn the ignition key. Realizes there is no key. Looks at his empty right hand trying to figure it out.

HE REACHES UNDER THE DASH AND FUMBLES AROUND.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

THE HOOD POPS. He climbs out and manages to lift the hood. He can't figure out how to hold it open so he lets it REST ON HIS HEAD. He pulls the plastic cap off the positive battery terminal. He puts his right forearm across the two terminals. THE BATTERY SPARKS. He searches with his other hand till it touches the starter motor. The engine bursts into life.

He drops the hood and climbs back into the Subaru.

I/E. SUBARU - CONTINUOUS

He puts the car in gear. It jumps forward and hits the car in front. AN ALARM GOES OFF. He fumbles it into reverse and lurches backwards into another parked car.

He finally gets free of the parking space and BANGS HIS WAY THROUGH THE LINES OF CARS. He hasn't remembered to turn on the lights or wipers.

He smashes through the barrier at the pay station.

I/E. SUBARU - EVENING

He weaves his way onto the busy Interstate. HIS DRIVING IS ERRATIC, speeding up, slowing down, twisting from one lane to another.

CAR HORNS BLARE as drivers swerve to avoid him. A passing truck sprays even more water onto his windshield. He peers up at a green interstate sign which he reads as 8 M 1 1 3. He swerves across three lanes.

A SPEEDING TRUCKER in a giant semi rig hits his brakes. The semi jack-knifes across three lanes. It's rear wheels overtake the cab and SMASH SIDEWAYS into the Subaru. The Subaru hits the side railing of the elevated highway and FLIPS.

EXT. DARK STREET - EVENING

THE SUBARU APPEARS UPSIDE DOWN OVER THE RAILING. It smashes down ROOF TO ROOF onto a parked car. It teeters there for a moment.

A bunch of kids sheltering under a bodega awning watch with delight.

KID
Holy shit!

The Subaru teeters for a moment longer. Then it slides, METAL AGAINST METAL, and flips back onto his wheels.

INT. SUBARU - CONTINUOUS

Matt shakes his head to clear it. He hits the gas and drives the smashed but still running Subaru into an intersection.

His left eye gives him no warning of THE SPEEDING TRUCK WHICH SMACKS into the Subaru knocking it screeching sideways towards the gangbanger's corner. They scramble out of the way and head for the halted truck.

I/E. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The trucker sees the gang headed for him. He has no interest in playing LA riots. HE SLAMS THE TRUCK INTO REVERSE. The gang pursues him. ONE KID IS BANGING ON THE WINDSHIELD WITH AN ALUMINUM BASEBALL BAT.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

MATT CLIMBS OUT THE WINDOW OF THE TOTALED SUBARU. He ignores the kids in their frenzied pursuit of the truck. He looks at the parked cars. A BLACK AND YELLOW LOW RIDER THUNDERBIRD parked by a hydrant is garish enough to appeal to him. He opens the door and gets in.

INT. THUNDERBIRD - CONTINUOUS

EVERYTHING LIGHTS UP.

Numbers. Odometer. Speedometer. Radio stations. The numbers start to blur together forming 8 M 1 1 3. He blinks the numbers away.

HE TOUCHES THE KEYHOLE. THE CAR STARTS RIGHT UP. He looks at his hand - amused. He pulls out.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Matt drives the Thunderbird towards the kids. Their leader, LERON, reacts in horror.

LERON

He got my ride! Ghost mothafucka
stole my ride!

Matt blasts past them. The kids crowd into the street and stop an approaching car - an '83 Buick Century. THEY PULL THE PROTESTING DRIVER OUT. Five of them crowd into the car and they head off in hot pursuit.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Matt drives at speed through an intersection, CLIPPING THE EDGE OF A PARKED CAR. The smack is loud enough to wake two sleeping cops in their hidden cruiser.

COP
What the fuck!

The cops hit the lights and swings into the intersection just as the Buick arrives. They miss each other by inches. Leron is not about to quit. The cops are still groggy from their nap. THE CRUISER AND THE BUICK SPEED DOWN THE ROAD, side by side.

INT. THUNDERBIRD - EVENING

Matt is speeding along clipping the occasional parked car. He's beginning to get the hang of driving.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The cruiser and the Buick are NECK AND NECK but they have entered a stretch of road where cars are parked on both sides.

Leron smacks the Buick against the cop car. The cruiser smacks him back. THE BUICK SCREECHES AGAINST THE PARKED CARS. SPARKS FLY. THE COP CAR SCREECHES AGAINST PARKED CARS ON ITS SIDE. The road is narrowing. Neither driver will quit. The street narrows further. AN UNMERCIFUL SCREAM OF METAL ON METAL as both cars screech into the ever narrowing lane. They GRIND to a halt, jammed solid.

The cop revs his engine. His rear wheel spins, smoking, till it bursts.

Leron revs the Buick. Nothing. BOTH CARS ARE LOCKED SOLID, THEIR DOORS JAMMED SHUT.

The kids look at the cops. The cops look at the kids.

The driver of the cop car draws his service pistol and displays it to the kids.

Leron draws his GLOCK and displays it to the cops.

The second cop reaches down and produces a SHOT GUN.

Leron's front seat guy reaches into his coat and produces a UZI.

Everybody looks at everybody.

The cops open FIRE.

The kids open FIRE.

The kid in the back of the Buick cowers down as both cars EXPLODE WITH BULLETS, SHOT GUN BLASTS AND MACHINE GUN FIRE.

Too close to each other to aim, both sets of shooters just BLAST away madly. This is America. The shooting goes on interminably and finally dies away.

The kid peeks his head up. He pats his hands over his body to confirm he hasn't been shot. He climbs out the shattered rear window of the Buick, clambers over the trunk and takes off.

EXT. INTERSECTION - EVENING

Matt drives into a crossroads, decides too late to make the turn, JUMPS THE CURB AND SMACKS INTO A TREE. He clambers out of the wrecked car and stumbles away. He steadies himself by GRABBING HOLD OF A STREET NAME SIGN. He looks up at the name. The numbers 8 M 1 1 3 flash across his eyes. He blinks and the numbers resolve themselves into the letters on the sign - 8 MILE.

Matt trudges down the street.

EXT. TRACT HOUSE - NIGHT

A DODGE CHARGER is parked in the driveway - its engine running. Matt appears out of the gloom. He studies the house. His attention is drawn to The Charger. He lumbers towards it.

INT. CHARGER - NIGHT

The car windows are fogged up.

TRACEY

I'm going whether that bitch likes
it or not.

DREW

Don't call your Mom a bitch.

Tracey gives him a filthy look.

TRACEY
Side with her.

She stares out the window.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
See how far that will get you.

DREW
I want to go as much as you.

He looks down at her body.

DREW (CONT'D)
More than you.

She starts to draw a 'sad face' on the window glass.

DREW (CONT'D)
You'll mark the window!

SHE ANGRILY SWIPES HER PALM across the glass revealing Matt peering in. Tracey screams!

DREW (CONT'D)
Ahhhh!

She grabs for the door handle. He grabs for her and misses.

DREW (CONT'D)
Don't!

She jumps out.

EXT. TRACT HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Matt, equally startled, is lumbering away across the yard. Tracey emerges from the car.

TRACEY
Wait!

Something in her voice makes Matt stop. He turns slowly to face her. She comes towards him. In her Goth make up she looks almost as dead as he does. She studies him for a moment.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Daddy?

He stares in confusion at this peculiar looking child. He lifts his sleeve to examine the tattoo. Could his blonde little girl have turned into this Goth creature?

She sees the tattoo. She reaches out her hand and touches it.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
You're freezing. Come inside.

She leads him towards the house.

INT. TRACY'S MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: a Mom's hand pouring a shot of vodka. The camera follows the hand to Mom drinking and REVEALS Tracey and Matt entering, followed by Drew. The living room is half lit so that Matt's appearance is not immediately obvious.

TRACEY
Dad's here!

Matt's ex-wife turns her head away sharply - as if the mere sight of her ex-husband threatens to enrage her.

MOM
What are you doing here?

Matt doesn't respond. Tracey plays the divorced kid card.

TRACEY
He's taking me to the Rising Dead concert!

MOM
Enough Tracey!

TRACEY
(to him)
Daddy! Tell her I'm going to the Rising Dead Concert!

MOM
Like he's going to start acting like a father now. Matt?

Matt doesn't respond to his name. He is gazing at an array of family photos on a credenza - HIS FOCUS LOCKED ON A PICTURE OF TRACEY AS A BABY ON THE KNEE OF AN OLDER MAN.

MOM (CONT'D)
Matt!

He looks at her, blinking, his name now recovered.

MOM (CONT'D)

Are you going to back me up for once?

TRACEY

(shrieking)

Daddy!! If I don't go to that concert my life is over! I won't have anything to live for! I won't study for my S.A.T's, I won't tidy my room, I won't do anything. I have to go the Rising Dead Concert!! Please. Please. Please. Please. Please. Please. Pa-lease!

MOM

It's not happening.

TRACEY

(to Matt)

Tell that evil bitch that I'm going to the Rising Dead concert or I'll totally hate you for abandoning us!

The female screeching seems to have no effect on Matt - as if he had always fallen silent in response to raised women's voices. He reaches for the framed photo.

MOM

I hope you're here to take her back to Boston with you!

Tracey is shocked.

MOM (CONT'D)

I didn't mean that, honey.

TRACEY

I rest my case. Now, I'm definitely going to the concert.

Matt stares at the photo. HIS LEFT EYE BLINKS STRANGELY. HE WIPES HIS FINGER ACROSS HIS EYE - as if removing sleep. He looks down at his finger tip. IT'S MOVING - A MAGGOT. He tries to talk - but barely anything comes out - just a croak.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

What'd you say, Daddy? That I can go to the Rising Dead concert?

MOM

Enough! You're not going all the way to New Mexico in the middle of a goddamned plague!

TRACEY

What the hell's the plague have to do with it!? I'll be safer there than in this decaying city. Detroit should just pull an Atlantis already and be done with it!

He moans.

MOM

What are you moaning about?

She looks at him, settles on him for the first time.

MOM (CONT'D)

You look terrible. Are you sick?

TRACEY

Yeah, Daddy, you don't look so good. Mom, you should probably take him to the hospital.

(under her breath)

So, I can go to the Rising Dead concert...

MOM

Shut up, now.

TRACEY

(shrieking)

I'm going to the Rising Dead concert whether you like it or not!!

She runs outside into the rain. Drew follows her.

MOM

Over my dead body you are!

(to Matt)

This is what it's like to actually be a parent.

She moves over to him.

MOM (CONT'D)

(tossing him out into the rain)

You know what? You're her father. You deal with it.

She pushes him out into the rain and slams the door. He has the framed photo in his hand.

INT. THE CHARGE - NIGHT

DEATH METAL BLASTS as the rain hammers the windshield.
Tracey and Drew in the front, Matt in the back.

TRACEY

You're absolutely wrong. Zombie
Death Threat may have been
influenced by Inner Terrestrials
earlier work, but they are in no
way a mere "reproduction."

She scoffs at the ridiculousness of his assumption. Matt
keeps his working eye on Tracey. In his POV Drew is blurred.

He can make no sense of their teen conversation.

DREW

I'm not saying they're a
reproduction, Tray--

TRACEY

Don't call me Tray, Andrew.

DREW

I'm saying they're a mass
production. My freakin' mom listens
to Death Threat.

TRACEY

Well, I guess your freakin' mom's
freakin' cooler than you, Drew.

DREW

(looking in the mirror)
What do you think, Mr. Shelley?
Are you into death?

No answer.

DREW (CONT'D)

More of a Peter, Paul, and Mary
kind of guy?

Matt moans. His mouth is dry and stale. He is looking at the
photo in his lap, illuminated by the headlights of passing
cars.

TRACEY

Daddy's not into death. He's
totally lame. He likes The Who.

She reaches into her purse and PULLS OUT A CIGARETTE. Drew
gives her a look.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

(to Drew)

What? Like he gives a shit.

She lights it up, takes a deep drag and passes the cigarette back to Matt.

DREW

You won't eat meat, but you smoke.

TRACEY

Tobacco was spiritual to the Native Americans.

She lights another cigarette and inhales. Matt is studying her, the lit cigarette in his hand. He mimics her action.

HE INHALES AND THE SMOKE SEEPS OUT OF THE CRACKS IN HIS SKIN.

Drew reaches for her hand. She allows it. He entwines his fingers with hers.

Matt's POV CLOSE ON their hands.

