

The MacGuffin

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - SEMI-RURAL AREA - DAY

A funeral procession on a sunny, late Spring afternoon in Washington D.C.

SUPER TITLES:

"1992 - Just after the fall of the Soviet Union"

Followed by:

"Before widespread use of cell-phones and the internet"

HAL ROBERTSON, alone in his CAR just behind the HEARSE.

Several cars behind HAL'S, is GINNIE (Virginia) NASH, also alone in her CAR, a pretty blond woman of about 26.

Following at a "safe" distance is a strange, foreign-looking, BLACK SEDAN with SEVERAL PEOPLE inside.

Procession nears CEMETARY.

INT. GINNIE'S CAR

She is a press reporter by the LABEL on her TAPE RECORDER.

INT. HAL'S CAR

He's about 30, a casual dresser for a funeral. As he drives, he plays the radio, and taps on the steering wheel.

EXT. FUNERAL PROCESSION

The procession winds its way into the cemetery, and up to the grave site.

EXT. GRAVESITE

A small assembly gathered before the open grave, with the CASKET beside it.

In the distance on a hill sits the mysterious black car.

MINISTER (OS)

It was Yakima Robertson's wish
that his eulogy be delivered at
his graveside by myself, and that
his nephew, Hal be present.

At the front fender of the BLACK CAR: A SHOTGUN MICROPHONE is
pushed into view. As if a recorder was switched on, it suddenly
picks up the Minister very TINNILY (FILTERED, OS).

MINISTER (OS)

Yakima Robertson was a simple man,
an obscure man in an industry of
people who were just the opposite.
Yakima Robertson was a Hollywood
character actor. He was one of
that dwindling group whom everyone
recognizes in the movies, but no
one can name...

Back at the funeral assemblage, as eulogy continues, both Ginnie
and Hal, widely separated, and unaware of one another, stand
among the MOURNERS, Hal at the front.

Ginnie takes notes on eulogy.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

His resiliency in the film
industry was legendary, appearing
In nearly six hundred films during
a career which spanned four and
one-half decades. That the same
directors had him in film after
film over the years lends evidence
of the respect they had for him.
Yakima Robertson gave his all to
his films, just as he had for his
country in the Second World War.
He used to insist that one of his
films, a western, his first after
the war, was his finest. He
emphatically repeated,
"Remember, it's not just a movie!"
Yakima Robertson believed these
words. He lived his life with as
much zest as one man could. We
will miss him.

Hal looks around.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Let us pray.

Ginnie twists her head in order to see the HEADSTONE, standing to the side, awaiting the burial.

It reads: 'Yakima Robertson, Actor 1918-1998 "It's there, it's all there, in the movie!"'

MINISTER (CONT'D)

God in Heaven, please accept our beloved brother Yakima Robertson into his eternal rest. Humbly, we ask for your blessing and forgiveness. Amen.

The funeral begins to disperse quietly. Hal moves to a spot beside the Minister, thanking everyone as they form a line and pass by paying their final respects.

As Ginnie comes past, he looks at her in puzzlement.

HAL

I'm sorry, did you know Uncle Yak?

GINNIE

Ginnie Nash. Please accept my condolences. I write for the Post. I'm doing a story on him.

HAL

Oh.

She nods and walks on toward her car. As she moves by, on the hill, the black car is gone.

INT. GINNIE'S CAR - EARLY EVENING

Ginnie drives in an area of modest apartment buildings in Georgetown.

Ginnie parks her car on the street. She goes into an apartment building. After a pause, quite suddenly, a STILETTO BLADE jabs into view.

A man, ALEXI, begins to clean his fingernails with the point.

VOICE 1 (MUSHKIN, OS)
Khan... After her!

A huge form rises behind Alexi: KHAN, a 7ft. Mongol. He moves after Ginnie.

Alexi looks after him jealously.

ALEXI
Thet lumox will be seen for sure.

VOICE 2 (VALNYA)
Silence! The Mongol is a
professional. Top of class in
Irkutsk--Do not worry, Alexi, you
will get your chance also.

Alexi smiles and pricks his fingertip with the stiletto, drawing blood. He sucks it hungrily.

INT. GINNIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She enters, switches on some lights, locks the door, tosses her handbag on a chair, and strides into the kitchen. On the way, she flips on the TV showing an "Info-mercial."

She TURNS UP THE SOUND (OS) so she can listen in the kitchen, and then moves to begin fixing her dinner.

KITCHEN

Throwing on an apron, she begins to work.

LIVING ROOM

A fist crashes through her door in a single, powerful thrust. Then a hand reaches through and turns the lock.

KITCHEN

Ginnie doesn't hear this because of the TV. She continues to move about the kitchen.

The PHONE RINGS (OS). She puts down her UTENSILS and heads for the living room.

LIVING ROOM

Passing the TV, she TURNS the VOLUME OFF, and heads to the PHONE on the COMMUNICATING COUNTER to the dining area. She's within sight of the bashed-in door. No one's there. The door is closed and bolted, but the hole gapes openly. Talking into the phone, Ginnie doesn't notice.

GINNIE

Hello? Oh, hi. No, no, I haven't been able to yet. Yeah. Yeah, I have an idea I'll try in a few days... Yeah... Yeah...

As conversation continues, through the hole, outside in the corridor, a FIGURE passes by.

A moment later, it comes back. It's a MAN, a neighbor, who looks in through the hole, inspecting it. Then he looks at Ginnie, talking away, still oblivious.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

No, this is the best way... Yeah, trust me, nothing else has worked, has it? Okay, then. Don't be such a skeptic! What?-- Don't be silly, of course I do.

Then Ginnie notices her neighbor peering through the hole. She smiles at him and waves.

He nods, smiling, and raising his eyebrows, pulls back and walks off.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Okay, okay... Right, bye.

As she hangs up the phone, she finally straightens up and looks at the hole in the door.

Registering shock, she stifles a scream when at the same instant the phone is wrenched from her hand by a huge figure behind her. A large hand comes around and covers her mouth.

The phone is hung up.

EXT. HAL'S GARRET - NIGHT

Hal Robertson lives in a garret over a garage behind a larger rooming house, in an older section of Georgetown.

In a space beside the entrance, is an RV, a full-sized WINNEBAGO.

Hal's car also sits there. Lights are on through his windows.

INT. HAL'S GARRET

It is cozy, barely furnished. The TV IS SILENT, and the STEREO PLAYS RAVEL'S BOLERO SOFTLY (OS).

Hal reads a TECHNICAL MANUAL.

TWO CATS loll about, one on his lap and one on the floor.

Absently, he pets one of them while munching POPCORN from a BOWL.

ON TV, a FAT WOMAN is being interviewed.

Hal pays this no mind, though one cat sits before the set, absorbed.

Suddenly Hal slams shut the book. Rising, he TURNS OFF THE MUSIC. The cat watching TV objects, but Hal ignores it and TURNS OFF THE SET and THE LIGHT to go to bed.

EXT. RUSSIAN EMBASSY - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

GUARDS stand at the entrance. On the street in front, nothing is happening.

INT. RUSSIAN EMBASSY - ROOM/CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The room is nearly empty save for a FEW CHAIRS, TWO HARSH LIGHTS, and the occupants.

Tied to a chair is Ginnie, looking a little worse for wear. THREE PEOPLE stand or sit around her:

MUSHKIN, a fat middle-aged KGB agent; VALNYA, a thin serpent-like female KGB agent in her 40's; and Alexi, the small, cruel-looking KGB assassin from earlier. He sits on the edge of the TABLE at which Mushkin is seated. Valnya paces.

MUSHKIN

(heavy Russian
accent)

My dear woman, if you do not
cooperate and tell us who you are,
I shall be forced to bring back
your caller, our friend Khan.

GINNIE

Where are we? Why did you bring me
here?

VALNYA

That is of no consequence. Perhaps
you would prefer it if Alexi here
dealt with you!

Alexi smiles.

Ginnie glowers.

MUSHKIN

We must know what you wrote in
that so mysteriously nonexistent
notebook at Mr. Robertson's
funeral this afternoon. Must I
explain that—

GINNIE

--I know, 'You haff vays--

MUSHKIN

--Simple injection. But why not
spare us the trouble of--

GINNIE

Go to Hell! I told you, those
notes are for a story I'm doing on
Yakima Robertson, and they're in
my desk at the Post!

Mushkin rises and motions his companions out.

IN CORRIDOR

Khan waits. When the door is closed, Valnya says:

VALNYA

I told you she would not cooperate. Mushkin, these journalists think they hold diplomatic immunity since Woodward and Bernstein.

MUSHKIN

(to Alexi)

How long until we get serum? This is inconceivable that we are all out of truth drug. Never would have happened when Soviets were running things. Can we not find new supplier?

ALEXI

That company in New Jersey is suffering through another strike. Only other sources are two in California, or--

VALNYA

--Or Russia herself!

MUSHKIN

Strikes! These Americans! Why do they tolerate such things? Bahhhh-

A MAN (KRINSKY) strides up and takes Mushkin aside. They confer. The man nods and receives orders.

VALNYA

Mushkin, what is it?

MUSHKIN

Krinsky says the Bulgarians have some quantities of drug at their embassy, but they cannot send it as it may be intercepted. They are being watched.

VALNYA

The Chinese?

MUSHKIN

Da. We will have to go there in
truck. Prepare her!

Khan opens the door. Ginnie looks up. Khan and the others enter.

ROOM

Khan gags her, then loosens her bonds. She is pulled to her feet
and they move to the door.

CORRIDOR

Outside they are confronted by SEVERAL other KGB AGENTS and a
doddering OLD LADY of about 90, cuffed, and awaiting the
interrogation room.

Mushkin nods and his group moves off as the new group enters the
room. One of the agents throws the old lady into the chair as
another closes the door.

EXT. RUSSIAN EMBASSY - PARKING COURTYARD

A small TOYOTA truck with a CAP drives up. Alexi gets out and
gets in the back. Khan shoves Ginnie in after him.

MUSHKIN

Khan, you drive. Valnya and I will
go ahead of you.