HE COCKS HIS HEAD TO ONE SIDE so that he sees Drew clearly for the first time. Drew's physical contact with his daughter has struck a deep primitive chord in Matt. Drew feels the eyes on the back of his neck. He glances back at Matt. The look in Matt's eyes is intensely threatening. Drew is scared.

DREW

I better call my Mom.

Tracey gets it instinctively - her boyfriend is afraid of her Dad! She is surprised and pleased. Drew holds out his hand for her iphone.

TRACEY

Get a phone already.

DREW

The ear rad--

TRACEY

I know, Drew. The ear radiation.

DREW

It's real, Tracey!

TRACEY

(mocking)

Then aren't you afraid to use it?

DREW
You want me to drive you to New
Mexico?

She hands over the phone. He turns down the radio and speed
dials his home. HE CHECKS OUT MATT IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR.

DREW (CONT'D)
Hey, Mom... of course I ate
dinner... Chinese... yeah, fried...
no I don't usually... I was trying
to be polite... It's not about
speaking up, Mom! My asthma is
fine... yes I have my inhaler.

Tracey is delighted by the progress of the conversation -
She's not the only one with a crazy mom.

DREW (CONT'D)
Mom, listen... Mom, I'm getting ear
cancer here!... I didn't raise my
voice! It's just the car... I'm
driving Tracey to a concert... New
Mexico.

He holds the phone further from his ear.

DREW (CONT'D)
Mom! Of course not. Mr. Shelley is
with us. Tracey's dad... You
what?... Yeah sure... Of course.

He turns in his seat and half offers the phone to Matt.

DREW (CONT'D)
My, eh Mom, would like to speak
with you, Mr. Shelley.

Matt stares back at him. It's not going to happen. DREW
TWIRLS THE KNOB ON THE RADIO TO STATIC. He holds the phone to
it.

DREW (CONT'D)
You're breaking up Mom! I'll call
you back!

He disgustedly throws the phone to Tracey.

DREW (CONT'D)
Ear cancer!

TRACEY
Grown ups!

She turns up the volume.

RADIO

I'll gouge your bleeping eyes!!
I'll eat your bleeping kids!!

They drive on through the night.

INT. THE CHARGE - SUNRISE

Drew's sleepy eyes jolt open. He blinks repeatedly. Tracey is sleeping. Matt seems passed out in the back, THE SUN SHINING OFF HIS TRANSLUCENT SKIN. The further South they travel the warmer it gets. Drew turns up the radio.

"Take a load of Fannie..."

TRACEY

Oh, I love this song.

DREW

Really?

She's been caught out being uncool.

TRACEY

I mean, ya' know, for a non-death metal song, it's not too bad. Daddy used to love The Band. Got me into them when I was young. He had this huge collection of old 33s. Guess he still does. I have no idea.

Drew checks the rear-view.

DREW

He like, what... You haven't seen him in a while?

TRACEY

He left us when I was eight because...

(mocking)

His work was so important.

DREW

That sucks, Tray-Tray.

TRACEY

Don't.

DREW

I couldn't imagine what it's like to grow up without a Dad. My families like so in my business--

TRACEY

We're not talking about you, Drew. God! You really need to know when to just listen.

DREW

Sorry. Why'd he leave? I mean what kind of work was he doing?

TRACEY

I don't know, Drew. Shut up! Something stupid.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Stupid like I don't know, because it's stupid. ID. He worked with ID's.

DREW

What do you mean? Like the government? CIA? Like a spook?

TRACEY

I don't fucking know, Drew. We don't talk about it! It's boring!

DREW

Well, I'm sure he had his reasons for going.

Tracey grills him.

TRACEY

It's not like I missed him. Even when he was there he was so totally inside his own head.

DREW

Maybe it was something really important.

TRACEY

You're an idiot, Drew.

EXT. OKLAHOMA HIGHWAY - LATER

They pass beneath an underpass. Spray painted on the side is MASKS = DEATH. Tracey wipes sweat from her brow.

TRACEY

Hicks.

Drew sniffs the air. Doesn't like what he smells.

DREW

What's that?

TRACEY

What?

He sniffs again.

DREW

Don't you smell it?

She glances back at Matt.

TRACEY

(in denial)

I don't smell anything?

He winds down the window. THE RUSH OF AIR WAKENS MATT. He glances at his fingers. HIS SKIN IS SHRINKING MAKING HIS FINGERNAILS SEEM TO BE GROWING UNNATURALLY LONG.

DREW

(quietly)

Hey, don't take this the wrong way,
I think you're Dad's the man and
everything, but he kind of stinks.

Matt's body is starting to rot.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A skinny PIMPLY FACE youth watches from the shade of the mechanic's bay as The Charge pulls up to the gas pumps.

Tracey gets out and starts for the Cashier hut. The pimply youth admires her.

INT. CHARGER - CONTINUOUS

Drew unfastens his safety belt. HE GOES TO OPEN HIS DOOR AS MATT'S HAND GRASPS HIS SHOULDER. He gasps in surprise and looks back at Matt. Matt leans in close.

Drew is repelled by the stench of his breath. MATT TRIES TO SPEAK THROUGH PARCHED LIPS. Drew can't understand. Matt squeezes his shoulder painfully.

He tries again, a supreme effort to articulate. Nothing. He dejectedly lets go. Drew escapes like a scalded cat.

INT. CASHIER'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

THE CLERK'S EYES ARE HUGE as he checks out Tracey moving around the store - huge at the sight of this exotic creature but also huge because he is hopped up on meth.

Drew comes in and moves directly to a display of CAR FRESHENER. He starts stripping them all off their holder.

Tracey passes a pile of newspapers - a color photo of a woman with bleeding eyes and a headline reading PLAGUE SPREADING WEST.

Tracey is holding a six-pack of coke. OUT OF THE WINDOW THEY WATCH THE CHARGE PEEL OFF. Tracey drops the six-pack.

INT. THE CHARGE - MORNING

The pimply faced youth drives. He turns on the radio. Full blast. IT AWAKENS MATT. He looks confused. He scans the empty passenger seat for his missing daughter.

INT. CASHIER'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

TRACEY

What are you doing!?

DREW

Calling the cops!

She runs over and hangs up the phone.

TRACEY

You are so not calling the cops!

DREW

Someone just stole The Charge!

TRACEY

Mom would just love that. Lost your car, lost your father - we are not calling the cops.

DREW

But someone stole The Charge!

TRACEY

Wow. That's just like you, Drew.
Selfish. Someone stole my frikken'
dad.

He looks at her.

DREW

Or your Dad stole...

She grills him.

DREW (CONT'D)

He stinks like hell. You haven't
seen him in years. Maybe he's a
convict or something.

TRACEY

My dad is not a convict, Drew.

DREW

I'm just--

She gives him "the look" and hangs up the phone.

TRACEY

No cops.

INT. THE CHARGE -- CONTINUOUS

Pimply face cruises down the empty road. He glances in the
mirror and nearly jumps out of his skin to find a corpse-like
Matt sitting upright in the backseat.

PIMPLY FACE

Ahhh!!!

He swerves all over the road and SMASH!

A DEER'S ANTLERS COMES CRASHING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD,
PIERCING PIMPLY FACE'S SKULL, SPLATTERING HIS BRAINS ALL OVER
MATT'S FACE.

EXT. THE CHARGE - CONTINUOUS

The car careens across the highway and smacks against a tree.
The dead deer still strewn across the hood. One of the
GLOWING BRAKE LIGHTS pops out and dangles from its cable -
sparking electricity. GASOLINE BEGINS TO DRIP FROM THE
RUPTURED TANK.

INT. CASHIER'S HUT -- MORNING

TRACEY
First we need guns.

DREW
Why do we need guns?

TRACEY
In case we have to shoot whoever it
was that stole your car.

DREW
What if it was your Dad, Tray?

TRACEY
Seriously stop calling me that
shit. I'm not anyone's little pet.
And my dad may be a deadbeat, but
he did not steal your fucking
masochistic automobile which is
just a lame excuse to compensate
for... something.

She walks away.

DREW
The Charge is not just an
automobile, okay! I know in your
world it may sound senseless,
childish, but in mine that... The
Charge...

His bottom lip starts quivering. He can't quite finish.
Tracey glances over at the clerk. She smiles and makes googly
eyes at him.

DREW (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

She slips and falls. Drew tries to help her up. She grabs his
collar.

TRACEY
(whispering)
Gun.
(loudly)
Ouch!

The clerk runs over to help. She's lying on the ground. He's
looking down her shirt.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Oh, how clumsy of me. God, that's
so embarrassing. Thank you so much.

Drew looks both ways and slickly hops over the counter,
BANGING HIS SHIN IN THE PROCESS.

DREW
Shit. Shit. Gun. Gun. Shin. Gun.
Shin. Shin. Shin. Ow.

CUT TO:

CLERK
Well, you all right, ma'am?

TRACEY
Ma'am? Oh my god, that's like so
cute.

CUT TO:

DREW
Gun. Gun. Gun. Gun. GUN!

He spots a gun taped underneath the counter. He hops over the
counter to find the clerk standing there.

CLERK
Hey, wachu' doin'!?

Drew - frazzled - pulls the gun on the clerk.

TRACEY
Woah, Drew.

DREW
Don't say my name!

TRACEY
Sorry. Shit!

DREW
Are there cameras? They could
probably see me. Oh, shit, if they
can see me--

She takes the gun from him, ducks down, and GRABS A PAIR OF
HUGE SUNGLASSES from the rack in the process. The clerk
points. SHE SPINS AND BLASTS THE CAMERA.

DREW (CONT'D)
Woah! Nice shot!

CLERK
That was a nice shot.

DREW
I didn't know you can do that.

TRACEY
You'll learn, sweetie.
(to the clerk)
You. Against the wall.

The clerk goes against the wall.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Down.

He does. Tracey cocks the hammer.

DREW
Woah. What are you doing?

TRACEY
I have to shoot him in the leg.

DREW
What?

TRACEY
Don't be sanctimonious, Drew.

DREW
Now's not the time to show off your
SAT vocab, Tracey. Now's the time
to--

TRACEY
Shoot him in the leg.

The clerk shuffles up closer to the wall.

DREW
And why do you have to do that?

TRACEY
(rolling her eyes)
You always have to shoot the guy in
the leg so he can't come after you.

DREW
I hate when you talk to me like I'm
an idiot or something.

TRACEY
God, Drew. Not now.

DREW
Exactly. Always on your terms. Not
now, Drew. Well, then when? It's
like you know what? Screw you,
Tracey--

TRACEY
Shut up, Drew.

DREW
Stop saying my name!

TRACEY
Sorry.

He reaches to take the gun from her.

DREW
You're not the king of the fucking
world. It's not the Tracey show
starring--

BANG! The gun goes off. It hits the clerk in the leg. He
looks at the wound in surprise. He feels no pain because of
the meth. He looks at her adoringly.

CLERK
You are just way cool.

TRACEY
Now look what you've done.
(to the Clerk)
You got a first aid kit?

He points to one behind the counter.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

They emerge. Drew is holding THE TORN OFF HANDSET of the pay
phone. He tosses it aside.

DREW
Happy now we're wanted for murder?

TRACEY
We didn't murder anyone.

DREW
We didn't do anything. You did all
the murdering.

TRACEY

Wow, Drew. Good to know where you stand.

DREW

I didn't mean it like...

He spots a BICYCLE leaning against the wall of the garage.

DREW (CONT'D)

C'mon.

TRACEY

You gotta be kidding?

DREW

You want to find your Dad or not, Clint Eastwood?

He throws his leg over the bicycle.

DREW (CONT'D)

Get on. Now.

She climbs on the crossbar. He wobbles in a circle and then heads off in pursuit of The Charge.

TRACEY

It's kinda' hot when you order me around.

He's in no mood for being teased. He pedals down the highway.

INT. THE CHARGE -- DAY

Matt sits calmly behind Pimply Face's smashed and bloody head. HE IS PICKING TINY PIECES OF BRAIN MATTER OFF HIS CLOTHES AND EATING THEM - but surreptitiously, as if he knows what he's doing is wrong. He reacts guiltily to their arrival, WIPING THE BACK OF HIS HAND ACROSS HIS MOUTH.

EXT. CHARGE -- CONTINUOUS

Drew surveys the totaled car.

DREW

My car! My car!

TRACEY

Oh my god! Daddy!

Drew can see gasoline pooling under the wrecked chassis. He unbuckles Matt and hauls him out. He glances at Pimply Face who is very obviously very dead.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Poor deer.

Drew hears this as 'Poor Dear.' He mans up.

DREW

I'll be okay.

TRACEY

I meant the deer.

Moving Matt has set the brake light swinging.

DREW

We can't leave it like this,
they'll find us.

TRACEY

Who, Drew?!

DREW

Who!? FBI, Homeland Security, KGB!
We're fugitives, Tray.

A spark lands in the gasoline - WHOMP!

TRACEY

Woah.

Drew grabs Tracey and pulls her away from the car. It hasn't exploded but it s burning brightly. Matt moves back towards the flames.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Daddy!

Matt leans into the burning car and extracts the framed photo. He stumbles away just as the car EXPLODES.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

(to Drew)

Well, there you go.

He looks at the broken glass of the photo. He shakes the glass loose and pushes the photo into his chest pocket as Drew stares at the destruction.

EXT. WOODS -- DAY

They flee into the woods, running, and stumbling over branches and tree stumps, a cloud of black smoke filling the sky behind them.

Matt stumbles behind them, keeping up, HIS LEFT EYE UNABLE TO SEE BRANCHES SWINGING BACK ON THAT SIDE. They slash and cut at his face. They run on and SPLASH! Matt finds himself face down in a pond. QUACK. A duck pond.

CUT TO:

Matt emerges from the water. HIS SKIN SEEMS PECULIARLY SLIMY. Bits of green weed cling to him. A duck quacks beside him. HE GRABS IT BY THE NECK AND TWISTS.

CUT TO:

A horrified look on Tracey's face as Matt SMASHES THE DUCK'S HEAD AGAINST THE EDGE OF A ROCK.

HE PRIES THE SKULL APART LIKE A FEATHERED PISTACHIO NUT and commences eating its puny, little bird brain. Drew puts his arm around Tracey who is completely lost for words.

DREW

Tracey. I have something to tell you.

TRACEY

(screaming)

What the fuck are you doing!?

DREW

Tracey. Easy.

TRACEY

Get off me! Daddy! What are you doing?

DREW

Tracey--

VOICE (O.S.)

What the hell you doin' to my ducks, boy?

An Okie in a cowboy hat, PAPA CLEM, stands next to his two teenage sons, CLETUS and CRAWD. They are both dressed in coveralls. Cletus is white and Crawd is black. PAPA CLEM PUMPS HIS SHOTGUN.

EXT. OKIE HOLLER - SUNSET

They are led under the gun into a mountain hollow - A STRING OF BROKEN DOWN SHACKS SURROUNDED BY BITS AND PIECES OF ABANDONED, RUSTED TRUCKS.

Cletus and Crowd proudly lead their captives. Papa Clem brings up the rear.

The holler folk, a weird mixture of black, white and mixed, emerge from their shacks to gather around the newcomers.

Lank haired teenage boys leer at Tracey. Barely pubescent girls smile sultry looks at Drew. The older Okies focus on Matt.

A bent over old crone, LATTIE, calls from the wonky porch of her shack.

LATTIE

That my Joe Bob? You brung back my
Joe Bob?

PAPA CLEM

T'aint your Joe Bob you old fool.
Joe Bob still back in Korear. How
many times I got a tell you?

One of the okies is roasting cat over the fire.

LATTIE

Didn't I tell you not to be eatin'
no pussy, boy!

An erect, emaciated elderly woman, VOODOO MAMA, moves towards the group. Her hair is long and wild and gray. She speaks kindly to Lattie.

VOODOO MAMA

Hush now, Mattie. That there ain't
no kin a you'rn.

The crowd falls back respectfully. Voodoo Mama raises a skinny arm and points a long finger at Matt.

VOODOO MAMA (CONT'D)

This here'n is a visitor. A
visitor from t'other side.

The crowd steps back fearfully. Voodoo Mama is too old to be frightened. She steps up to Matt.

VOODOO MAMA (CONT'D)

We bin waiting the longest time.
You brung a message over from Joe
Bob? Lattie been grieving that boy
way too long.

Matt studies her face but doesn't respond. Tracey looks frightened and confused. She takes hold of Drew's arm. Drew looks excited - the Voodoo woman is causing a suspicion to grow in his mind. PAPA CLEM NUDGES MATT WITH THE SHOTGUN.

PAPA CLEM

Cat got yer tongue, boy? Mouth was
working well enuff you was eating
them duck brains.

VOODOO MAMA

Hunger make a good sauce. Don't you
know to feed a visitor?

Papa Clem lowers his shotgun with unconcealed bad grace. He doesn't like his manners being corrected by a woman, but he's not about to challenge her.

CUT TO:

Fires roaring. Banjos wailin'. BBQ'n. Mugs swingin'. Raucous good ole' hillybilly time.

PAPA CLEM

(shouting over the
commotion)

If it were birds you wanted you
t'come talk to me. We give you dem
birds.

He passes Matt a plateful of roasted duck brains. Matt would prefer them raw but he eats them anyway. PAPA CLEM TAKES A HUGE BITE FROM A ROASTED DUCK DRUMSTICK and guzzles a mug of something.

CLEM

Woo-eee!

Drew takes a bite of his drumstick, looks at Tracey.

DREW

It's really good.

PAPA CLEM

What's wrong with you, little
girlie? Not hungry?

His wife, OLIVIA, drawn, pale, kind.

OLIVIA

Now, you leave her alone, Papa Clem. You eat what you wanna eat, hunnie, but you should eat.

TRACEY

I'm vegan.

OLIVIA

Say again?

TRACEY

I don't eat anything that has a face.

OLIVIA

Oh, ain't that the cutest thing you ever heard, Papa Clem?

Papa Clem takes another swig of moonshine and passes the mug to Matt. Matt drinks, the 'shine running down his chest. The booze shoots straight to his brain. He tries to focus his working eye on Papa Clem.

PAPA CLEM

T'aint nuthin' like kin. All this stuff don't matter much. It's great, the duck brains, the shine, but it's the people who you eat n' drink them duck brains n' shine with that make it all what really matter.

Papa Clem studies Tracey and Drew. Tracey's Goth makeup is running, making her look increasingly like Matt.

PAPA CLEM (CONT'D)

That pretty little thing sure does favor you. What degree a kin are they?

VOODOO MAMA

That man don't have no kin. Not no more.

Papa Clem ignores her. He admires his two sons who are engaged in a moonshine drinking contest.

PAPA CLEM

Now my two boys, Crawd and Cletus there. Crawd favors me and Cletus definitely favors his Momma.

Tracey looks from Cletus to Olivia. Olivia shoots her a warning look.

TRACEY

What the hell is going on?

Drew is watching Voodoo Mama who's attention is fully on Matt. He doesn't know how to break the news to Tracey. HE TAKES A LONG SWIG OF MOONSHINE.

DREW

That weird old woman...

TRACEY

The witch lady?

DREW

Yeah. I think she figures Mr. Shelley is a...

Cletus smacks a tin cup down on the table in front of them. He leers at Tracey. Grins at Drew.

CLETUS

Drink ya fer her.

DREW

What?

CRAWD

He wanna drink ye fer the young poon.

Tracey isn't sure what's being said but she doesn't like what she's guessing.

TRACEY

Please don't drink anymore.

Crawd downs another cup and slams it against the table.

DREW

Oh, it's on.

He stands and offers his mug. Crowd fills it and his brother's. They both knock back the drinks and SLAM THEIR MUGS DOWN.

TRACEY

Drew...

DREW

Not now, Tracey. Now, it's Drew time. Fill it up!

Crawd pours another round. The booze is hitting Drew fast. It's also distracting him from the freaky thoughts he's having about Matt.

TRACEY

Drew, please.

He takes her by the arm. A bizarre look in his eyes.

DREW

I can beat him.

TRACEY

I don't care if you beat him.
Please, just stop drinking.

DREW

Oh, look, now you ask me to do something. This is the first time you've ever asked me to do anything. Drew, do this. Drew, do that. Drew, stop being an idiot.

TRACEY

Yes. Please. Stop.

DREW

Impossible.

He turns to face Cletus for another chug-off. Tracey looks to Matt. He's drunk - even weirder looking than before. She mumbles to herself.

TRACEY

Men are such idiots.

Tracey angrily walks away. Crowd watches her go. DREW SLAMS A MUG DOWN ON A TABLE. Cletus stands there giggling.

DREW

You did not win that one! I won
that one! I won that one!

Cletus pours another round.

CUT TO:

Tracey petulantly smacks her hand against the side of a pickup truck. Crowd looms out of the darkness.

CROWD

You are a purty little thing...

His sudden appearance has startled him.

CRAWD (CONT'D)
No need to be afeard. Old Crowd
here made sauce with most all the
holler gals.

He takes hold of her. He grins a loathsome grin - his teeth
yellow. She struggles to break free.

TRACEY
Cut it out.

CRAWD
Bet yer like any fresh poon under
that face paint.

She punches him in the chest. This excites him.

CRAWD (CONT'D)
Ain't had me no strange in a long
time.

She turns her face from him in disgust as he leans in to her.
A HAND GRABS HIS SHOULDER AND SPINS HIM FROM HER. Matt
punches him hard in the face. He stumbles back and recovers.
He charges Matt, driving his shoulder into Matt's stomach.

They sprawl across the ground. It should be no contest but
Matt is filled with whiskey and enraged with parental
propriety. They tumble across the dusty ground - Crowd
punching and kicking and Matt trying desperately to bite
Crowd's head.

MATT
Aghhh!

They break apart and climb to their feet. THE HOLLER FOLK
FORM A CIRCLE AROUND THE FIGHTERS. Drew tries to break
through the crowd. He is raving, animalistic, drunk mad.

DREW
Mr. Shelley! Mr. Shelley!

The Voodoo woman screams a warning.

VOODOO MAMA
Don't you rile that man!

Drew punches and pulls but he can't break through.

CUT TO:

TRACEY SCRAMBLING INTO THE CAB OF THE TRUCK. It's a stick shift. She doesn't notice. The key is in the ignition. She turns it and hits the gas pedal. The truck lurches backwards.

CUT TO:

MATT HAS GOT CRAWD IN A HOLD AND IS TURNING HIM SO THAT HIS HEAD WILL BE IN REACH OF HIS TEETH. He arcs his back and opens his mouth wide to bite.

The truck scatters the crowd and HITS MATT HARD IN THE BACK. He releases Crawd as the motion flips him onto the flat bed of the truck.

The truck reverses over Crawd, missing him, and scatters the other side of the circle of fight watchers.

Drew flings open the passenger door and clambers inside.

TRACEY

I don't know how to... I don't know
how to...

DREW SNAKES A LONG SKINNY LEG OVER TRACEY'S and punches down on the clutch. He jams the shift lever into First.

DREW

Gas!

The truck rockets forward again scattering the mob and heading straight for Crawd as he scrambles to his feet. Crawd jumps aside and onto the running board of the truck.

He grabs Tracey by the neck pulling her towards him as if about to bite her.

TRACEY

Aghhh!

Drew slams the truck into second gear. Then he bends his knee and kicks Crawd hard in the face. Crawd spins off.

CUT TO:

An Okie throwing a hunting rifle to Papa Clem.

CUT TO:

Matt, still enraged and drunk, trying to climb to his knees in the back of the truck.

CUT TO:

Tracy looking back at Matt as the rifle FIRES. The bullet exits through Matt's shoulder, smashing through the rear and front windows of the cab. Drew and Tracy scream.

BANG!! Gunshots start crackling through the air.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Drew reaches back through the smashed window of the cab to grab hold of Matt.

DREW
DRIVE!!!!!!!!!!

Tracey floors it.

DREW (CONT'D)
Now, hit the clutch!

TRACEY
The what!?

DREW
The weird fucking pedal.

She takes her foot off the gas and steps on it. BANG! A bullet whizzes past the truck.

DREW (CONT'D)
With your left foot! Step on it
with your left foot!

She does. Drew can just reach far enough to shift gear.

DREW (CONT'D)
Release!

DREW (CONT'D)
It's like a relationship between
the accelerator and the clutch.
You can do this.

BANG! A shot gun blasts shoots out what's left of the front window.

TRACEY
Oh, my god!!

DREW
Clutch!!!

TRACEY
Drew!!

DREW

Clutch!!

She hits the clutch. Drew shifts.

TRACEY

Daddy!

DREW

He's fine.

TRACEY

What do you mean he's fine!

DREW

It doesn't matter if it's not in the head.

TRACEY

What!?

BANG! BANG!

DREW

Drive!!

Wild shots keep hitting the truck as the Okies spend their last energy chasing them down the road.

I/E. TRUCK - NIGHT

They drive along dirt roads.

TRACEY

What the fuck is going on, Drew!?

DREW

Hold on. I just need to calm down.

He hiccups.

DREW (CONT'D)

And catch my...

Hiccup. Tracy looks through the rear window to Matt lying sprawled, still gripped in one of Drew's hands.