Khan looks at the truck cab, frowns, and then, with difficulty,
climbs in. Sitting, he bangs his knee on the dash.

Meanwhile, Mushkin and Valnya have entered their Russian-made
black sedan, a ZIL, and take off. As the car pulls out, it
reveals Mushkin's name written on the concrete curb.

INT. TRUCK BOX

Ginnie watches Alexi suspiciously.

Smiling, he begins to clean his nails again with his stiletto.

EXT. TRUCK - ON STREET

Khan blasts the horn at a motorist as he pulls a panic stop.

It's an UNMARKED POLICE CAR, the DRIVER, a MIDDLE-AGED COP.

COP
Cool yer jets, Mac!

Khan sobers right up, and returns to driving.

INT. TRUCK BOX

Captive and captor pay no attention to one another.

EXT. TRUCK - ON STREET

The truck hits a pot-hole and the tailgate flies open. Ginnie sees her chance, and lets go with both feet, sending Alexi out the door. The truck moves on as he scrambles to his feet screaming for it to stop in Russian.

ALEXI
Nyet! Nyet! CTOП!!! (STOP!!!)--

INT. TRUCK BOX

Euphoric, Ginnie looks around. She spots Alexi's stiletto, and lays on the blade to sever her tied wrists.

INT. TRUCK CAB

Khan continues driving.

INT. TRUCK BOX

Working her bonds against the knife, Ginnie succeeds in freeing her hands and begins untying her gag. Removing it, she tosses it away.

EXT. TRUCK - ON STREET

The truck pulls up to a red light.

Ginnie casually climbs out of the back, and stands at the rear, fearing to move to either side and be spotted.

A car behind the truck in the line has its lights trained on her. She smiles and then realizes she's holding Alexi's stiletto. She tosses it back inside the truck.

The light turns green, and as the truck moves away, Ginnie sidesteps the traffic and vanishes into the night.

INT. HAL'S GARRET - BEDROOM/LIVING ROOM/ENTRY DOOR - CONTINUOUS

The room is dark. A muffled pounding (OS) on a door from some distance away can be HEARD. Hal comes awake in the darkness.

HAL

Huh?

The pounding continues. Hal comes fully awake.

HAL (CONT'D)

What the--!

He flips on a light, showing a cat sprawled on the bed covers. Climbing out of bed, he tosses back the covers exposing the other cat underneath. He throws on a ROBE.

GINNIE

(OS, muffled)

Hal? Hal Robertson?

IN LIVING ROOM

Hal moves through his apartment, and raises a WINDOW to look down.

Below, seeing Ginnie at his door, he does a double-take.

HAL

Miss Nash? That you?

GINNIE

(muffled)

Hal, please! I've got to talk to you!

Hal gets a pained expression.

HAL

Can't it wait?

GINNIE

No! They may be coming here right now. Please, let me in.

He resigns himself to her pleas.

HAL

Sure, give me a minute.

He closes the window, moves to his door, and descends.

AT ENTRY DOOR

He opens the door, and she slips in fast and shuts the door behind her. They start up the stairs.

IN LIVING ROOM

As they enter, Hal moves to turn on a light, but he's interrupted.

GINNIE

No! No lights!

She turns and looks at his door. She frowns.

GINNIE

Not a very strong door. Terrible, really. They sure don't make 'em like they used to. You really ought to get a good, solid--

HAL

I like my door. Now, maybe you'll explain what you're doing here.

She moves to a seat.

GINNIE

Do you know anybody named Khan? Nine feet tall, strong as an ox...

Hal shakes his head.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

What about a little guy called
Alexi? Or Mushkin? A woman called
Valnya? They're all Russians.

HAL

Really?

He sits.

GINNIE

Look Hal, they kidnapped me
tonight because of something they
think I learned at your uncle's
funeral. They were gonna shoot me
full of drugs to get it out of me,
but I think they ran out of it,
and so they were taking me
somewhere where they did have it,
only I escaped. I don't think they
followed me. I came straight here.

She looks at him, scared.

HAL

Uh-huh... Right. Happens every
night. Very interesting, Miss
Nash--

He stands and approaches her.

HAL (CONT'D)

--Only I saw that picture! Look--

He pulls her up, puts his arm around her and begins to walk her
toward his door.

HAL (CONT'D)

Why don't you go home and work on
it? Rewrite it, and call me in
about a hundred years--

GINNIE

Look, I am not kidding. A great
big Russian put his fist through
my door tonight and kidnapped me.
I don't know where they took me, I

(MORE)

GINNIE (CONT'D)
don't know what they wanted, they
might have--I was just so damned
scared...

She breaks down and starts to cry.

HAL
Hey... hey, come on. Look, I'm
sorry. Sit down here, okay?

They sit down on his couch. The only light is a faint blue from
the moon shining through a window.

HAL (CONT'D)
You're not kidding, are you?

She shakes her head and sniffs.

He nods, and mentally prepares himself, then:

HAL
Okay, start at the beginning.

LATER

Ginnie finishes her story. Hal paces, listening.

GINNIE
So I decided I had to warn you.
They may come here next.

HAL
Why didn't you just call me, and
head straight to the police?
You've really stuck your neck out
by not telling somebody... Not to
mention my neck--

GINNIE
--But I have told somebody. You!
Listen I think I have an idea
where I was held tonight, and if
I'm right, there's nothing the
police can do about it.

HAL

What are you talking about?
They've got authority everywhere.

GINNIE

Not in the embassy of a foreign government! Hal, if I was held prisoner in the Russian Embassy, by its official employees, Diplomatic Immunity would prevent the police from investigating. Embassies are "Foreign Soil."

HAL

Well, if that's the case, we can still go to the Government. A protest can be made... Through channels... We'd call the papers—Hell, what am I telling you for? You work for a paper!

GINNIE

That's just why I don't want to let this out yet.

He stares at her.

HAL

I don't think I like what's coming...

GINNIE

Hal, this thing could be big, really big. Maybe a full-fledged International Incident. We've got to find out what they want.

HAL

Ginnie, this is out of our league. These people are pros.

She shakes her head.

GINNIE

I escaped from them didn't I? And they think I know something from the funeral this afternoon.

She stands and begins to think out loud.

GINNIE (CONT'D)
If they think it, maybe I do, only
I'm not aware of it. If we retrace
the entire afternoon, maybe we'll
get it--

HAL
Ginnie, this is ridiculous. We've
got to go to the authorities--

She looks at him imploringly.

HAL (CONT'D)
It won't work...

She continues to gaze at him.

HAL (CONT'D)
Look, be sensible... Even if we
did find out what it was--

Her gaze is taking effect. She takes his hand, begins to stroke
his arm, then his hair slightly, while looking into his eyes.

HAL (CONT'D)
--we don't have the files, or the
people, or the--

She looks at him, imploring.

HAL (CONT'D)
Alright, well it can't hurt to
retrace the afternoon. But when we
get whatever it is, we hand it
right over to the federales.

GINNIE
Agreed.

She sits.

GINNIE (CONT'D)
Now let's start at the funeral
home.

INT. BULGARIAN EMBASSY - NIGHT

Alexi stands in an office. Suddenly he's slapped hard across the face. Valnya and Khan stand before him.

VALNYA

Idiot! How could you allow such a thing?

ALEXI

I could not prevent the door from opening--

VALNYA

--Fool! Why did you not use the lock?

ALEXI

...I do not like being locked into things.

VALNYA

Perhaps not, but you may find Siberian chains less to your liking.

Mushkin enters. Valnya instantly defers to his authority.

MUSHKIN

Valnya, it was unfortunate, but
Alexi's excuse will be sufficient
(looks at Alexi)
--for now. We must recover her. If
she alerts the Americans, we will
be set back perhaps days, and
Moscow is furious already. Put
Alexi and Khan on mourners from
funeral today. The woman must be
found.

Valnya nods, turns her gaze upon Alexi whose eyes become slits, and then turns to Khan, glowering, as usual.

EXT. HAL'S GARRET - NIGHT

The apartment is dark, both vehicles still parked as before.

INT. HAL'S GARRET

The shades have been pulled down, the curtains closed, and blankets have been hung to keep in all the light.

Hal and Ginnie review the afternoon.

HAL

...So that takes us to the eulogy. You're sure that car you saw was the same one as in the parking lot tonight?

GINNIE

Had to be. It was the only one I'd ever seen. They called it a Zuul or Zugli or something. Russian, I'll bet. Can you recall any of the eulogy?

HAL

Better than that. I have a transcript. Uncle Yak wrote his own eulogy. He gave it to me at the hospital with his instructions the day he died. He was very insistent that everything be carried out exactly as he planned. I'll get it--

Hal moves to a desk, opens the top drawer, and takes out an envelope. Returning to his seat, he begins to remove it.

HAL

Uncle Yak and I were always pretty close. He used to take me on the movie set when we visited.

He begins to read it.

HAL (CONT'D)

And of course he gave me his most prized possession, his film collection. Every major picture he had anything to do with, and scores of others, most are 16MM reductions I'm converting to DVD.

She's interested.

GINNIE

Really?

(to self)

I wonder...

HAL

Yeah, they're all up in the attic until I can get a bigger place and set up a screening room. Let's see...

(reads aloud)

"Yakima Robertson was a simple man. An obscure man in an industry
zah, zah, mumble, mumble...

Ginnie watches him.

HAL (CONT'D)

....he used to insist that one film, a western, and his first after the war, was his finest. He emphatically repeated, 'Remember, it's not just a movie!'

GINNIE

That's it!

Hal looks at her lamely.

HAL

What? That? That's just an expression.

GINNIE

No, it isn't. Hal, the expression is, "it's only a movie", and it's for scary films. Why would he say that about one film, a western-- the moviest kind of movie there is? Hal, your uncle was leaving a message...

He's listening, but not buying.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

"It's not just a movie." And his dying instructions, insisting that you follow his wishes exactly!

He scrunches up his face.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

The epitaph on the headstone. He wrote it, didn't he?

HAL

Well, yeah, but--

GINNIE

"It's there; it's all there; in the movie!" Even I remembered that crazy of an epitaph.

He still isn't convinced.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

"The movie," Hal! Singular! The film made just after the war, which one was it?

HAL

Uh, I think it was Ambush at Renegade Pass, 1946, starring John Wayne and Walter Brennan. Directed by John Ford, uncle Yak's favorite boss.

GINNIE

You've got it? In the attic?

HAL

Yeah, sure... No, we don't need the print in the attic, I've got a copy on DVD.

GINNIE

What are you waiting for? I'll make the popcorn.

Hal searches for the disk. Ginnie rattles pans in the kitchen, calling for locations of this or that ingredient.

INT. BULGARIAN EMBASSY - NIGHT

Mushkin taps A RED RUSSIAN PEN on a DESK.

Valnya paces back and forth. Finally, she stops and looks at him.

VALNYA

What about the nephew? Do you think she would go there?

MUSHKIN

No. We have checked him thoroughly. He knows nothing. If she knows anything, she knows this, or how would you explain how she--

He is interrupted by Krinsky who whispers something in his ear. Mushkin shakes his head and says something in reply.

INT. HAL'S GARRET - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Hal and Ginnie sit in the darkened living room watching the film. The popcorn bowl is nearly empty. They are bored.

A battle rages in the movie. It ends. There is some concluding dialogue and then the film ends.

Hal points the remote, turns off the system, and then turns on a lamp.

HAL

Well, that's it. Ginnie, there's nothing out of the ordinary in the film. I can't even figure why uncle Yak liked it.

She nods slowly.

GINNIE

By the way, where was he at the end there? I couldn't even find him.

HAL

Couldn't you? He was the guy in the back looking at the mesa top while the battle--

GINNIE

Hal!!!

HAL

I'm way ahead of you...

He's re-started the video system and advances the DVD. When he's set, he turns out the light, and starts the film.

The final moments of the film play. Suddenly, at a certain point, Hal freezes the picture on the screen.

HAL

There! He's near that rock formation... see?

GINNIE

Yes, YES, Hal!

HAL

Now, I'll restart it.

The film resumes. A small FIGURE looks up at the top of the mesa, directly behind the film battle raging in FG. Every time the film returns to the shot, he is doing this. Eventually, he stops, and the battle ends.

When the film is over, Hal turns off the video system. Then he slumps down in his seat, drained.

They both sit in silence for several moments.

GINNIE

Where did they shoot that movie, Hal?

HAL

Oh no... No, Ginnie! Remember, you agreed to go to the authorities.

GINNIE

Of course, Hal. They'll need to know too. And if they won't help us--

HAL

--Won't help us?

GINNIE

Well, you've got to admit, it's pretty weird... Now, where?

HAL

A place called Monument Valley.
It's in Utah, on the Arizona
border... It's Navajo land. Ford
shot lots of movies there in the
old days... You really think we'll
get the send-off from the
Government guys?

GINNIE

It's possible...

He sighs. She waits.

HAL

I don't know... This is--

He looks at her in earnest. She leans forward.

HAL (CONT'D)

Ginnie do you realize how risky
this is?

She collapses into her seat.

GINNIE

I'll tell you something riskier.
Arguing in this apartment all--

HAL

--Garret.

GINNIE

Hal, will you listen to me?
Whether you like it or not, we are
in this thing. Now, I guarantee
that if we stay here much longer
this "Garret" of yours is gonna
look like Czechoslovakia after the
invasion!

HAL

Okay, what's your game plan?

GINNIE

Well... the least we could do is
get out of here... and... maybe

(MORE)

GINNIE (CONT'D)
get a hotel room to get some
sleep. Then in the morning, we--

HAL
A hotel room? "Room"?
Interesting... Do you proposition
men this way often?

GINNIE
Don't flatter yourself. Remember,
they're looking for me. Alone!

Hal rises, and goes to one of the covered windows. Peering out,
he says:

HAL
Hmmm, almost dawn. Still an hour
or two, though. We-ell, if we go,
we'll have to go quietly.

Ginnie's face has lit up at "if we go," but then she looks
puzzled.

GINNIE
What do you mean?

She stands and walks to the window.

Hal pulls the curtain aside slightly. Together, they look down
at the recreational vehicle parked beside his car.

HAL
Had a vacation lately?

EXT. WASHINGTON - DAWN

The city wakes up. A fine day is in the offing.

The F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS.

Nearby, are several shops, including a massage parlor.

Standing near one store front, leaning against a LAMP-POST
reading the morning NEWSPAPER is a figure, Alexi.

WITH ALEXI

He reads the paper upside down, using it as a cover to observe the F.B.I. entrance.

Hearing a noise, Alexi sees a CUSTOMER emerging from the massage parlor.

As he walks out, he is grinning and waving at someone inside.

CUSTOMER

G'bye doll. Best ever, hon. Heh,
 heh, I'll never fergetcha.

As he turns to walk off, he sees Alexi watching. The man notices the newspaper, and comes up, smiling.

CUSTOMER

Hey, buddy, yer paper's flipped.
 No wonder you ain't readin' it.
 Pitchers ain't too good, neither.
 Here, lemme help you...

He grabs the newspaper in an attempt to turn it right-side up, and Alexi rips it viciously out of his hands. With a snarl, Alexi beats the guy several times with the paper, then stops, glaring at him.

ALEXI

Get away from me you decadent
 bastard!

The lout feels challenged, and stepping forward, begins to puff up.

Alexi produces his stiletto.

The man looks at this and hot-foots it away.

Alexi puts the knife away. He looks around to see if anyone has observed this, and notices TWO PEOPLE across from him approaching the entrance to the F.B.I.

They are an ASIAN COUPLE with knapsacks and they carry MOTORCYCLE HELMETS.

They try the doors. Finding them locked, the couple stand for a moment perplexed, the ASIAN MAN checking his watch, and then they begin to look around.

The ASIAN WOMAN holds a piece of paper, which she looks over.

INSERT PAPER:

"AMERI-TOURS - For the Yen-conscious traveler - See the U.S.A. on a Kawasaki, Page four, Washington D.C. Cont. - 7:30 a.m. - F.B.I. - 10:00 a.m. C.I.A., etc. etc..."

BACK TO SCENE

Nervous, Alexi begins to back up toward the building front. He looks around for something to cover himself.

Spotting the newspaper in pieces on the sidewalk, he watches the wind scatter it.

He casts about for anything else.

The couple look around them for something to occupy the time until the next tourist spot.

Looking in Alexi's direction, they see the massage parlor sign behind him.

Alexi sees them looking at it, and panics, thinking they have spotted him.

JAPANESE MAN

(Japanese w/sub-
titles)

Oh, look, a massage establishment.
I haven't had a good massage and
bath since Osaka.

JAPANESE WOMAN

(Japanese w/sub-
titles)

That is a splendid idea. My feet
are killing me already this
morning!

JAPANESE MAN

(Japanese w/sub-
titles)

Excellent, let's go.

Alexi dashes away.

INT. CAR

Alexi uses the secure phone.

ALEXI (CONT'D)

Number One, number Three. I am
opposite F.B.I. building. No sign
of woman, but must report I have
observed two Chinese agents
attempting to make contact with
F.B.I. Of course I am sure!

INT. MOTEL ROOM

The room is dark, as the drapes are closed. Through a crack,
SUNLIGHT filters in, and onto the bed.

In bed are Hal and Ginnie, with the covers pulled up to their
necks. Hal comes awake slowly.

Seeing his situation, he eventually throws back the covers, and
gets out of bed in his jockies. He goes into the bathroom.

When the door is closed, Ginnie's eyes come open and she throws
back the covers. She's fully dressed. As Hal showers (OS), she
begins to change clothes from a small bag on a nightstand.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKWAY - MORNING

Hal's RV rolls along in the morning sun.

INT. REC VEHICLE

GINNIE smiles at him as they listen to the radio.

GINNIE

You sure were right about our next
move. They never could have
figured I would go back to my
apartment.

HAL

It wasn't my suggestion, remember?
But it did work. We've got
something on our side: we're
amateurs, unpredictable.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKWAY

As the R.V. shoots by, the morning traffic with it.

A few cars back, the Russian sedan follows discreetly.

The R.V. passes under a freeway sign for the C.I.A. It takes the turn-off.

The black car follows, along with a few other nondescript cars.

As the R.V. parks, the black car enters another section of the parking lot.

Alexi drives. Passing a GARDENER who looks up, he waves.

The gardener recognizes him and nods.

Alexi parks the car, and observes Hal and Ginnie climb out and head for the entrance.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

The four Russians sit quietly for several moments. Then:

MUSHKIN

This will take while.

VALNYA

Should we take tour?

ALEXI

I've seen it...

VALNYA

Tour was only recently started
since Freedom of Information Act
was amended.

ALEXI

Before thet! I saw building before
thet!

MUSHKIN

Quiet! We will turn around and
wait outside of grounds.

Alexi looks around and spots the Japanese couple ride in on their large-bore KAWASAKIS. Panic seizes him.

ALEXI
MUSHKIN! It is them!

They all look over at the Japanese couple getting off their cycles.

VALNYA
The Ch-Chi-Chinese!

MUSHKIN
Alexi, quickly, drive outside
grounds before we are spotted.

As the Japanese move toward the building, the Russian car skulks out.

INT. R.V.

Hal drives.

GINNIE
I told you they'd ignore us.

Hal just drives.

EXT. BETHESDA MARYLAND - NEXT TO BELT-WAY - GAS STATION - LATER

The R.V. pulls into the gas station. Hal jumps out and begins to gas it up. Ginnie gets out and heads for the rest room.

The Russian car is visible, stopped in the street in the distance.

After a moment, it cruises by, and Hal catches sight of it. Suddenly, he realizes what it is; the occupants are obscured because they hold newspapers between them and the glass.

All but Alexi's are right-side up.

Hal sobers right up, but continues to fill the tank.

Ginnie emerges from the building.

Hal tries to figure a course of action.