TRACEY

Daddy, are you okay?

Gurples.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
He's not bleeding. Why isn't he
bleeding?

DREW
It doesn't matter. This is a moot
point.

TRACEY
Daddy? Do you have the Bizarro
Plague? Is that why you're not
bleeding?

He moans.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
If you have the Bizarro Plague
doesn't that mean that we're
gonna...

She looks at him.

DREW
What did I just say, Tracey? He
doesn't have the Bizarro Plague.
He has the fucking...
(hiccup)
Zombie.

TRACEY
Excuse me?

DREW
Zombie.
(hiccup)
He's a zombie.

She hits the brakes. Hard. The truck swerves to a halt in a
swirl of dust.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Tracey climbs out and storms around to Drew's side. He climbs
out. He looks shaky. Actually he looks green.

TRACEY
A zombie?

He signals for her to give him a moment. HE TURNS AWAY AND
PROJECTILE VOMITS THE MOONSHINE OUT OF HIS GUTS.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Gross!

He wipes his mouth. He looks almost as bad as Matt.

DREW
It's painfully obvious.

TRACEY
You're an asshole, Drew.

DREW
I'm a bearer of truth.

TRACEY
There's no such thing as zombies,
you dickhead.

Drew looks at Matt sprawled in the flat bed of the truck.

DREW
Check his pulse.

TRACEY LEANS INTO THE TRUCK AND CHECKS THE PULSE IN MATT'S WRIST. She can't find it. She leans in further and feels for his heart beat. Nothing. She gives Drew a frightened look.

DREW (CONT'D)
I think he's starving.

TRACEY
He just ate.

DREW
He didn't eat what he needs to eat.

Tracey takes a deep breath.

TRACEY
You're saying he's starving to death?

DREW
No. I'm saying he's starving to un-death.

TRACEY
Un-death? Drew, what the fuck are you talking about!? Stop with this shit. Be serious.

DREW
I am being serious. If my theories correct, he...
(hiccup)
Needs to eat brains.

TRACEY

Why are you doing this right now?

DREW

What? Solving the problem? Saving the world?

TRACEY

Stop talking about fucking zombies. Those are movies, idiot.

DREW

Not just movies, Tracy. Stories. Really, really old stories that people have been telling for thousands of years. They're like in our DNA - they are who we are.

TRACEY

You've been in college too long.

DREW

What about Jesus?

TRACEY

Jesus, Drew?

DREW

Jesus turned bread and wine into his OWN body and blood - and then he drank it!!! And then he hung on a cross, died, came back to life, converted, and became the most popular piece of jewelry around the world. Everyone looooooves Jesus, but zombies are ridiculous? Stories exist for a reason, Trace. They contain information. Vital information!

TRACEY

Enough, Drew! Look at my father. He's... unhealthy.

DREW

He's not unhealthy. He's starving. He needs to eat. Just listen to me. For once.

TRACEY

He just ate.

DREW
Brains, Tracey. He needs to eat
brains.

She starts punching him. Drew grabs her.

DREW (CONT'D)
It makes perfect sense. I mean it
would explain the rotting...
(hiccup)
The smell, the discoloration, lack
of blood, lack of intelligent
communication, no offense Mr. S.

Matt's one working eye is on Drew.

TRACEY
Are you seriously telling me my
father's a flesh eating maniac?

DREW
Don't stereotype, Tray. That's when
ugly things happen. Judge with your
own eyes.
(beat)
And it's brains. Not flesh. Flesh
is nutritionally useless. Or at
least, intellectually nutritionally
useless.

Her bottom lip starts quivering.

DREW (CONT'D)
He's a zombie, Tray. I'm telling
you.

She swallows.

TRACEY
Daddy, are you dead?

DREW
Un-dead, Tray. Un-dead.

She gives him a horrified look. She climbs into the cab.
Drew drives.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

They've been driving through the night.

A FLASHING NEON SIGN in front of a fleabag motel in the
distance.

DREW

Thank God.

Matt stares at the flashing VACANCY sign from the bed of the truck. To him it reads VAC IN ATED.

INT. FLEABAG - NIGHT

Drew and Tracey enter. The desk is empty. A bell sits on the counter. DING! The noise pierces Tracey's throbbing skull. DING!

TRACEY

Just stop!

DREW

That's what it's there for.

A man walks out on ARM CRUTCHES. Each step, drudgingly painful, his head hidden under a dark stetson. He grumbles every time his arm swings forward - PLUNGING THE CRUTCHES AGAINST THE HARD WOODEN FLOOR.

DREW (CONT'D)

Hi, we'd um like a room.

The desk clerk, BATES, looks lasciviously at Tracey.

DREW (CONT'D)

(to Tracy)

One room or two.

TRACEY

I don't care, Drew.

DREW

Would your Dad let us stay in a room alone?

Tracey looks out the window. Matt is watching from the back of the truck.

TRACEY

Why don't you ask him?

Drew follows her look.

DREW

One room will do.

The man groans and reaches up for some keys.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bates unlocks the door and leads them in switching on a light. He gestures at the TV. He opens another door. Tracey peeks into the bathroom.

BATES SUDDENLY REACHES UP AND TEARS BACK THE SHOWER CURTAIN.

Tracey jumps back. Empty. Bates winks at her, enjoying his little joke. He comes face to face with Matt. Matt isn't laughing. Bates gulps and leaves.

CUT TO:

Tracey and Drew at the far edges of a king sized bed. Matt is lying between them. There is a CEILING MOUNTED MIRROR which allows Tracey and Drew to address each other. They are both exhausted, mumbling towards sleep.

TRACEY

Why do zombies have to eat brains,
Drew?

DREW

What's that?

TRACEY

Zombies, Drew. Why do they have to
eat brains?

DREW

Why do you care if zombies don't
exist?

Tracey stares at him.

DREW (CONT'D)

'Cause that's what makes them
zombies. Vampires suck blood.
Zombies eat brains.

TRACEY

Says who?

DREW

Dan O'Bannon. He put a unique spin
on the whole thing with Return of
the Living Dead. He needed to do
something different to stand out
from Romero. So, he had his zombies
eat brains. Not flesh. And, it
makes way more sense.

TRACEY

Why?

DREW

Why!? Think about it, Tray. Brains have all sorts of proteins, nerve cells, life energy--

TRACEY

Life energy?

DREW

You know, like what happens when you devour someone's soul. Only soul's don't necessarily exist. Brains do.

TRACEY

Of course souls exist.

DREW

Isn't that cute--

TRACEY

Haven't you seen 21 Grams? Be more like Benecio, Drew. Do what Benecio would do right now. He would make me feel better.

DREW

C'mon, sweetie.

Matt turns his head and looks at him.

TRACEY

Tell me he hasn't eaten anyone's brains. Because that would be totally gross. Ew.

Her gag reflex starts to kick in.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

I'm gonna puke. I'm gonna fucking puke.

Drew rises on one elbow to address her directly. Matt gives him a dirty look. Drew lays back down.

DREW

Look, even if he did... Re: Brain Eating, this isn't some demented, stereotypical, slow moving, flesh eating zombie lunatic from Eve of the Nauseating Holiday, Tracey.

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

This is your father. Mr. Shelley.
And he needs our help.

TRACEY

This can't be happening. Not to me.
All I want to do is go to the
Rising Dead concert! Is that too
much to ask!?

DREW

It's not happening to you. It's
happening to him.

TRACEY

It's just not fair. It's just
fucking like him to do this to me.
Again. He left us once. Isn't that
enough? Now he has to ruin Rising
Dead for me by becoming a fucking
zombie.

She turns on her side, her back to them. He turns his head
towards her and watches her breathing slow. She is asleep.

A SINGLE TEAR COMES FROM MATT'S GOOD EYE AND GLIDES DOWN HIS
DESICCATED CHEEK.

He turns his head and looks at Drew again. Matt attempts to
speak.

MATT

Duh yuh yuv...

Drew eyes reveal he can't make it out. Matt makes a supreme
effort.

MATT (CONT'D)

Do you... love her?

DREW

(simply)

I love her to death.

Matt believes him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

The kids are in deep sleep on either side. Matt is sitting
between them his head lowered. He could be sleeping.

ANOTHER ANGLE: He is studying the photo. Numbers and letters
run across it and resolve into

1 1 A 5 V 3 6 A 5. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD AND TRIES AGAIN. AGAIN HE SEES 1 A 5 V 3 6 A 5. HE IS DISTRACTED BY THE SOUND OF MUFFLED, CHANTING VOICES. HE SLIDES DOWN THE BED AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR.

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

MATT IS MOMENTARILY BLINDED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE SUN. He squints his good eye at the weird sight in front of him - a Tea Party protest.

Matt studies them in amazement - THEIR OUTLANDISH FOUNDING FATHER COSTUMES, OBAMA POSTERS PORTRAYING THE PRESIDENT AS THE JOKER, CHARLTON HESTON WITH HIS RIFLE ABOVE HIS HEAD AND THE SLOGAN "FROM MY COLD DEAD HANDS". The Trump-Baggers are screaming their chants at the motel.

T-BAGGERS
Weirdos go home! No Bizarro Plague
here!

Matt looks back at the motel. PEOPLE ARE HUDDLED FEARFULLY IN DOORWAYS AND AT WINDOWS, INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES, FAMILIES.

The T-Baggers are right. These are people fleeing the Northeast, putting distance between themselves and the plague. They have the frightened, disoriented look of refugees.

The T-Baggers have the strength of community, of conviction, of self-righteous rage.

T-BAGGERS (CONT'D)
Quarantine this now! Quarantine
this now!

Matt is drawn towards their mad energy. He mingles with the chanting crowd.

LEADER
Quarantine! Ha!

T-BAGGERS
Guantanamo!

Matt comes face to face with a protester dressed in scrubs, his face painted ghoulishly white.

GHOUL
Death panels now! Death panels now!

Matt is threatened by the anger. He bares his teeth. The ghoul claps him on the shoulder.

GHOUL (CONT'D)
Love your costume, man!

Another T-Bagger emulates the Heston poster - RAISING AN AK-47 ABOVE HIS HEAD.

CHUCK
From my cold dead hands!

T-BAGGERS
From my cold dead hands!

The refugees begin to withdraw from the doorways, to close the flimsy curtains. A FRIGHTENED COUPLE WITH TWO SMALL CHILDREN MAKE A DASH FOR THEIR CAR. They reverse perilously close to the demonstrators, scattering them. The T-Baggers erupt in raw anger. They pound on the car.

T-BAGGERS (CONT'D)
Out! Out! Out!

The two children look terrified as the car pulls out. It passes Tracey as she emerges from her room. SHE SPOTS MATT IN THE MIDST OF THE MOB.

TRACEY
Drew!

She plunges into the milling crowd and grabs Matt. The Ghoul gets right in her face, screaming.

GHOUL
Death Panels Now!

TRACEY
Asshole!

Drew is starting the truck. She hustles Matt into the cab. Drew reverses and peels out. The blacktop where they were parked reflects a GLISTENING RAINBOW OF LEAKED OIL AND WATER.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Tracey looks back through the shattered window at the screaming T-Baggers. She looks at Matt. He hasn't improved during the night.

TRACEY
We need to get him to a hospital.

DREW
A hospital, Tracey? You think they treat zombism in a hospital?
(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)
You take him to a hospital, you'll
never see him again. I promise.

Drew spots a roadside diner ahead.

DREW (CONT'D)
Maybe they serve brains.

His joke falls flat.

EXT. DINER - DAY

They park and enter.

INT. DINER - DAY

A half dozen diners cease talking as they enter and look at them with undisguised hostility. Tracey's Goth look would have drawn disapproval at the best of times. These are not the best of times.

A Rancher drops his newspaper on the counter top. The headline reads BIZARRO PLAGUE REACHES DENVER. They head for a booth. Drew whispers to Tracey.

DREW
Not sure these brains would help.

Each group of strangers they have met has been increasingly weird looking. The denizens of the diner are no exception. Tracey looks around warily as they sit. All this zombie talk has her weirded out. The customers turn away.

A WAITRESS, bone thin and weary, arrives with three mugs of coffee and menus. Her red wig is slightly askew. Matt drains his coffee in one swallow.

DREW (CONT'D)
Three Country Breakfasts, please.

WAITRESS
Passin' thru?

DREW
Passing through.

The waitress retreats. Matt takes the photo from his pocket. He flattens it carefully on the table. He studies it. Again the numbers run across it - 1 A 5 V 3 6 A 5. He blinks in frustration.