Ginnie moves toward him.

He thinks, trying to decide, then looks at some highway signs for the Belt-way. The pump clicks off as Ginnie comes up.

 HAL
Get in!

 GINNIE
What?

 HAL
Get in! I... Hurry up!!!

 GINNIE
Hal, are--

 HAL
GET IN!!!

He runs into the building, pays, and rushes back to the R.V. Ginnie has remained frozen a moment, then looking cautiously down the street, she steps into the R.V.

Hal blasts out of there, does a u-turn, and recklessly enters the freeway ramp.

INT. R.V.

Hal, driving fast, looks into his rearview mirror and sees the black car behind. Ginnie tries to control her fear.

 GINNIE
Is it them, Hal? Well, is it?

 HAL
Yeah.

 GINNIE
Oh-my-God, what'll we do?

 HAL
Lose 'em... We'll lose 'em.
They're following us because they
don't know what we're up to. All
we have to do is give 'em the
slip. Hell, we can do it. We're on
(MORE)

HAL (CONT'D)
 our own turf, aren't we? All we'll
 do is stay public, and lose 'em.
 We've got supplies, clothes,
 money, and time, plenty of time.
 We're tourists, remember?

She smiles back weakly.

As the speedometer increases, Hal looks at the pursuing car in
 the rearview mirror.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

Khan drives.

VALNYA
 They know we follow them!
 Inexcusable!

MUSHKIN
 Do not worry, Number Two, I have
 plan...

EXT. BELT-WAY/GREAT FALLS PARK ROAD - CONTINUOUS

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A. The R.V. attempts evasive maneuvers. It takes a freeway exit and then gets back on.
- B. It changes course at the last minute, nearly causing several accidents.
- C. It shoots down a winding, hilly road and cuts into a--
- D. --forested driveway. The Russian car passes by.
- E. But, then, when Hal pulls out to go the other way, the Russians are behind.
- F. Day passes--
- G. --to night.
- H. They are now far from where they started.

I. Finally, Hal checks his mirror, and a smile crosses his face as he watches the Russian car turning to gas up.

WITH RUSSIAN CAR

It screeches to a stop behind a car at a gas island.

Mushkin gestures for Khan at the wheel to get the car to the pump. Khan BEEPS HORN (OS). Nothing happens, so Khan does it again. The driver of the car in front looks at him with sneering contempt as he fills his car up.

DRIVER

Wait yer turn, jerk.

Khan gets out of car rising to his full height. The DRIVER smiles sheepishly, and indicates his gas pump.

DRIVER

No offense, buddy. Heh, heh,
y'want mine, y'can have it.

Alexi points to another island, and Mushkin screams for Khan to put the car over there.

Khan does as told, and Alexi springs out, unfamiliarly grabs the nozzle, and tries to fill the tank.

As he does so, a very sexy girl bends over checking her tire across from him and exposing enough leg to make a eunuch drool.

As he watches this, craning to get the best angle, the gas sloshes back on him completely drenching his crotch. He closes his eyes. Pain? Ecstasy?

INT. R.V.

Hal and Ginnie cheer at their escape.

HAL

We did it. Finally. Now, all we
have to do is change course and
get as far away from here as
possible.

A turn-off appears. They take it.

INT. R.V. - NIGHT

Most of the night has passed. They move silently down the highway. One or two pairs of HEADLIGHTS show behind and ahead.

Ginnie sleeps.

Hal shows few signs of fatigue.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

The dawn begins to break.

The R.V. hits a small rut in the road.

INT. R.V.

It jostles Ginnie awake. She takes in the scene.

A RADIO STATION PLAYS SOFTLY (OS).

The horizon has brightened behind them.

Ginnie looks ahead. Then long and hard at the cars strung out behind them. Then she sees something.

She scrambles to the glass, straining to see.

GINNIE

No... NO, HAL!

HAL

What? What is it?

She turns around in resignation and slumps down.

GINNIE

What do you think?

HAL

I don't believe it. Are you sure?
They couldn't have known we turned west.

She shrugs and shakes her head.

GINNIE

I don't know how, but they did.

They continue to move along saying nothing.

LATER

The R.V. and the pursuing Russians are no further apart. Traffic has increased.

Hal sees an exit with a TOLL PLAZA ahead. Driving up, he stops, pays the toll, and heads through.

The Russian car takes the exit. There are fairly long lines at most of the lanes. Mushkin, driving, guides the car into an automatic lane.

At the gate, he stops, and feels in his pocket for coins. Feeling none, he looks at Khan, next to him, then at Valnya and Alexi in the back. All shake their heads. Angrily, Mushkin hits the wheel, and screeches the car through illegally.

As the Russian car heads away, the toll alarm goes off, and a patrol car immediately starts up, giving chase.

Mushkin sees this.

MUSHKIN

Der'mo (Shit).

He pulls over to the shoulder.

The police car does likewise, behind. The OFFICER gets out, and giving the strange car the once-over, he slowly moves to the driver's window which is now rolled down.

PATROLMAN

Excuse me folks, but you didn't pay the toll.

Mushkin smiles out at him.

MUSHKIN

Very sorry, officer, but we're in hurry. If you have change for five dollars--

PATROLMAN

See your license, sir?

Mushkin pulls out a card and hands it to him. The cop looks at it and a change comes over his features.

PATROLMAN
Russian Embassy! Official
business, eh?

Mushkin nods.

PATROLMAN
(handing back the
card)
No need to pay anything, sir. Just
carry on. Sorry for the
interruption. 'njoy the day,
now...

He begins to head back to his car.

The cop gets into his car, as his RADIO SQUAWKS:

RADIO VOICE (OS)
Gordy? Listen, another Vermont tag
just plowed through eastbound.
That's him on the overpass, now...

PATROLMAN
Out-of-stater, huh? Well, I'll git
him...

He fires up the big DODGE and takes off, LIGHTS ABLAZE, SIREN
ON.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

MUSHKIN
Now we have lost them. Did you see
them turn off road?

No one says anything.

INT. R.V. ON HIGHWAY - LATER

Hal drives.

HAL
Anything back there?

She looks.

A long empty stretch of highway.

GINNIE

Nope. Hal, we've really lost them.
They haven't a prayer of finding
us now.

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR - PARKED SOMEWHERE

The trunk Lid is slapped shut. A C.B. ANTENNA is threaded onto a MOUNTING BASE installed on the outer surface. Once done, the person moves around and enters the car. It starts and takes off.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - AERIAL - DAY

The highway meanders far below.

MUSHKIN (OS)

Brrreak 1-9. Lonesome Cowboy
asking if anyone out there has
ears on?

CRACKLE (OS)

BIG BANANA (FILTERED, OS)

This here's the Big Banana,
Cowboy, eastbound on the thru-way.
What can I do you for, C'mon?

CRACKLE (OS)

MUSHKIN (OS)

We are west-bound and have lost
the party of which we are looking
for. Would you be so kind as to
tell us if you saw beige GMC
Motor-van, with brown bourgeoise
stripe on side?

CRACKLE (OS)

BIG BANANA (FILTERED, OS)

That's a big 10-4, Cowboy. Ah
don't know about the boodgewah
stuff, but three o' them there
vee-hicles passed me by in the

(MORE)

BIG BANANA (CONT'D, OS)
 last ten mile or so. One was
 running mighty fast. That there
 was one purrrty little cruiser,
 I'll be bound.

CRACKLE (OS)

MUSHKIN (OS)
 Much thanks, Big Banana.

CRACKLE (OS)

BIG BANANA (FILTERED, OS)
 Say, Cowboy, seen any smokeys out
 there to the east?

CRACKLE (OS)

MUSHKIN (OS)
 All is clear to New York, Big
 Banana.

CRACKLE (OS)

BIG BANANA (FILTERED, OS)
 Mucho Gracias, Compadré, you got
 the same goin' west.

CRACKLE (OS)

MUSHKIN (OS)
 Thank you Comrade. Catch you on
 flip-flop.

CRACKLE; then it cuts out (OS).

The black car, now in sight, speeds up.

EXT. WITH R.V. - ON HIGHWAY - DUSK

The R.V. shoots past into the western sunset.

INT. R.V. - NIGHT

Hal drives. Occasional headlights shoot past. Behind them are
 one or two sets of headlights.

GINNIE

Hal, did your uncle Yak ever tell
you anything about himself?
Anything sort of secret?

He looks at her blankly.

HAL

Secret?

He shakes his head, saying:

HAL (CONT'D)

No...

He tries to read her eyes.

HAL (CONT'D)

Oh, the thing? The thing in his
movie? That's the MacGuffin.

She looks at him, her face twisted in bafflement.

GINNIE

The what?

HAL

Uncle Yak worked in a few
Hitchcock movies, and they all had
a thing he called the MacGuffin.
It was the thing everybody was
after. You know, the secret plans,
the missing Crown Jewels...
Hitchcock called it the MacGuffin.
He used to tell a story about two
guys on a train. One had a large
box on his lap. The other looked
over and asked him what it was.
"It's a MacGuffin" "What's a
MacGuffin?" "It's a device for
trapping lions in the Scottish
Highlands" "But there are no lions
in the Scottish Highlands!" says
the other guy. "Then this is no
MacGuffin," says the man.

He looks at her. She half-smiles, then leans over.

GINNIE
You talk too much.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The R.V. passes by. Behind, a single set of headlights follows.

EXT. K.O.A. KAMPGROUND OFFICE - NIGHT

The R.V. is parked before the Office. Hal emerges, gets in on the driver's side, and drives toward a slot.

INT. R.V.

He stops, puts the R.V. in park, and shuts off the engine. Ginnie faces him, takes his hand, and smiles.

He smiles back, looking at her, reading her. Then he stands and pulls her up. They look at one another.

After a moment, he wraps his arms around her and, looking into her eyes to be sure, he kisses her.

HAL
Let me show you the rest of my
apartment.

They step into the back.

LATER

Hal and Ginnie in the darkness, making love.

They roll around on the BED, cramped as it is, and Ginnie's back bumps a small PORTABLE TV SET which COMES ON.