DREW (CONT'D)
 (enthusiastically)
 The Roman's had the Antonine. The
 Eurasian's had the Bubonic. The
 Medieval's had the highly
 publicized Great. Our parent's had
 Polio. And now we have The Bizarro.

TRACEY
 You're seriously such a fucking
 child.

Tracey pulls out her iphone. Starts plugging something in.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
 (reading)
 Google says: IF U EAT RAW BRAIN
 WILL IT AFFECT UR BRAIN OR WILL U
 JUS CRAP IT OUT.. IM NOT SAYING
 ANY1 HAS THE POSSIILITY OF FINDING
 RAW BRAIN..BUT WAT HAPPENS IF U DO
 EAT IT???WILL U GET SMARTER OR WILL
 UR BRAIN GET BIGGER...LOL..?

DREW
 What'd you type in?

TRACEY
 What do you think I typed in,
 dipshit?

DREW
 Brain is actually one of the most
 nutritionally-dense organs found in
 any animal. Unfortunately, the
 brain is also an organ that can
 carry a concentrated amount of
 disease. Karu, Mad cow disease.
 Don't ask google, ask Drewgle.

Pleased with himself, Drew studies the upside down image. He
 turns it towards himself.

DREW (CONT'D)
 That's Dr. Science! Like on those
 VHS tapes!

He studies it more closely.

DREW (CONT'D)
 Is that you?

Tracey looks at the image of herself.

TRACEY

Cute huh?

DREW

What are you doing with Dr.
Science? How did you know him?

Matt turns the photo back to himself.

TRACEY

He's my grandfather.

DREW

You're shitting me! This guy is
major! Like a total mystery! You
never told me!

TRACEY

I did tell you! I told you we don't
talk about him!

DREW

Don't talk about him? Don't talk
about your Dad. What do you and
your mom talk about.

TRACEY

We talk about things that matter.
Like feelings. You should try it.

The waitress returns and deposits THREE BREAKFAST PLATES
LADEN WITH EGGS, SAUSAGES, TOAST AND A LUMPY, WHITE, SLIGHTLY
GREY PORRIDGE. Tracey regards it with disgust.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Yew! What's that?

Drew checks the menu.

DREW

Must be grits.

TRACEY

They don't have fries? I'm not
eating that.

She uses her fork to separate the grits from the acceptable
food. MATT HOWEVER IS WOLFING DOWN HUGE FORK FULLS OF THE
BRAIN-LIKE GRITS.

DREW

See?

Matt takes another huge swallow of his re-filled coffee. He reaches across and TAKES A HEAPING FORK OF TRACEY'S GRITS.

TRACEY

Daddy!

Matt studies the photo some more.

DREW

Dr. Science! This could be mega.

Matt stands and moves across the room. He returns with a PAPER PLACE MAT AND A BOX OF CRAYONS. He turns the place mat white side up. He extracts a green crayon and gathers his concentration. THEN HE LABORIOUSLY, CHILDISHLY BEGINS TO WRITE. They watch as the letters and numbers laboriously appear - 1 A 5.

DREW (CONT'D)

One A five.

Matt writes V 3 6.

DREW (CONT'D)

V three six.

Matt finishes and studies the letters. He concentrates fiercely - 1 A 5 V 3 6 A 5. Matt takes a red crayon and overwrites the 5 - changing it painstakingly to an S. He does the same to the second 5. He studies again and overwrites the 3 till it reads as an E.

DREW (CONT'D)

One A S V E 6 A S.

He turns the puzzle and grabs a blue crayon. He gets it at once. He changes the 1 to an L and the 6 to a G.

DREW (CONT'D)

LAS VEGAS!

TRACEY

Las Vegas? You want to go to Las Vegas, Daddy?

Matt blinks his agreement.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Vegas? Why would he want to go to Vegas?

DREW

Hope it's not to count cards.

Matt picks up the photo. Tracey's turn to get it.

TRACEY
Grandad! Grandad is in Las Vegas?

Matt starts to rise.

DREW
Dr. Science!

He tosses a few dollars on the table like a Vegas high roller.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

THE TRUCK BARRELS DOWN THE TWO LANE BLACKTOP. The trees have turned to desert. The greens and browns are now reds and yellows. It's hot.

Drew is driving, Tracey is shotgun and Matt is propped up between them.

Drew glances at Matt - the smell of decomposition is getting worse. Drew is in equal parts fascinated and repelled by Matt, BOUNCING AND SWAYING BESIDE HIM.

Tracey displays the amazing female ability to not be grossed out by the physical condition of the people she loves. She glances at her black painted nails. The varnish is cracked and worn.

TRACEY
Could I have it?

DREW
What?

TRACEY
The zombie?

DREW
Have you eaten brains?

TRACEY
No.

DREW
Do you want to eat brains?

TRACEY
Yech.

DREW
Then you're good.

TRACEY
How will we find him in Las Vegas?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GAUDY CASINO - NIGHT

Drew's IMAGINED IMAGE of a crazed Dr. Science rolling craps, a lecherous blonde on one arm - excited green hued faces watching the dice SLOW MO across the felt.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Matt peels a swathe of dead skin off his arm.

TRACEY
Daddy!

Matt looks from her to his arm. THE TATTOO IS BLACKENED, THE SKIN AROUND IT BLISTERED. THE IMAGE LOOKS ALMOST GOTH. He holds his arm up to Drew and points at the puncture wound.

Drew can't make it out in the rotting flesh.

Matt's eyes reveal the frustration of a man who has spent his life surrounded by people who just don't get it. Matt uses his thumb and forefinger to mime an injection.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
A junkie! Daddy's a junkie!

DREW
A shot! He got a shot! The Bizarro plague vaccine causes zombieism!

TRACEY
There is no plague vaccine!

DREW
So they say!

TRACEY
Not your conspiracy shit, Drew.
Not now. Daddy's just sick.
Granddad will know what to do.
Yeah.

(MORE)

TRACEY (CONT'D)

(beat)

Yeah.

Tracey is comforted by this non-zombie explanation of what's happened. She retains the teenager's ability to be in total denial of death.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

We can even go to the concert
first!

Drew shoots her an unbelieving look.

DREW

If Mr. S. doesn't rot to bits.

Drew spots a GAS STATION SIGN AHEAD. He glances at the gas gauge - empty. The engine temp gauge is on high.

EXT. DESERT GAS STATION - DAY

The truck is by the pumps. Drew has Matt perched in the flat bed and is covering him with bags of ice. Tracey emerges from the store and throws a roll of duct tape to Drew and a hat that reads WORLD'S GREATEST DAD.

DREW

You drive.

She starts the truck and it jerks forward. The gas nozzle is still in the tank. The hose pops free. The truck takes off with twenty feet of hose snaking behind.

EXT./INT. TRUCK - DAY

Drew kneels in the back wrapping Matt in duct tape to hold his decomposing body together. The more he wraps him, the more he looks like a classic zombie.

TRACEY

(in the rearview mirror)

You made him look like a mummy, you
idiot!

Classic mummy. Drew lays Matt flat on the truck bed. Places the hat on him. Smiles.

Tracey checks the mirror again - the flashing blue and red lights of a cop car.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Drew follows her look.

DREW
Oh fuck! Oh fuck! Oh fuck!

The WAIL of the siren. Drew grabs the open, shattered rear window and shouts at Tracey.

A passing SEMI drowns out his voice and rocks the truck.

DREW (CONT'D)
What do we do? Oh my god. What do we do? What do we do?

TRACEY
Stop flipping out like a little girl.

DREW
We totally shot that guy--

The cop is gaining.

TRACEY
Well, don't say that for starters.

DREW
(screaming)
The gun. Get rid of the gun!

Tracey takes the gun off the seat and shoves it down her pants. She pulls in to the side of the road, JERKING TO A HALT AS THE ENGINE STALLS OUT.

Drew jumps down as the cop climbs out of his cruiser. The officer approaches, ADJUSTING HIS SMOKY THE BEAR HAT LOW ACROSS HIS EYES. He notes the gas hose hanging from the tank.

Drew smiles weakly. The cop ignores him and addresses Tracey.

COP
Step out of the vehicle, please.

Tracey gives him a winning smile.

TRACEY
Is there a problem, officer.

The cop glances into the bed of the truck. He does a double take at the sight of Matt, sprawled on his back, and covered in ice packs like the most abused relief pitcher in history.

The cop pulls out his gun.

COP

Out now!

Tracey climbs out. The cop keeps his gun on her.

CUT TO:

MATT TURNING HIS HEAD. HIS ONE EYED - POV OF THE COP'S GUN

trained on his daughter. Matt sits up - Frankenstein style. The cop swings his gun back and forth between Tracey and Matt.

COP

Hold it right there!

TRACEY FEELS IN HER PANTS FOR THE GUN. Drew is almost jumping out of his skin, shaking his head 'no'.

Matt starts to climb from the truck. The cop pulls his tazer and waves it at Matt.

COP (CONT'D)

One more step, I'm taking you down,
sir.

MATT LUMBERS TOWARDS HIM. THE COP TAZERS HIM - 50,000 VOLTS -

ZAP - exactly what he needs. He stands upright as his LEFT EYE POPS OUT OF ITS SOCKET AND DANGLES ON HIS CHEEK. The cop, Drew and Tracey SCREAM!

MATT'S POV IS NOW CLEAR ON THE RIGHT BUT A CRAZED STEDICAM

view of the ground on his left.

He walks towards the cop.

The cop backs up into the highway.

WHAM!

Right into an oncoming SEMI 18 WHEELER.

DREW/TRACY

Whoa!!

The SEMI weaves down the Highway, brakes screaming.

The SEMI driver climbs shaking from his cab. HE SEES MATT COMING TOWARDS HIM, ONE EYE DANGLING. The driver climbs back into his cab and takes off, spewing bits of Cop across the road.

Matt delicately pops his eye back into his head. He holds his hand over his left eye and squints with his right.

He points into the desert.

DREW

The desert? You want to go through
the desert?

Matt nods.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A HELICOPTER SHOT of the truck barreling across a roadless desert. The high vantage point reveals that the truck is not traveling in a straight line - it is veering into a huge circle.

I/E. TRUCK - LATER

Tracey rouses herself against the heat.

TRACEY

Still no roads.

DREW

Big country. We'll hit one sooner
or later.

She glances at Matt.

TRACEY

Better be sooner.

She squints at the blazing sun.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

How come the sun is on that side?

DREW

What?

TRACEY

The sun was on the other side. Now
it's on this side.

Drew peers up at the sun. He fears she might be right, but he's a guy and guys are never lost.

DREW
We're okay.

TRACEY
Have you any idea which way we are
headed?

Drew is getting defensive. He raises his voice to her.

DREW
I got it, okay!

Matt's working eye opens and considers Drew. He doesn't like anyone shouting at his little girl. He squints at the sun. He knows Drew is lost but communication is beyond him.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The hottest part of the afternoon. The truck rolls to a halt as the engine dies.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

Drew burns his hand on the hot metal of the hood as he lifts it.

DREW
Shit!

He waves his hand about. STEAM AND SMOKE POUR FROM THE OVERHEATED ENGINE. He touches the radiator cap.

DREW (CONT'D)
Ouch!

TRACEY
Idiot!

SHE PULLS HER T-SHIRT OVER HER HEAD and hands it to him.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
You have to do it slowly! Unscrew
it like a soda bottle or it's going
to--

Drew yanks the cap off and is engulfed by the shooting steam.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Idiot.

Drew flails away coughing.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Were you watching the temperature
gauge?

He can hardly breathe.

DREW
Of course I was.

TRACEY
What did it read.

He gestures at the sun.

DREW
Hot!

MATT CLAMBERS OUT AND WALKS THREATENINGLY TOWARDS DREW. Drew
backs off coughing.

Matt grabs the positive terminal of the battery and the
starter motor. The engine CRANKS as the electricity flows
through Matt. But the engine doesn't fire.

DREW (CONT'D)
Woah! Mr. Shelley, you have
attractive electric charge!

TRACEY
God. Who are you dating, here?

DREW
Your Dad can conduct electricity.

TRACEY
Daddy?

Matt looks revived.

DREW
Electricity runs the brain. He
needs to eat live brains to capture
the electric energy that operate
the neurons!

He looks to Matt for confirmation. Matt tries the starter
motor again. The engine CRANKS and then BANG - it seizes.
Drew coughs again.

Matt shakes himself. He studies the position of the sun. He
makes a calculation. He trudges away from the truck.

DREW (CONT'D)

(coughing)

We need to get him some nice live human brains so he can explain what's going on.

TRACEY

Soon he can eat mine. Mom, sorry I couldn't make it home - died in desert. Daddy ate my brains. Love forever, Tracey.