Onscreen is a late show presentation of a movie: "North By Northwest," with SOUND LOW (OS).

EXT. K.O.A. KAMPGROUND - NIGHT

A pair of feet creep stealthily among the dense shrubbery of the sleeping campground.

INT. R.V.

Lovemaking continues, as TV plays.

EXT. KAMPGROUND

The pair of feet continue to creep forward. Suddenly, they come up to a vehicle, the R.V. They halt.

INT. R.V.

Their ardor heats up.

EXT. R.V. - SIDE DOOR

A hand comes to the door handle, and tries it. It begins to open.

INT. R.V.

As they make love. Hal's hand comes to the TV and dials down the volume knob. Hal and Ginnie continue making love.

EXT. R.V. - SIDE DOOR

The hand begins to swing the door ajar, but then is halted.

Khan prevents Alexi from entering the R.V. With one strong yank, Khan picks Alexi off the ground, and hustles him off. The door swings free, and bangs the side of the R.V.

INT. R.V.

Hal and Ginnie sit up suddenly at the noise.

GINNIE

What in God's name? The door's open!

Hal gets up and goes to investigate.

HAL

Stay where you are.

EXT. R.V. - SIDE DOOR

Hal pokes out of the door, seeing it's open. He looks around, but sees and hears nothing.

He steps down, and examines the door mechanism closely. Nothing. Then, there's a scratching sound (OS), and he looks down.

A RACCOON scampers by, giving him a look in the process. He smiles to himself, and then closes and locks the door.

INT. R.V.

Hal comes back and sits down next to Ginnie.

GINNIE

Well?

He pushes her down and kisses her quickly, then:

HAL

Nothing, just a raccoon.

GINNIE

Oh.

They kiss longer this time.

Then, after a pause, she looks away and silently mouths the words: "a raccoon"? Hal pulls her over to kiss her again.

On the little TV, the end shots in *North By Northwest* play:

Thornhill kisses Eve and the train they are on goes into the tunnel. The words: "The End" and "North By Northwest A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture (Trademark)" appear.

INT. TRUCK STOP RESTAURANT - MORNING

Hal and Ginnie sit at a booth in the busy restaurant--an average eatery found on the interstate.

Outside, through the windows, a GREYHOUND BUS unloads its PASSENGERS who begin to filter into the restaurant.

A WAITRESS brings Hal and Ginnie their orders: HAL: 2 eggs over easy, hash browns, sausage links, and three silver dollar

pancakes; Ginnie: a vegetable omelette and coffee. Hal drinks milk.

The Bus Driver comes into view as the last of his passengers get off the bus, and enter the restaurant. He follows at a distance in order to get a place by himself.

The hostess leads him in after a moment to the booth across from Hal and Ginnie. They are separated by a cheap woven fence and some plastic plants, such that they do not see one another.

ON HAL

A waitress comes up to the hidden seated Bus Driver, and takes his order (UNHEARD).

Hal and Ginnie begin to eat their breakfast, as another waitress delivers a CADDIE of SYRUP DISPENSERS for Hal's pancakes.

The Bus Driver begins to listen to them.

HAL

You look tired.

He smiles.

HAL (CONT'D)

Shoulda said something if it was
too much for ya last night.

She gives him a look.

He grins.

She gets a mock-angry look, picks up one of the syrup bottles, and pours it on his eggs.

He takes no notice, and continues to eat the now disgusting mess. He smiles as he chews, then tilts his head as if to repeat the question.

Ginnie settles down a bit and tries to be genuine.

GINNIE

I'm okay, it's just all happening
so fast.

She returns to eating, slowly.

HAL

I know... Say, can I ask you something?

She looks at him considering her answer. He smiles. She does too.

GINNIE

What?

HAL

Did you... did you... like it?

She snorts out a laugh.

He cools down a bit, slightly hurt.

She sees and tries to repair the damage.

GINNIE

Oh, don't get me wrong, you were fantastic.

The Bus Driver next door perks up, hearing this.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

More than fantastic!

HAL

Yeah?

The Bus Driver echoes Hal's "yeah?" by listening harder.

GINNIE

Yeah.

HAL

Oh c'mon, I wasn't really...

His eyes raise at end, making it a question.

GINNIE

You were... maybe the best. It's just that... well, you know. It didn't help with them around.

HAL

The Russians?

The Bus Driver's eyes open.

GINNIE

I can't get that one--

HAL

The big one?

GINNIE

Yeah, I can't get him out of my
mind. He was so... cruel.

The Bus Driver's eyes widen.

HAL

What about the little guy and his-

A CRASH covers up the word "knife." It's a WAITRESS, dropping a
tray of dirty dishes.

GINNIE

Last night, afterwards, I dreamed
that he...

The Bus Driver listens intently.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

...that he...

Bus Driver cranes to hear.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

...stuck it... in me!

The Bus Driver cannot believe his ears.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

All four of them--the little wormy
one, the big gorilla--

The Bus Driver begins to screw up his face in revulsion.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

--the short, fat one, and the old
lizardy woman--

The Bus Driver is beginning to wilt from his own imagination's
pictures.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

--Uhhh, they just gave me the shivers. Turned me off completely.

The Bus Driver slowly begins to recover from all of this.

Hal and Ginnie say nothing for a moment or two.

HAL

But you enjoyed it, huh?

He smiles at her, gathering courage for the next question.

She nods, smiling.

HAL

When uh, when was it the best?

She giggles, not believing he is actually pursuing this. He smiles, trying to get her to talk.

HAL

C'mon...

GINNIE

C'mon, yourself!

HAL

No, tell me. I'm just curious.

GINNIE

Wellllll... Oh, I don't know.

HAL

When? C'mon...

GINNIE

Welll... when... when the--

HAL

Yeah?

The Bus Driver cranes to listen while simultaneously lifting his coffee.

GINNIE

--the... when the raccoon--

The Bus Driver sprays the coffee, disrupting the conversation completely. He quickly gets up to avoid the mess, and tries to mop up.

Hal and Ginnie stare at him.

He rushes out, after slapping down some bills.

EXT. TRUCK STOP PARKING LOT - LATER

Hal's R.V. pulls out and onto the highway.

From a side road, the Russian car moves out behind after waiting several moments.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

Khan looks exhausted, and very cramped, as does Mushkin. Valnya is ornery, and Alexi keeps to himself, pouting.

MUSHKIN

In next town we buy more tents.
One just for you, Khan.

VALNYA

And sleepink bags. We buy sleepink
bags. And shampoo. And new black
dress.

Alexi smiles at her discomfort. She catches this.

VALNYA (CONT'D)

Keep smile off face, idiot. You
almost ruined whole operation last
night!

MUSHKIN

From now on orders will be
followed exactly, or person will
suffer consequences. Is that
understood?

Alexi nods morosely.

ALEXI

I was only trying to learn
destination.

MUSHKIN
Ve shall see soon enough.

EXT. R.V. - HIGHWAY - SOMEWHERE IN MIDWEST - NEXT DAY

Morning. It's raining.

INT. R.V.

Hal, driving, passes another R.V. nearly identical to his own. In a side window, as he passes, a PAIR of bored KIDS (a BROTHER and SISTER, approximately 8 years old) stare at them.

Looking across, Hal makes faces. They break up in laughter.

She smiles.

They pass a sign for St. Louis, a few miles ahead. Hal looks into the rearview mirror.

Behind, a car, passes a group of slower cars, coming too close.

Hal recognizes it.

HAL
Oh, no!

GINNIE
What? Hal, what is it?

HAL
They're back there. The Russians.
They've followed us all the way...
Two days!

GINNIE
I've been watching all the way!
Sometimes we've been the only
thing on the road!

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

Khan drives.

VALNYA

LUMOX! You drive too close! They
see us!!! You brainless heap of
dung!!!

Alexi smiles.

INT. R.V.

Ginnie stares at Hal in panic and confusion.

GINNIE

Hal, how could they do it?

HAL

I don't know; maybe they put one
of those beeper gizmos on us.

He guffaws and points down at the dash-board radio and C.B.
unit.

HAL (CONT'D)

Maybe they used one of those!

She looks at it, not understanding.

GINNIE

The radio?

He turns on the C.B.

ROADRUNNER (FILTERED, OS)

Should be right behind 'em, now
Cowboy.

Crackle (OS)

MUSHKIN (FILTERED, OS)

Your assistance is appreciated,
Roadrunner.

Crackle (OS)

Hal and Ginnie look at one another, listening.

ROADRUNNER (FILTERED, OS)
Been a pleasure. Say, Cowboy, you
still got that sweet sounding
wohman on deck?

Crackle (OS)

VALNYA (FILTERED, OS)
Am right here... uh, Run-reader...

Crackle (OS)

ROADRUNNER (FILTERED, OS)
Haw haw haw haw, Now I know you
just got to be a good lookin'
wohman...

Crackle (OS)

VALNYA (FILTERED, OS)
Oh--you little boonchk--

Crackle (OS)

MUSHKIN (FILTERED, OS)
--Give regards to Mrs. Roadrunner
and little roadrunners. Must hang
up now!

Crackle (OS)

ROADRUNNER (FILTERED, OS)
Oh, okay Cowboy. Sure will, good
buddy, 10-4 'n all that rotgut.

Hal and Ginnie listen in resignation. Hal turns it off.

EXT. HIGHWAY.

They're entering the ST. LOUIS area. The GATEWAY ARCH looms
ahead.

INT. R.V.

Hal calculates, trying to decide on a course of action.

Ginnie looks out a rear window.

GINNIE

They're moving up on us.

Hal looks ahead and sees an exit. He steers them off, toward a retail strip.

The Russians follow suit, staying behind, now, about 200 yards.

As he drives, Hal talks hurriedly:

HAL

How much cash have you got?

Ginnie reacts slowly, but opens her handbag and looks.

GINNIE

A few dollars. I thought we were using credit cards--

HAL

--No time!

Suddenly, he whips the R.V. into a DRIVE-IN LIQUOR STORE.