(beat)

He'd totally eat your brains first.

Drew coughs. Inhales.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

This is such bullshit, Drew.

She lights up a cigarette. Matt glances back at them.

DREW

Really?

TRACEY

Like I give a frick what you idiots think? What? Because now he's a zombie I'm supposed to forgive him for leaving us. Suddenly he's my parent again. And you're a fucking man now? Choking in the desert like Doc Holiday!

(in his face)

Thanks a lot, Zombie Dad!

Tears well in her eyes and she starts to follow her father. Drew is still holding her shirt. HER SKIN IS SHOCKINGLY WHITE AGAINST HER BLACK BRA. He hurries after her.

DREW

Put this on.

She takes the shirt and puts it on her head.

DREW (CONT'D)

Your skin, Trace. You've got to cover your skin.

He pulls his shirt off.

DREW (CONT'D)

Take mine.

TRACEY

Get off me.

He reaches for her arm.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

GET OFF OF ME!!

Matt stops and turns. His higher brain is improving but his emotional brain is still totally primitive.

MATT'S POV OF TWO HALF NAKED TEENS - ONE HIS DAUGHTER.

He emits a threatening GROWL and heads towards them. Drew's primitive brain is working just fine. He knows he is in danger. Instinctively, HE SWIPES THE SHIRT FROM HER HEAD AND DRESSES HER IN HIS SHIRT. She doesn't resist.

DREW

She's just... a little angry.

Matt reads the clothing action as one of caring. He halts his threatening advance. He resumes his march. Tracey follows. Drew looks at her undersized t-shirt.

HE WRAPS IT ON HIS HEAD LIKE A TURBAN AND FOLLOWS THEM.

EXT. DESERT - EVENING

The sun has begun to sink off to the West - but there is no relief from the heat.

DREW

Where's your phone? Give me your phone.

TRACEY

What about the ear radiation, Drew?!

She takes it out. Drew grabs it.

DREW

What is this?

He shakes the phone, slaps it against his leg. Looks maniacally at the frozen screen.

DREW (CONT'D)

It's frozen. Ashton Kutcher's
twitter! Really, Tray!?
(screaming)
(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)
You got the Bizarro Plague. Oh, no
you don't. You're a zombie! You
just got Punk'd!! You're dying in
the desert!

He screams at the phone.

DREW (CONT'D)
"CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW!?" "CAN YOU
HEAR ME NOW!?" Fuck you Steve Jobs!
Fuck you Ashton fucking Kutcher!
And verizon guy. And what's-her-
name too!!

HE FLINGS THE PHONE FAR INTO THE DESERT. Matt looks confused.
He walks on.

EXT. DESERT - EVENING

Drew is falling behind. His breathing is labored. HE TAKES
THE INHALER OUT AND BREATHES DEEPLY THROUGH IT. He shakes it.
EMPTY. He gasps. He looks frightened. Matt and Tracey seem
suddenly very far ahead. He struggles to catch up - his hand
clutching his chest.

DREW
(weakly)
Wait up!

Tracey looks back. Drew has fallen to his knees. She runs
back to him.

His breathing is coming fast and shallow. She sees the fear
in his eyes.

TRACEY
Daddy!

Matt turns. TRACEY SEARCHES DREW'S POCKETS FOR HIS INHALER.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Where is it?

He shakes his head. Matt holds his hand to Drew's neck, he
can feel the airways tightening. He grunts and walks away.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Don't leave us!

He keeps walking.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Oh god, oh God. Tell me what to do!

Drew's eyes look resigned. He gazes at her as if she is the last thing he might ever see.

MATT RETURNS CARRYING A HANDFUL OF SMALL, SPINELESS, CACTUS WITH SPIKY PINK FLOWERS. Matt snaps off the tops of the cacti and FORCES THEM INTO DREW'S MOUTH. Drew starts to breathe.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

They sit in a circle. Drew is calm. Matt stares into the distance.

TRACEY

How did he know?

Drew shrugs.

DREW

We studied it in Biology. Peyote is used to treat asthma.

TRACEY

Great, Drew. Just when I'm about to graduate D.A.R.E. I want some.

Matt growls a negative.

DREW

He means you're too young.

She gives him a vicious look. He tries to recover, but turns pompous.

DREW (CONT'D)

One person should always stay straight. In case people bug out.

TRACEY

Perfect. Nursemaid to a patriarchal zombie and glorified western character.

DREW

I'm Doc Holliday? Cool.
(impression)

Anyway, it's not having any effec--

Drew VOMITS viciously across her legs.

TRACEY

Ahhh!!!

She jumps away.

Even Matt is disgusted by the sudden exorcist SPEWING. HE LEANS BACK TO AVOID THEM AND WHOOSH RELEASES A VILE FLOOD OF SEMI-DIGESTED GRAY GRITS. They crawl away from the dreadful mess.

CUT TO:

They are tripping. Matt is standing turning slowly in a circle.

Matt's POV of the night sky - a brilliant array of stars.

LINES BEGIN TO JOIN THE CONSTELLATIONS AS IN A TEXT BOOK

Turning them into bears and the big dipper and a snake. The snake begins to move. Matt blinks.

DREW IS BUGGING. PARANOID. HE KEEPS A WARY EYE ON MATT

Matt's teeth seem sharp, his fingernails long. Drew holds his thumb up in front of his face to block the sight of Matt.

Matt sits.

DREW

Do this Tray.

TRACEY

Don't call me Tray, Crud.

DREW

Do it. Do it.

She holds her thumb up to the sky.

DREW (CONT'D)

That piece of the sky that's covered by your thumb nail.

TRACEY

Yeah?

DREW

That piece of sky contains a billion galaxies as big as ours.

TRACEY

Wow.

DREW

And each of the galaxies contains a billion stars as bright as our sun.

TRACEY

Don't talk about the sun, Drew.

DREW

Only five percent of the universe is made up of matter. Twenty five percent is anti-matter.

TRACEY

And the other seventy percent?

Drew shrugs his shoulders. Matt muses quietly to himself.

MATT

The other seventy percent is love.

He hears a rustle in the brush. A snake comes gliding towards him. He hears the sound of the deadly RATTLE.

The rattlesnake rears up and shows its fangs.

Matt's hand flashes out, he grabs the snake and BITES its head off - flinging the decapitated body aside.

Drew looks at him. Did he hear something?

Matt covers his mouth with his hand. He looks guilty. Drew looks away. MATT RESUMES CHEWING THE REAL OR IMAGINED SNAKE.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A broiling sun. Tracey and Drew stumble along. The peyote puking has left him completely dehydrated.

Emitting the liquids, and the dry desert air has had the opposite effect on Matt. He looks better, his skin has dried out, the sores closed up. He seems to be gaining strength as they weaken.

TRACEY'S HAIR IS NOW NEARLY BLOND FROM THE SUN. Her face burnt. Her mouth dry. Her body emaciated. This is it. This is bad. The end.

TRACEY

I've got to take these off.

She's grabbing her earrings.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
So hot. Burning.

She grabs her nose. Lips.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
My lips are burning off!

She struggles to pull out her nose ring, her lip ring. Her fingers are too clumsy. SHE IS TEARING HER SKIN.

DREW
Here, let me.

With infinite care he removes the burning hot rings.

TRACEY
I'm sorry.

DREW
For what?

TRACEY
For everything. For my zombie dad.
For dying out here.

He looks at her with complete devotion.

DREW
I'd rather be here with you than
anywhere else.

He kisses her burning forehead with his parched lips.

DREW (CONT'D)
You're burning up.

Matt studies her. With her makeup sweated away and the piercings removed she looks more like his little girl.

HE GLANCES AT THE BLACKENED TATTOO ON HIS ARM. It looks totally Goth. He turns and leads them on.

EXT. DESERT - LATER

They have entered an area of sand. No plants. No shade. Drew is stumbling along, pulling Tracey by the hand. His head is down. HE NOTICES A PATTERN IN THE SAND. He stops and shakes his head to clear it.

DREW
Mr. Shelley! Look!

Matt stumbles back to them. Drew is pointing at the sand.

DREW (CONT'D)
Look. Footprints.

There are definitely two sets of prints in the sand. Matt studies the prints.

TRACEY
Those are horse prints.

DREW
Horses will lead us to water.

Matt reacts angrily. He points towards the South - the direction he has been leading them in.

DREW (CONT'D)
We have to find water, Mr. Shelley.
For Tracey. She'll die without
water.

Matt looks at his daughter. He nods his assent. He starts to follow the footprints.

EXT. DESERT - LATER

THE WIND BEGINS TO PICK UP, blowing grains of sand across the hoof prints.

Matt looks in the direction of the wind - A MENACING BLACK CLOUD FILLS THE HORIZON. He tries to hurry, leaning into the wind.

EXT. VALLEY OF DEATH - LATER

A GUST OF WIND HITS THEM AS THEY TOP A DUNE. Sand blows in their faces. They head down into a sandy depression gaining temporary respite from the wind. The bottom of the depression is littered with strange sandy mounds.

Drew grimaces as a foul stench hits his nostrils. He looks suspiciously at Matt.

DREW
We seriously need to wash him.

Tracey covers her nose.

CLOSE ON: A vulture, its head emerging from the sand, bits of blood and flesh clinging to its beak and feathers. The vulture turns his head and its eyes zero in on Matt. The huge bird takes off with a mighty flap of its wings.

CUT TO:

Matt's POV of the bird flying towards him.

CUT TO:

The bird wheeling so as to land on Matt. At the last moment Matt swings an arm at the ugly creature. It squawks in surprise and flies away.

TRACEY

An eagle!

Drew knows it wasn't an eagle. He takes a step forward and the SAND SQUISHES UNDER HIS FOOT. He withdraws his foot carefully.

HIS SNEAKER IS COVERED WITH AN OOZING, PUTREFYING MESS OF FLESH.

DREW

Uh oh. This isn't good.

Tracey takes a step towards him. She steps on something and A WITHERED, BLACKENED ARM SPRINGS OUT OF THE SAND. She screams!

A GUST OF WIND WHIPS THE COVERING OF SAND FROM MORE AND MORE CORPSES. She is surrounded by dead bodies. Her feet beat a tattoo of panic on the ground. She looks down. She is sinking into a grave.

SHE RUNS TO MATT - COMICALLY SKIPPING FROM FOOT TO FOOT -

Trying to avoid the stinking remains.

TRACEY

O M G! O M G!!!

She grabs Matt. He puts an arm around her. He looks about calmly.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

A contact high! A contact high from the peyote! Tell me it's just the peyote!

Drew is moving excitedly from corpse to corpse.

DREW
This is awesome!

HE GINGERLY WIPES SAND FROM THE BLACKENED DEAD FACE OF A YOUNG MAN.

The head rolls to one side.

Drew leaps back. His fascination overcomes his fear and he leans in again. THE BACK OF THE SKULL IS CRUSHED. The cranial cavity is empty!

DREW
Zombies! I told you!

TRACEY
This is NOT THE TIME for your
bullshit!

Drew is dancing in triumph.

DREW
I was right! I was right!

He treads in something gooey.

TRACEY
Yewww!!!

DREW
This is proof! This is--

He looks up at the dunes. WHERE TWO RIDERS ON HORSEBACK HAVE SUDDENLY APPEARED. One of the horses rears in the best John Wayne style as the rider draws a rifle from a saddle scabbard.

TRACEY
We're saved!

She runs towards the riders. Drew takes off after her. Matt stumbles after them.

Drew runs to place himself between her and the galloping horses.

The riders POV as he steers his horse straight into Drew.

Drew goes sprawling.

The second rider heads for Matt. HIS HORSE SPOOKS WHEN IT CATCHES MATT'S SMELL. The rider just keeps his saddle.

Tracy has thrown herself on Drew to protect him.

DREW
I'm okay. I'm okay.

The first rider, VIRGIL, keeps his gun leveled at them.

VIRGIL
On your feet, Beaner!

Tracey regards him with glowering anger - his cowboy hat, his desert camo uniform.

TRACEY
We're American you ASSHOLE!

VIRGIL
Well don't you have a dirty little mouth, girlie. What you reckon, Andy?

His companion gestures at Drew who still has Tracey's t-shirt wrapped around his head.

ANDY
Hell Virgil, looks like we got us one of those rag head Al Kay-eeda types.

DREW
I'm from Michigan, dipwad.
Detroit, Michigan. Heard of it?

VIRGIL
Sure heard of home grown terr-ists.

He turns his attention to Matt, to HIS DISCOLORED SKIN, HIS WONKY EYE, HIS DESERT DRIED BODY.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Want to tell me this here ain't an alien?

TRACEY
Who the fuck are you?