Behind, the Russians halt at a traffic light.

At the window, a CLERK looks at Hal and Ginnie.

HAL

I wanna buy an empty case of beer!

CLERK

Empty... What brand?

HAL

Brand? What are you, a comedian?
C'mon, gimme a case!

The clerk vanishes. Hal looks at the Russian car, still waiting.

A FUNERAL PROCESSION moves through the intersection, preventing the car from moving as the LIGHT TURNS GREEN.

HAL

We've gotta lose 'em!

The clerk strides up with a CASE OF BEER BOTTLES.

HAL

We'll head south... To Mexico, if
we have to.

He turns to notice the clerk. He pulls the case in, and puts it
down on the floor next to them. Then, he gestures for Ginnie's
money.

CLERK

Let's see, that comes to...

Hal shoves a twenty at him.

HAL

Here! ...Cover it?

The clerk, surprised, takes the bill.

CLERK

Sure... I could get you some empty
Gallianos or Tanguerays if you--

Hal screeches away and makes a wild U-turn.

The last car in the funeral line passes through, the light goes
green, and the R.V. passes the Russians in the opposite
direction.

INT. R.V.

In the R.V., Ginnie watches the Russian car drive up to the
liquor window.

GINNIE

They've stopped at the store.
They're talking to the clerk.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

They look at the drive-in window.

CLERK

Heck, for ten bucks, I'll tell you
their shoe sizes.

MUSHKIN

Please, they escape. What did you hear?

CLERK

The guy was sayin' something about headin' south. To Mexico, I guess.

MUSHKIN

Ahhhh.

Khan screeches them out and makes a deft U-turn, running a red light to catch up.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DRIVE-UP WINDOW

CLERK

Hey! What about my ten bucks?
Tourists!

INT. R.V.

They speed back onto the Interstate.

Ginnie watches at the back, as Hal heads them through the late-morning St. Louis traffic.

EXT. R.V. - FREEWAY

Outside, the rain begins to slacken, and the clouds show signs of breaking.

INT. R.V.

Ginnie looks out the back.

GINNIE

They're merging with traffic.

She moves forward.

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Well? How do we lose them?

HAL

Is there a lot of traffic back there?

GINNIE

It's not heavy, but there are...
Hey, what are you thinking?

He looks at her and grins.

HAL

Open the window back there, and
let me know when they're behind us
in this lane.

He begins to slow the R.V. She moves to the back.

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR

It moves through medium-light traffic. Eventually, it is about 100 yards behind the R.V., and no cars are between it and the R.V.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

MUSHKIN

Is no point in hangink beck. Stay
with them for now.

Valnya watches Ginnie opening the window of the R.V., and hanging out.

VALNYA

Mushkin, what are they doing?

Mushkin squints ahead.

Ginnie suddenly holds a bottle in her hand. With a twist of her wrist, she flips it on to the roadway. It smashes, littering the lane with glass.

The Russian car sidesteps it, causing another car to toot its horn.

Ginnie lets go with two more bottles, one in the center, and one on the right lane. The Russian car dances around the glass again, this time sending a car off the road.

Mushkin yells at Khan (SILENT), and gestures wildly.

Behind, one or two cars have punctured tires.

EXT. SAME FREEWAY, FARTHER BACK.

The rest of the traffic begins to come upon the broken glass.
The drivers panic, whipping from lane to lane.

Among them are the Japanese Couple on their Kawasakis. They dart to and fro avoiding accidents one after another, gesticulating and shouting at one another in Japanese.

Other drivers shake their fists at them.

Finally, they attempt to slow down and stop on the shoulder. As they do, another MOTORCYCLIST, a Hell's Angels-type, complete with DENIM VEST and chopper, shoots past.

MOTORCYCLIST
Chickennnnnnnnns!!!!

The Japanese Man shakes his fist at him.

JAPANESE MAN
Anata bakagete orokamono-me! Anata
wa kakujitsu ni korosa reru! (You
ridiculous fool! You'll be killed
for sure!)

EXT. RUSSIANS AND R.V.

Ahead of the Russian car, Ginnie now has three bottles, which she drops into each lane.

The Russian car swerves, but it's useless.

Khan realizes this, and too late, jams on the brakes. The car skids toward the glass, slowing rapidly, but halting right on the worst patch.

Traffic goes crazy: horns, screaming drivers, chaos.

The front two Russian tires go BOOM-BOOM, and begin to lose air.

In the traffic mess, the Motorcyclist is forced to lay his bike into a shoulder to avoid an accident.

Not a single car is smashed. The effect: amazement.

The Russians just sit there, dejected.

Alexi looks at the horizontal motorcycle, then speaks quietly to Mushkin who nods. Alexi jumps out, and runs up to the recovering biker, who's head and shoulders taller.

Taking him by surprise, Alexi shoves him out of the way, and then leans down to pick up the bike.

The biker looks at him and smiles.

MOTORCYCLIST

Git yer hands off that chopper,
shrimp.

Alexi smiles at him, and then, with blinding speed, spins on one leg and kicks the biker in the face, sending him to the shoulder.

Returning to the motor-cycle, Alexi picks it up, expertly starts it, and takes off after the R.V. The biker MOANS (OS).

INT. R.V.

Hal and Ginnie are jubilant, the traffic eliminated.

EXT. HIGHWAY

But far behind, and approaching rapidly is Alexi.

Also, a FREIGHT TRAIN is moving along to the right, paralleling the roadway.

Some distance ahead, the tracks pass under the road at a diagonal, and begin to parallel the road on the left side.

The train is being overtaken by the R.V., and the R.V. by Alexi.

INT. R.V.

HAL

You saw them get at least two
flats? You're sure?

GINNIE
Uh huh, positive Hal.

HAL
Then we did it!

Ginnie looks out the back.

GINNIE
Hey, a motorcyclist got through
the mess back there!

Hal looks into the mirror, seeing the rider gaining fast. He
stares hard.

HAL
Hasn't got a helmet... Heyyyyyy,
that's that little guy, Alexi!

GINNIE
What?

EXT. HIGHWAY - R.V. & TRAIN & ALEXI - CONTINUOUS

The train is steadily passed. Suddenly, the rear window of the
R.V. opens and Ginnie appears.

Alexi comes up from behind, closing the distance.

He holds the handlebar with the same hand holding the stiletto.

His eyes go to the rear tires of the R.V. He means to take out a
tire.

The road begins to rise as the Interstate passes over the tracks
via a LONG BRIDGE.

Ginnie tosses out a bottle.

Alexi puts the bike around the glass.

They begin to move up the grade leading to the bridge. The train
passes under, losing ground to them.

Ginnie tosses several bottles in succession. Alexi slaloms
around them.

More bottles are tossed, as they ascend. Alexi has his hands full.

He moves too close to lose a tire from the glass. Ginnie throws one at him, instead. It glances off, and he slows down fast, stunned.

Then, as they near the crest, Ginnie dumps all of the bottles remaining in the case across the pavement.

Alexi, having started to gain again, is forced to swerve wildly to his left. He shoots off the road, just below the point where the BRIDGE RAIL begins, passes over the shoulder, into mid-air, and comes down... on top of the moving train.

Impossibly, he stays up, moving up the train on the tops of the cars, jumping the gaps between.

He's nearly out of his mind with fear.

INT. R.V.

Ginnie sees this through the rear window.

GINNIE
God, Hal, look!

Looking out, Hal gapes at the sight.

EXT. TRAIN - TOP & BETWEEN CARS - CONTINUOUS

Alexi, petrified to do anything other than stay up, continues moving forward.

Suddenly, a gaping chasm looms directly ahead--a flat car with two semitrailers head-to-head on it. He twists the accelerator with all he's got, shoots off the car in an insane leap, and drops into the space between the semi-trailers.

The motorcycle jams snugly in place.

Alexi has his eyes shut tight. Slowly, he opens them. Something shifts, and he drops out of view.

INT. R.V.

Both Ginnie and Hal look away in horror.

INT. GAS STATION SERVICE BAY - LATER

Khan, Mushkin, and Valnya stand about underneath their car on a hoist. A TOW TRUCK stands outside.

A long-haired, dirty YOUTH shows them TWO TIRES.

Both are extra-wide, and have white letters saying, "Fat Trac Fifty."

Mushkin glares.

MUSHKIN

But you have no Russian tires?

The Kid shakes his head.

MUSHKIN

Not even Czechoslovakian?

KID

Nope, these here are the only tires I can make fit that crazy rim o' yours! Have to rotate 'em all 'n put these puppies on the back.

Mushkin's confused: puppies?

VALNYA

Mushkin, who cares what kind tires, so long as they are round? Why not these?

MUSHKIN

I don't like blimp. Is bourgeois!

VALNYA

Bourgeoise? How?

MUSHKIN

It is fat!

VALNYA

Mushkin, you are fat! Besides,
Russia is capitalist now.

He turns and throws up his hands.

MUSHKIN

Put white letters on inside.

The Kid bolts into action.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

A COKE MACHINE: a coin drops, then another, then a button is pushed. The machine makes NOISES (OS), but no can falls out.

Khan simmers. He kneels down, opens the flap, and reaches inside. A TWISTING OF METAL, then A WRENCHING (OS). He twists his arm, buried in the machine to the shoulder, and then pulls hard, coming away with a DENTED CAN OF COKE.

Glaring down at it, he watches as it suddenly pops its own tab.

He begins to smile.

Behind Khan, the Kid backs the car out of the garage, with the large racing tires mounted on the back. The white letters face out.

As the Kid gets out, Mushkin goes to the driver's door, Valnya to the front passenger door, and Khan, coke in hand, to the rear.

Mushkin looks across the car top at Valnya.

MUSHKIN

But I told him white letters on
inside!

VALNYA

Mushkin, there is no time.

She sees something.

VALNYA (CONT'D)

ALEXI!?!

Alexi stumbles up, torn, bleeding, dirty, nearly dead, but walking.

Khan shakes his head in disgust, finishes his coke in one pull, and collapses the can to a coin. Getting in, he tosses the lump of metal away.