VIRGIL
We're New Mexico Posse Comitatus.
Hussein Obama Biden ain't gonna police the border, we sure as hell are.

DREW
These people have been killed by--

VIRGIL
Ain't nobody gonna miss a beaner
dead in the desert.

DREW
They've been killed by zombies!

Virgil laughs. TOBACCO JUICE RUNS DOWN HIS CHIN.

VIRGIL
That's rich.

ANDY
Homeland Securtee give a reward for
captured terr-ists.

Virgil considers.

VIRGIL
Can't afford the Sheriff in Las
Vegas pokin' round out here.

DREW
Las Vegas? We're in Nevada?

VIRGIL
Las Vegas, New Mexico boy. More'n
one Las Vegas in the world.

Drew glances at Matt. Matt is staring at Virgil. No confusion
or surprise - obviously they have been headed for this Las
Vegas all along.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Shame you ain't ever gonna see it.

ANDY
I don't know, Virgil. Ain't like
offing a Mex or two. They might be
real 'mercans.

Virgil gives Andy a hard-eyed look.

VIRGIL
Time to get her done.

Andy looks at Tracey, trying to work himself up for the deed.

ANDY
Shame to waste the young trim.

Virgil licks his lips.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Waste not, want not.

A BLAST OF WIND SWEEPS SAND ACROSS HIS FACE. He switches his wad of chewing tobacco from one cheek to the other. He spits at Tracey's feet.

VIRGIL
Okay girlie. Step away from the Arab.

Matt looks from the tobacco spittle to Virgil's face. The man on the horse just insulted his daughter! Virgil extracts a short handled SPADE from his saddle bags and tosses it to Drew.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Start digging boy.

Matt takes the spade from Drew and walks towards Virgil. Virgil hesitates - it's not easy to kill close up. He works THE HANDLE ON HIS WINCHESTER AND LEVELS IT AT MATT.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
You asking for it, boy.

Matt keeps coming.

Virgil's horse catches the whiff of Matt and rears on its hind legs.

Virgil FIRES.

The bullet passes through Matt's left shoulder. Matt keeps coming.

Virgil face betrays fear. He cocks the rifle again and tries to aim. A BLAST OF WIND UNSETTLES HIS HORSE - it shies from the wind-blown sand.

Virgil tugs on the reins to pull the horse's head back towards Matt. MATT RUNS TOWARDS THE HORSE. THE HORSE REARS AGAIN, almost spilling Virgil, arcing his back, exposing his throat. MATT LEAPS AND SWINGS THE SPADE. IT SLICES THROUGH VIRGIL'S NECK, ALMOST DECAPITATING HIM.

Tracey screams. Drew grabs the gun from Tracey's waistband.

He aims wildly and FIRES at Andy. He misses. He MISSES again. But the shots distract Andy.

A stronger blast of wind almost blots out all sight.

Andy tries to shield his eyes from the sand, tries to locate Matt. Virgil's panicked horse is blocking his view.

MATT STOOPS UNDER THE BELLY OF THE REARING HORSE AND CHARGES ANDY. Andy's horse shies and slips down the side of the dune, spilling it's rider.

Another blast of sand obliterates everything as Matt pursues Andy down the dune.

Tracey stands petrified as the sand blasts around her. A struggling, bent over figure looms towards her. She screams in terror. It's Drew. He grabs her.

DREW
(screaming over the
howling wind)
It's okay! It's me!

TRACEY
Daddy! Where's Daddy!?!

MATT APPEARS OUT OF THE STORM. He is carrying the spade and a canteen.

HE OPENS THE CANTEEN AND POURS WATER DOWN HIS DAUGHTER'S THROAT. She gulps it down.

Drew patiently awaits his turn. His eyes are on the spade, ON THE BLOOD DRIPPING FROM ITS BLADE.

CUT TO:

Tracey and Matt hunkered down in a slight dip in the sand, trying to protect each other from the howling wind.

Matt stands above them, HIS ARMS OUTSTRETCHED, THE WIND RIPPING HIS FLIMSY SCRUBS TO TATTERS - the top shredding away, the lower pant legs flapping themselves to destruction till he looks like he's wearing the Hulk's costume.

The wind screams against him, SANDBLASTING HIS SKIN, exfoliating dead layers, smoothing him out. He puts his head back and screams and screams, the howl of the wind whipping the sound away.

EXT. LIP OF CANYON - MORNING

The wind has died. The air has the clear brilliance that follows a storm.

The two horses, Virgil and Andy's, stand patiently together, their reins hanging to the ground.

The camera TRACKS towards a strange pile of sand perched on the lip of a deep canyon.

THE SAND BEGINS TO MOVE AND THE BACK OF MATT'S HEAD EMERGES
SANDBLASTED TO TOTAL BALDNESS.

The sand slips from his shoulders as he looks down into the canyon that stretches into the far distance. Another ten feet in the storm and they would have tumbled to their deaths.

He looks down at his daughter, sleeping in his arm. He smiles contentedly. He looks down at Drew, sheltered in his other arm. He grunts - the ambiguous grunt of a father towards his daughter's choice of man.

He looks about, spots the horses. He begins to carefully extract himself from the sleeping pair. They begin to waken.

Matt walks calmly towards the horses. One horse neighs nervously. Tracey shakes the sand from her hair. Drew begins to wake. They peer out over the canyon.

TRACEY

Wow.

DREW

Wow.

She sees the canteen lying by her feet. She opens it and passes it to Drew. He drinks and hands it back. She drinks. She takes his hand.

TRACEY

I don't want to do this anymore. I
want to go home.

They watch Matt returning with the two horses. Tracey is unruffled by his space alien appearance - she is long passed surprise.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Daddy seems better.

Drew looks suspiciously at Matt.

DREW

Maybe it's something he ate.

They rise and the sand flows off them.

CUT TO:

They follow the lip of the canyon towards lower ground. Matt rides the more skittish of the two horses. Tracey has the reins of the other horse. Drew is balanced precariously behind her.

EXT. BOTTOM OF CANYON - DAY

They make their way through the lush bottom of the canyon, FOLLOWING A SPARKLING CREEK. A waterfall cascades down the red canyon wall and the horses trot forward excitedly. DREW AND TRACY FLING THEMSELVES FACE DOWN INTO THE FAST RUNNING RIVER. Drew's head shoots back up, shocked by the freezing cold water.

DREW

Ahh! Cold!!

Tracey drinks - her head under the water. THE DYE IN HER HAIR STARTS TO WASH OUT, SPREADING A FILM OF ORANGE AND BLACK AND GREEN ACROSS THE SURFACE.

Matt doesn't drink. He watches his daughter luxuriating in the water. She kneels by the riverbank, using her t-shirt to wipe the last vestiges of make up from her face, flicking her hair back and forth to dry it. THE WATER HAS COMPLETED THE BLEACHING OF THE SUN AND THE SCOURING OF THE SAND.

She looks like his little girl. He grunts with satisfaction and starts to lead his horse out of the water and down the trail. Drew smiles at Tracey, all horrors momentarily forgotten. He retrieves their horse. A pained look crosses Tracey's face. She calls out to Matt.

TRACEY

Daddy, wait up!

He pauses and looks back towards her.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

(plaintively)

You're always leaving me.

Matt knows that nothing he can say will undo the hurt he caused her when she was young. He forces the words out.

MATT

I never left you. I just went away.

She looks hurt. Drew leads their horse from the water.

DREW

I felt a lot safer when he couldn't talk.

They follow after Matt.

EXT. TWO LAND HIGHWAY - DAY

They ride down a long slope, the Sangre de Dios Mountains glowing red in the distance. They come to the edge of a highway. Matt considers for a moment and then turns south.

They ride along the dusty edge of the road. A CRAZILY PAINTED VW VAN ROARDS PAST THEM.

Then a couple of crowded cars. All headed south. A SHIRTLESS KID LEANS HIS BODY OUT OF THE PASSENGER WINDOW of a passing car, his arms raised in triumph.

SHIRTLESS KID
Rising Dead!!! RIsing Dead!!!

Tracey flips a triumphant look at Drew perched behind her. She digs her heels into the horse's flanks.

TRACEY
Yes!

She canters past Matt.

EXT. FORK IN THE ROAD - DAY

They gallop up to a divide in the road. One arm is sign posted LAS VEGAS N.M. The other road is marked SANTA FE N.M.

Someone has taped a sheet of cardboard with a painted arrow below the Santa Fe sign. It reads RISING DEAD CONCERT.

The road to Las Vegas is empty. A steady stream of vehicles is headed toward the concert.

Tracey pulls her horse to a halt and slips neatly to the ground. Drew clambers awkwardly down. Tracey is dancing in delight.

TRACEY
I knew it! I knew it!

Matt gallops up holding on for life. He manages to get his horse halted. A passing van BLARES its horn and Matt's horse shies. Matt scrambles down to safety. He gets control of the horse, waits fo a gap in the traffic and crosses, taking the Las Vegas road.

Tracey is skipping down the road to the concert waving to the passing cars.

Drew's horse pulls on the reins wanting to follow its companion.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
C'mon, Drew!

He looks helplessly from her to Matt. He has literally come to a fork in the road. She sees his hesitation. Total betrayal. Total abandonment. She sticks her thumb out to hitch a ride.

A van screeches to a halt and its door slides open.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Last change!

Drew points at Matt.

DREW
This could be huge. Atomic even!
Massive science!

TRACEY
You're doing what he did.

DREW
What?

TRACEY
Choosing your head over your heart.

A BOY'S HAND REACHES OUT OF THE VAN. She looks once more to Drew. He doesn't move. She takes the hand and is pulled into the van. The door slams and the van peels out. Drew looks forlorn. Then, he gives the horse its head and hurries after Matt.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STREET - DAY

Matt and Drew on horseback pass the glistening, modernistic campus of Highlands University. Drew notices a sign for the NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

EXT. TRAIN MUSEUM - DAY

They pass a Western steam locomotive and cross to 'the wrong side of the tracks.'

EXT. LAS VEGAS PLAZA - DAY

Matt holds both horses as Drew works his way around the square. NATIVE AMERICANS ARE SELLING TRINKETS TO TOURISTS.

A group of bedraggled hippies fill another corner, one strumming a guitar. A drugged out girl is begging. HE IS TEMPTED BY THE SIGHT OF TWO COPS STANDING BESIDE A CRUISER but thinks better of it.

Finally, he spots a civilian dressed in a corduroy jacket and carrying a laptop. Drew pushes through a group of SCARY LOOKING SURVIVALISTS DRESSED INCONGRUOUSLY AS MOUNTAIN MEN WITH FRINGED DEERSKIN JACKETS AND COONSKIN CAPS. At least their weirdness distracts attention from Matt.

Matt watches as Drew approaches the academic who nods yes and points.

EXT. RISING DEAD CONCERT - DAY

DEATH METAL CONCERT TO END ALL DEATH METAL CONCERTS

Blaring, pounding, thumping, brilliant music. The lead singer is electric, commanding and audience of thousands.

SINGER

I'll eat your fucking brains!! I'll
lick your fucking skull!!

The Goth kids scream back the lyric and bang wildly into each other.

GOTHS

Eat your fuckin' brains!!

Tracey is in the midst of the madness, having a ball, struggling toward the front of the pulsating crowd - pushing against crazed Mohawk haired young men guzzling beer and

WHITE FACED, BLACK HAIREd GIRLS WITH MADLY PIERCED FACES HIGH ON SPEED AND ECSTASY.

EXT. DR. SCIENCE RANCH - DAY

Drew and Matt ride down a dusty track to an isolated abode ranch. They dismount by a wooden gate which bears the legend

KEEP OUT.

Drew opens the gate and they lead their horses through.

They study the building for a moment. It seems deserted but for a beaten up pick up truck parked beside it.

Then, a door opens and a man steps out onto the shaded porch. He holds a rifle down by his leg as he studies them.

DR. SCIENCE

Come on in, nice and slow.

Dr. Science advances into the bright sun as the come forward. He shades his eyes with his free hand. Matt walks up close. They look in each other's eyes.

DR. SCIENCE (CONT'D)

Son?

Matt lowers his head and rests it against his father's chest. His father leads him inside.

INT. DR. SCIENCE RANCH - DAY

They enter a living room STACKED WITH BOXES OF FOOD, A CORNER FILLED WITH WEAPONS AND AMMO, ANOTHER WITH CRATED MEDICAL SUPPLIES, ONE WHOLE WALL TAKEN UP BY AN ARRAY OF COMPUTERS.

Dr. Science leads Matt to a wooden chair. He begins to examine him, methodically, expertly. He shines a light into Matt's eyes, he feels for his pulse. He examines his arms and spots the TINY INJECTION WOUND. He ends his examination and gazes into Matt's eyes.

DR. SCIENCE

Matt, I need to know what you're working on.

Matt looks back hopelessly - the complexity of vocabulary is beyond him. Drew takes a breath. Then, he nervously announces his terrible news.

DREW

He's a zombie. He needs to eat brains. I think he already did.

DR. SCIENCE

He already has more brains than the most of us.

DREW

You don't believe in zombies?

DR. SCIENCE

See them all the time. Congressmen. Cops. Critics.

Matt's eyes go to the computer. He crosses to it, sits heavily before it. He takes the mouse in his hand, clumsily at first. He clicks on HISTORY. A long menu of scientific institutions appears on the screen. Matt clicks on one.

DREW
M.I.T. In Boston?

DR. SCIENCE
Where he worked.

DREW
I.T. Tracey said I.D.

DR. SCIENCE
Yes. I.D. Infectious Diseases.

Matt has clicked through to a field that calls for a password. He carefully types T R A C E Y. The page opens.

He starts to work his way through the files.

DREW
You were famous. You were Dr.
Science. Your lectures can still be
found in libraries. People still
use them.

Dr. Science's focus is on Matt's screen. Pages and pages of calculations flicker by.

DR. SCIENCE
I was clever. Me and a lot of other
clever people came up with a cure
for epilepsy.

DREW
Did it work?

DR. SCIENCE
It worked alright. Passed all
testing. We rushed it out - so
proud of ourselves. Then patients
started suffering brain damage.
Horrific seizures. Then they
started dying. I've been in the
desert for forty years.

Matt is still working away - the pages flickering across the screen filled with LONG STREAMS OF LETTERS AND NUMBERS.

DREW
You left your family?

DR. SCIENCE
I couldn't look my son in the eye.

DREW
Mr. Shelley did the same thing.
Left Tracey.

DR. SCIENCE
Families are like DNA - they just
replicate themselves over and over.
Sometimes you get a mutation. If
you're lucky, it's an improvement.

Matt stops the pages. He uses the mouse to highlight a
section. Lines and lines of letters - AUG ACG GAG CUU CGG

In Matt's POV the LETTERS BEFIN TO SWIM

Almost as if they are about to resolve into another clue. He
blinks. He covers his left eye. The letters steady -
unchanged. They're no a clue. They are the answer.

He looks at his father. Dr. Science leans in. Takes control
of the mouse. He flicks back and forth through the
surrounding data.

DR. SCIENCE (CONT'D)
That's my boy. He found it.

DREW
What?

DR. SCIENCE
The mutation that allows Bizarro
Plague to cross the brain/blood
barrier.

DREW
The what?

DR. SCIENCE
Plague has been around since the
beginning of time. Europe.
Colonization. Colonialism. Haiti.
The origins of Voodoo. Belief in
the living dead. Manmade biological
warfare. Earthquakes, cholera,
hurricanes. Some combination set
the plague loose. Rescue workers
brought it home.

DREW
And that's how Mr. Shelley got it?

DR. SCIENCE
No. He injected himself with it.

DREW
Why would you do that!?

DR. SCIENCE
You vaccinate by injecting a
littler piece of the disease into a
person. He got the balance wrong.

DREW
But why test it on himself?

DR. SCIENCE
Because he's my son.

Beat.

DREW
(gulps)
He has the plague?

DR. SCIENCE
A version of it. He might have the
cure - the explanation of the
trigger event.

DREW
Trigger event?

DR. SCIENCE
The plague is everywhere now. In
millions of people.

He looks at all the weapons and supplies.

DR. SCIENCE (CONT'D)
That's why I'm prepared. But, it is
only manifesting in the cities.

DREW
Why?

DR. SCIENCE
Because, that's where you get
trigger events. Some combination of
crowding, excitement, hysteria.
Maybe something to do with
electricity.

DREW
Oh my god. Tracey!

EXT. RISING DEAD CONCERT - DAY

In the distance ominous storm clouds tower above the Sangre de Christo. THE AIR CRACKLES WITH LIGHTNING.

Tracey dances on, close to the lip of the stage. A kid dodges past the Hells Angels who are providing stage security. He mounts the stage. A bouncer runs towards him.

THE KID LAUNCHES HIMSELF BODY SURFING INTO THE CROWD. The Hells Angels lash out in frustration - punching and kicking at the Goths. Tracey is trapped in the sudden MOCK VIOLENCE.

EXT. DUSTY ROAD - DAY

The green pickup charges along a back road, a huge plume of dust glowing red behind it.

Dr. Science drives maniacally, Matt in the middle, Drew shotgun. The truck hits a bump, flies through the air and CRACKS DOWN hard.

DREW

Faster!

Lightning flashes across the mountains.

EXT. RISING DEAD CONCERT - DAY

The sky turns threateningly dark as thunder clouds block out the sun.

The fighting by the stage has spread - Goths and Hells Angels going at each other, giving free reign to their macho images of themselves. Girls scream in delighted excitement.

Tracey is trapped next to a bouncer who is grappling with a tall Goth. THE GOTH LANDS A CRACKING PUNCH TO THE HELLS ANGEL'S FACE. POW!

The Angel pulls a KNIFE and plunges it into the Goth's belly.

CLOSE ON: The Goth face as his head collapses cartoonishly onto the Angel's shoulder, inches from Tracey. BLOOD BURSTS FROM THE GOTH'S EYES AND SPLASHES ONTO TRACEY. Total panic.

SCREAMING VOICES

Plague! Plague! Bizarro Plague!

Terror spreads like a wave through the crowd. People are trampled. The lead singer waves his band to stop. The music falls raggedly apart.

LEAD SINGER

Calm down! Everybody be cool!

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING FLASHES ACROSS THE SKY AND HITS ON OF THE SPEAKER TOWERS.

The band's guitars explode - killing the guitarists.

THE LEAD SINGER DANCES GROTESQUELY - HIS HAIR ON FIRE.

Electricity SHOOTING UP from his skull. He DROPS electrocuted to the stage.

The speaker tower weaves back and forth and CRASHES down CRUSHING the drummer.

At the rear of the crowd Goths respond with EXHILARATED AMAZEMENT - the best rock show ever!

FANS

Awesome! Wow!

A wailing FEED BACK loop screams through the air. People cover their ears in pain.

Tracey is trapped in the milling mass - people are tearing at each other's faces, scraping, biting.

A cop is struggling though the crowd, swinging his night stick. He is knocked to the ground. He tries to rise, grabbing for his gun. BANG - the gun goes off.

The cop is trampled. Someone grabs the gun and FIRES wildly into the crowd.

Inches from Tracey's face, an enraged GOTH STICKS HIS THUMB INTO THE EYE SOCKET OF ANOTHER GOTH. BLOOD SHOOTS OUT.

Tracey screams.

CUT TO:

The pickup skidding to a halt at the rear of the stage. They clamber out. Dr. Science, rifle in hand, and Drew run along the side of the stage. Matt climbs onto the rear of the stage.

CUT TO:

Matt's POV of the CRAZED CROWD. He spots Tracey's LIGHT HAIR in the seething mass of black. She is ogg her feet being pushed along in the jam.

Matt looks down at his feet - AT AN ELECTRIC CABLE SPARKING AND SNAKING ONT HE FLOOR. He grabs the cable. Electricity shoots though him. He holds the cable above his head and screams.

MATT

AAHHHH!!!!

CUT TO:

Tracy spots him.

TRACEY

DADDY!!!

CUT TO:

MATT TURNING HIS HEAD.

Matt steps over the smashed corpse of the drummer. He starts to run across the destroyed stage.

CUT TO:

TRACEY'S POV OF MATT RUNNING TOWARDS HER. IN HER IMAGINATION

His image transforms MOMENTARILY - the healthy, blond haired father of her MEMORY running to the rescue.

CUT TO:

MATT LAUNCHING HIMSELF OFF HTE STAGE AND INTO THE AIR

Transforming from a Dad into FULL ZOMBIE MODE.

He BODY SURFS across the mob. He comes face to face with an UGLY CRAZED Goth. Matt opens his jaw impossibly WIDE and CLAMPS DOWN on the BALD SKULL of the Ugly Goth.

The SKULL CRACKS open and brains spurt out!

The mob pulls back in fascinated horror.

Matt and the dead Ugly Goth CRASH to the ground.

Matt grabs the gray, pulsating BRAIN and raises it above his head.

The mob holds its collective breath.

His mouth opens wide again - brain and blood and bone stuck in his teeth. He SCREAMS releasing the anger and rage and fear that is buried in every father.

The mob leans further back.

MATT JAMES THE BRAINS INTO HIS MOOUTH AND CHOWS DOWN.

The CROWD ERUPTS in terror.

HE crashes INTO THE FLEEING CROWD lashing out madly. He kicks, punches, bites his way through the mob.

The shock of the violence clears a space around Tracey.

Dr. Science and Drew FIGHT their way towards Tracey - almost overwhelmed by the panicked mob. A Goth swings at Dr. Science.

Dr. Science SWINGS THE STOCK OF THE RIFLE IN AN UPWARD ARC AND SMACKS THE GOTH UNDER THE CHIN ALMOST KNOCKING HIS HEAD OFF.

Matt tears into the crowd, grabbing a Goth and a Hells Angel by their necks. He CRACKS THEIR HEADS TOGETHER, splitting both their skulls. He pries them open, one at a time, and SUCKS OUT their brains.

Drew reaches Tracey. A BERSERK HELLS ANGEL CHARGES TOWARDS THEM, SWINGING A CHAIN ABOVE HIS HEAD.

Tracey pulls the gun. She levels it at the charging angel.

DREW

Through the head! Through the head!

At the last moment she FIRES. Dead center in the forehead. The Hells Angel flies backwards.

DREW (CONT'D)

Awesome!

A WAVE of utter fear and depravity sweeps outward from Matt, consuming the entire crowd. People tear and kick at each other.

SCREAMING MAN

Plague! Bizarro Plague!

An enormous CRASH OF THUNDER and the sky opens up - A BIBLICAL DELUGE OF RAIN POURS DOWN. It washes out the violence as the crowd cowers beneath its fury.

Matt stands alone, his head down, his arms hanging loose.

Tracey looks at him - his BLOOD SHOT EYES, his BLOOD SMATTERED mouth and chest.

He throws his head back and opens his mouth - a PINK SPUME runs from his overflowing jaws.

He holds his arms out and watches the rain wash the blood away.

Tracey walks forward carefully as if approaching a wild and lethal animal.

TRACEY

Daddy? It's alright, Daddy. I'm safe now.

MATT'S POV of TRACEY is BLURRED. BLOOD RED but her face swims into focus - loving and forgiving. He uses every last ounce of control to raise his hand and touch her face with infinite gentleness.

He leans toward her and whispers to her.

MATT

Finish it now.

She steps back in shock.

TRACEY

No, Daddy.

His face begins to transform. FROTH BEGINS GURGLING OUT THE SIDE OF HIS MOUTH.

She backs up till she bumps into Drew. Matt begins to walk towards them.

MATT'S POV of them. They are just a red blue.

DREW

Mr. Shelley--

But, it's not Mr. Shelley anymore. It's not Matt. Tracey reaches for the gun.

DREW (CONT'D)

Mr. Shelley!
(screaming - trying to
wake him)
MR. SHELLEY!!

Tracey points the gun at her father. She aims for his head.

Her hand shakes.

The thing that is MATT is getting closer. Its mouth opens horribly.

Tracey can't fire. The gun wavers.

Drew takes the gun from her hand. HE COCKS THE HAMMER. THE LAST BULLET REVOLVES INTO THE CHAMBER.

Drew FIRES. The bullet SMASHES through the center of Matt's forehead and blows off the back of his head.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PLATEAU - DAY

A beautiful vista. The rain has stopped.

They have built a funeral pyre of brush and laid Matt's body on it. THE FLAMES CRACKLE UPWARD AND MATT'S DESICCATED FLESH AND BONE ARE CONSUMED.

Tracey watches the fire consume her father's body.

TRACEY

Could you have saved him?

DR. SCIENCE

No. He was too far gone.

TRACEY

We all are.

DR. SCIENCE

No, no, darling. There's always hope. As long as there is love, there is hope. He gave us the answer. His breakthrough will allow us to save millions.

A tear runs down Tracey's cheek. Drew reaches up and wipes it away with one finger. She smiles at him and turns away.

Drew looks down at his finger tip, AT A TINY LIVE MAGGOT.

He turns and looks after Tracey.

DREW

Uh...Tray...?

CUT TO:

BLACK