MUSHKIN

(to Alexi)

What happened?

Alexi staggers forward.

ALEXI

I lost them...

Khan, inside the car, laughs to himself. A door opens.

VALNYA (OS)

Idiot! Get in car!

EXT. SOUTHWEST DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

It is a hot day.

The R.V. passes a SIGN for the Mexican border. The R.V. moves to the horizon, and vanishes over a rise.

After a moment, the Russian car, with C.B. antenna atop, and new tires on back, follows.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

All four Russians pig out on McDONALD'S HAMBURGERS.

Mushkin tunes the radio, halting on a ROCK 'N ROLL STATION.

Scrunching up his face, he moves on. Valnya slaps his hand. He turns it back to the station, playing a bouncy, pop tune.

Valnya taps or bounces to the beat.

Mushkin is disgusted.

Between bites, Alexi cleans his nails with his stiletto. This, despite having ONE HAND SPLINTED and BANDAGED, a BRUISED and SCRATCHED FOREHEAD, and a BAND-AID on his cheek.

Beside him, Khan is squeezed into the corner, sucking on a milkshake.

EXT. R.V. SOUTHWEST BORDER TOWN - OUTSKIRTS - DAY

The R.V. drives through.

It passes through CUSTOMS.

It crosses into MEXICO.

From some distance off, the Russians watch from the U.S. side.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

VALNYA

That is it! They will lose us. We cannot cross border without raising commotion with U.S. and Mexicans. We should have--

MUSHKIN

Be quiet! Do you think I did not foresee this? That phone call I made this morning was to alert our people in Mexico. At this moment, they are being watched by two separate teams of agents.

They all look at him incredulously.

ALEXI

Two?

VALNYA

Standard procedure. Second team watches first team.

Alexi considers this, as the others return their attention to the border station, then turns to look behind.

ALEXI

(to self)

I wonder who's watching...

To the rear, a black car is parked in the distance.

Valnya turns to Mushkin, oblivious to Alexi's discovery.

VALNYA

Do you think it is hidden in
Mexico?

MUSHKIN

No. They will simply reenter U.S.
at some other point. We will be
waiting for them.

EXT. MEXICO - DESERT - DAY/TWILIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The R.V. moves across the barren wasteland through the
afternoon.

At TWILIGHT, the R.V. arrives at a roadside CANTINA.

Hal and Ginnie get out and walk in.

INT. CANTINA

It's a shabby little place with EIGHT or NINE TABLES scattered
about, a BAR along one wall, and a small CORNER PLATFORM.

A SERAPE-clad SOMBRERO-toting BLACK GUY with SUN GLASSES on
plays an ACOUSTIC GUITAR.

A cup rests in front of him: he's blind. He strums a meandering
SPANISH MELODY.

Hal and Ginnie see him and look at one another. They find a
table and take seats. A WAITER comes up, offers MENUS, and after
a moment, takes their orders.

After he departs, they give the place "the once-over." It's
occupied by FIVE or SIX OTHERS.

HAL

Boy, if this ain't right out of a
movie.

Ginnie nods.

HAL (CONT'D)

With the cash I got before
(MORE)

HAL (CONT'D)

crossing, we should be able to last two or three meals before we have to re-cross. We've lost them for sure, now. They probably couldn't follow us because it would have made too much noise. Diplomatically, I mean.

GINNIE

You don't think they called anyone down here, do you?

HAL

No... They couldn't be that well organized. Even if they did, we haven't seen anyone following us down here. Nobody who looks Russian anyway.

They both look over at the blind guitar player. He begins to play "Celito Lindo," as if he sensed their attention. When they return to each other, a slight smile crosses his face.

Through a window, the SUNSET has turned the SKY CRIMSON.

Ginnie listens to the music.

Eventually, she looks over at Hal. He's been looking at her. They're falling in love.

Suddenly, the waiter brings them their food: TAMALES, FRIJOLES, a BOWL of NACHOS and SAUCE, and TWO BOTTLES of CARTA BLANCA.

INT. CANTINA - LATER

They finish their meal. A different TUNE is played by the blind black guitarist.

After Hal lays down some U.S. DOLLARS, They rise.

GINNIE

Shouldn't we give something to the guitar player?

Hal shrugs, and they stride over.

HAL
 Muchas gracias, por favor. ...uh,
 we, uh, greatly enjoyed your
 museeca...

He lays a bill in the cup. The guitarist smiles and says:

GITARIST (TERDELL)
 Oh, well thank you folks. Always
 like to play for Anglos.

(Note - Terdell will, at times, affect a mock black street lingo
 as a mannerism intended to manipulate people.)

Hal sputters and laughs nervously.

HAL
 Oh, you--

He looks at Ginnie.

HAL (CONT'D)
 He speaks English.

She smiles.

GINNIE
 Yeah.

GITARIST
 You folks plannin' on re-crossin'
 t'night or tomorrow mornin'?

Hal's smile vanishes.

HAL
 B-beg your pardon?

GITARIST
 (smiles)
 Oh, yeah... sure. We overheard the
 Russkis were looking for you down
 here. We decoyed most of 'em.
 Should be down around Acapulco
 'bout now.

Hal's jaw is hanging open.

HAL

Acapulco? I d-don't know--

GITARIST

Few of the boys needed a vacation,
so we figured why the Hell not
lead 'em to Acapulco. Sorta tough
getting' a rec vehicle like that
on such short notice, though.

HAL

Who are you?

The guitarist looks from one to the other of them, and then
says:

GITARIST

'scuse me, folks. Villa, Terdell
Villa, Mexican Intelligence.

HAL

Mexican Intelligence? You're
black!

TERDELL

We don't all look like Alphonso
Bedoya.

Hal and Ginnie are suspicious. They shrink back a bit.

TERDELL (CONT'D)

Hey man, easy... I'm on your side.
I'm here to help.

He leans closer.

TERDELL (CONT'D)

It's oil, isn't it?

HAL

Well, ah...

GINNIE

Well, we aren't sure what it is,
but if you're here to help us--

HAL

--We're crossing back into the
States in the morning.

He puts his arm around Ginnie, and walks her two steps away.

HAL (CONT'D)

Thanks for the offer, but we can
take care of ourselves.

They turn (Ginnie reluctantly), and head for the door. Before they get there, the door opens and in walk TWO DARK SUITED SLAVIC GENTLEMEN with coldly serious looks on their faces.

Terdell raises his eyebrows.

TERDELL

Oh-oh.

Hal and Ginnie stop at the sight of them, then try to push past. The two men step out of the way, and allow them to go out. Then, after a moment, they smile and start to follow.

EXT. CANTINA - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Hal and Ginnie move for the R.V.

The Russians come out, and begin to close on them.

AGENT 1

Excuse me, but I must ask you to
halt!

Hal looks at GINNIE, uncertain what to do--

TERDELL (OS)

--Yessuh, suh, that sho nuff was
one hottsy tottsy tamale!

The Agents turn, and Terdell strides up and between them and the R.V. They try to push past him.

TERDELL

You boys try the beans? I ain't
never--

They begin to push him aside.

AGENT 2

--Let us past... Out of the way,
gringo nigger!

Terdell whips out an AUTOMATIC PISTOL and points it at them.

TERDELL

What'd you call me, you honkey-
assed polar bear?

Hal and Ginnie have used the distraction to get in and start the R.V. Hal begins to back out.

GINNIE

He's holding a gun on them to let
us get away. You can't just leave
him!

Hal considers, then swings the R.V. around and Ginnie opens the door.

GINNIE

Mr. Villa, get in!

Terdell looks at them out of the corner of his eye, then at the two Russians who are looking at their car over to one side (another ZIL).

Deciding, he shoots out a tire of the car, and then points it back at the two Russians. Backing up, he climbs in, and the R.V. screeches off.

The Russians reach for their weapons. One agent's GUN is shot out of his hand.

TERDELL

Tol' you not to do that, sucker!

The R.V. quickly moves out of range, as the other Agent produces his WEAPON and fires after them.

The first Agent mutters an epithet.

INT. R.V.

Hal drives, while Ginnie watches Terdell turn and face her, smiling.

HAL

You can see, then.

GINNIE

'Course he can!

TERDELL

You kiddin'? Ahh "shoots" by ear!

Grinning, he takes off his sunglasses.

TERDELL (CONT'D)

Don't tell nobody, I got a tidy
little operation on the side.

He begins strumming his chest.

TERDELL (CONT'D)

Da da, da da da; da da, da da da;
Celito Lindo--This is the most
action I've seen since I was
partnered with that tennis player.
The blind act made it tough to
shag tennis balls.

(beat)

Where we gonna cross?

HAL

Can you--

TERDELL

--Cross the border? No sweat
compadré, they know me like a
brother, up there. Think I'm a
Mexican narc. Hardly anybody knows
I'm Mex-Intel. Hell, nobody even
thinks Mexico has a C.I.A.

Hal and Ginnie laugh silently, the tension finally broken.

HAL

You can shoot pretty good...

TERDELL

Thanks, my sight's just about the
only thing I got any more that's
good. I sure can't hear so good,
and my tongue just about give out
from the food down here. I ain't
even been to college.

GINNIE

How'd you get hired?

He smiles, and Hal answers with him:

HAL & TERDELL

Affirmative action.

TERDELL (CONT'D)

Actually I tested and qualified like anybody else. They overlooked the diploma thing given my pretty looks. Kinda knew my complexion might be an asset down here. Everybody thinks I'm foreign: Anglo, tourista, visiting African dignitary... My great grandfather was a slave to an Anglo with property near Vera Cruz. My father took the name Villa when he was a kid. After I joined Intelligence, they teamed me with this Apache tennis player, but like I said, it didn't work out. People kept asking me for autographs and how to meet Oprah, so we finally split up.

EXT. DESERTED AREA - PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Mushkin is inside the telephone booth. Behind him is an UNCLE SAM SIGN (I want you!) and their car. Mushkin growls into the receiver:

MUSHKIN

Fools! That is why you are in Mexico! Because of incompetence! They don't even have C.I.A. Must have been Chinese, they are everywhere now... Not all of them look like Cisco Kid... No no, the Americans could never have engineered it, look at botch they made of Bay of Pigs. They still think we took missiles out of Cuba... Never mind, I shall attend
(MORE)

MUSHKIN (CONT'D)
to it with our border contacts.
They cannot re-enter unobserved,
not with that truck of theirs...
Da, da, da!

He hangs up.

EXT. BORDER STATION - NEXT MORNING

The R.V. waits in line to go through.

Ahead, BORDER AGENTS tear into a van, searching for drugs.

INT. R.V.

HAL drives, Ginnie rides shotgun, and Terdell is behind.

GINNIE
...so that was why we decided to
try losing them by crossing the
border. It was Hal's idea.

TERDELL
Smart, very smart. Ever think
about working in "the community"?

EXT. R.V.

A CUSTOMS OFFICIAL (WENDEL) walks toward the R.V.

INT. R.V.

TERDELL
Don't worry, none. I'll get us
through.

The Customs Official strides up to the driver's window, and is about to speak, when Terdell pokes his face into view. The man's face lights up immediately.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL
Well, hello, Villa. Another bust
goin' down?

TERDELL

Sure is Wendel. Gonna prove to
some boys things don't always go
better with Coke.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

Give 'em one for me, okay?

TERDELL

Will do.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

When you comin' back through?

TERDELL

Oh, two, maybe three days. This
here's our newest find, Pablo.

Hal grimaces slightly, then turns it into a weak smile. The
Customs Official looks at him in some amazement.

OFFICIAL

You Mex's got more Un-Mexican-
lookin' fellers than flies on
shit. Nice to meet you, ...Pabbbb-
lohhh.

HAL

(terrible
accent)

Si senor, muchas gracias. Muy
bueno.

Terdell looks away and rolls his eyes.

OFFICIAL

Well, c'mon through, boys.

He steps out of their way, and waves them through, Hal pilots
the R.V. back into the U.S.

EXT. DESERT - MORNING

The R.V. shoots by.

INT. R.V.

As Hal drives, they eat DOUGHNUTS and drink COFFEE.

The RADIO plays a rinky-tink COUNTRY-WESTERN TUNE (OS).

They descend into a valley that looks like a furnace. A sign along the road proclaims the area a D.N.R. development region, with successful completion projected, "_____".

TERDELL

Should pull into Buzzard Gulch in
a few minutes.

GINNIE

Buzzard Gulch?

TERDELL

Relocation town, t'other side o'
the valley. Built for when the dam
goes into operation. Whole
valley'll be one huge lake like
Lake Mead. The few folks that live
'round here get a place in the
Gulch.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY

The R.V. crosses the vast bowl-like valley shimmering in the late-morning heat. When it is a small speck, the Russian car comes into VIEW, following.

INT. R.V.

Everyone is silent. Finally, Ginnie looks back and sees the solitary black car behind them a half-mile.

GINNIE

Hal! Look behind! Is it--?

Hal just looks into his mirror, and says nothing. Terdell who has been looking behind, turns back around, and says:

TERDELL

Well, folks, I guess we've got
some drivin' to do...

EXT. HIGHWAY

The R.V. climbs out of the valley and comes upon a deserted, partially-built redevelopment town with the SIGN:

"Buzzard Gulch, Population: 123, Another regional improvement by your Department of Natural Resources."

INT. R.V.

The town is drab: institutional, functional, and unfriendly. It's also deserted.

Slowing down, they pass through, looking back and forth.

Then a SQUAD CAR drives into view.

Hal brakes, and pulls alongside. Inside, the SHERIFF smiles at them.

SHERIFF

How do? I'm Clint Farquehar (Far-khar). You folks lookin' for the Dam construction? Tour should start in about ten minutes.

HAL

Tour? Yeah... Which way?

SHERIFF

Left at the edge o' town, and follow the road 2-3 miles through the hills. Can't miss it.

HAL

Yeah, thanks a lot.

The R.V. takes off.

INT. R.V.

HAL

Let's just hope he doesn't send them this way too.

EXT. R.V.

They wind into the hills.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR - ENTERING BUZZARD GULCH

It slows, passing through. There is no sign of the Sheriff.

Alexi takes in town through his window.

ALEXI

Nice town.

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR

It passes through, rounds a curve on the other end, and comes upon a stretch of straight and empty road. It screeches to a halt.

EXT. DAM CONSTRUCTION PARKING AREA

Hal parks the R.V. next to several other cars and similar-looking RECREATIONAL VEHICLES.

Nearby, are a pair of familiar-looking Kawasakis: the Japanese couple.

Getting out, Hal, Ginnie, and Terdell move off to the TOUR BOOTH, pay the admission, and follow a SMALL GROUP OF TOURISTS: the Japanese Couple, cameras dangling; a FAT EUROPEAN COUPLE--dressed as if they just got in from Hawaii--and a FEW OTHERS.

HARDHATS are passed out to everyone, and the TOUR GUIDE begins the tour. CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY is all around.

They move to a CONSTRUCTION ELEVATOR, get on, and it descends.

As the Guide begins his spiel, the Japanese Couple shoot picture after picture.

TOUR GUIDE

The WILHELM T. GOTT Dam is the most ambitious--

EXT. PARKING AREA

The Russian car drives through. Then they see the R.V. Alexi spots the Japanese bikes.

ALEXI
The Chinese!!!

INT. DAM

The tour group stops at a view as the Guide continues.

TOUR GUIDE
--tons of steel, 975 construction
workers, and will hold back--

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR - DOOR

Feet appear from the open car door. They begin to walk.

INT. DAM

The tour arrives at a new place.

TOUR GUIDE
--over 753 feet high, and 1172
feet long at the crest.

Hal and Ginnie are not interested, but Terdell remarks at every statistic.

INT. DAM - ELEVATOR

The pair of legs descend in the elevator.

INT. DAM.

TOUR GUIDE
Now, if you'll move this way,
we'll proceed to--

INT. DAM, BOTTOM OF ELEVATOR SHAFT - OUTSIDE DOOR

The door opens, the legs get off, and walk past a FILM ROLL WRAPPER lying on the ground.

INT. DAM

TOUR GUIDE

--and took seven years just to
draw up the plans--

TERDELL

No shhhh--

He looks at Ginnie who is staring at him.

INT. DAM - WITH LEGS

The legs walk in a deserted area. Then someone appears.

DAM WORKER (OS)

Hey, buddy, you better get a
hardhat!

He comes up.

DAM WORKER (CONT'D, OS)

Buddy?

The stiletto pops open (OS) and thuds home. The dam worker's feet jerk, he gasps, and slides to the floor.

Alexi. He smiles, reaches down, pulls out his blade, removes the man's HARD HAT, and uses his RAG to wipe the knife.

EXT. TOP OF DAM - ELEVATOR DOOR TO POUR SITE - CONTINUOUS

The DOOR opens, and the group gets off.

Looking around, they see workers moving around, and a CREW pouring a huge amount of CONCRETE into the great depths of the unfinished dam. They move closer.

TOUR GUIDE

The sheer volume of concrete being
poured for the Wilhelm T.
Gott.....Dam would serve to build
(MORE)

TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)
 a two-lane highway from Anchorage,
 Alaska to Mexico City--

TERDELL
 Wooooeeeee!!!! Sure is a load!

TOUR GUIDE
 The pour goes on nonstop, and will
 not be halted no matter what
 happens. Why? It honestly would do
 no good. Ma'am, if you were to
 drop that nice camera into the
 pour, it would be encased within
 this dam forever. Not just
 centuries, or even millenia, but
 eons... forever.

The crowd "Ooohs" and "Ahhhs" on cue.

TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)
 Hold onto your loved ones, folks.
 Now if you'll follow me...

The group moves on, but Hal and Terdell stay and look into the
 maw to see the pour continue. Hal runs off to catch up with the
 group.

Terdell continues to gaze at it. He kicks a STONE. It falls out
 of sight.

From above and behind him, he hears a NOISE (OS), and sees a
 movement on a SCAFFOLD.

The tour group is some distance off, completely out of earshot.

Terdell starts to follow, then halts.

With stealth, he creeps around a corner, making it look as if he
 followed them. Instead, he circles, directly under the
 scaffolding.

Then he ascends a ramp, moving high enough to see a dark-suited
 figure with his back turned.

THE FIGURE'S LEGS AND FEET

He's leaning out, looking where Terdell had gone around the corner. His head is partially obscured by a post, but we can see that he wears a hardhat.

SILENTLY, Terdell creeps up the ramp until he is at the figure's level. Twenty feet still separates them.

Inching closer, Terdell picks up a LONG-HANDLED CONCRETE SMOOTHER (HOE).

He approaches, raises the hoe to strike--the figure suddenly says:

SUPERVISOR

Leo? Get those forms over here,
and send Phil down to level two.
Hurry it up!

The figure pulls upright, into view. Terdell immediately brings down the hoe, and begins to examine it as the man sees him.

SUPERVISOR

Hey, you with the tour?

TERDELL

Oh, me? ...uh, yeah. Really nice
hoe you got here. Really nice!

The construction supervisor gives him a look.

SUPERVISOR

Well, you're not supposed to be
here. You wanta catch up to 'em?

TERDELL

Oh, yeah, sure... Sorry.

Terdell backs up, smiling, goes down the ramp, still holding the tool, and walks around the corner to where the tour had stopped.

The man still watches him. Terdell notices he's still holding the hoe. He puts it down, still smiling.

The man still watches, unbelieving. Terdell turns away.

TERDELL

(to self)
Son-of-a-BITCH!!!

SUPERVISOR
 (to self)
 What a nut-bag.

He walks off.

Terdell moves along the rail over the great, open maw into which the pouring continues. Across the chasm, a DOZEN or so MEN work, controlling the pour and monitoring the trucks.

As Terdell picks up speed, he looks around for the tour. The men look over at him. They begin to shout and point.

He whirls around just in time to duck as a SLEDGE-HAMMER swishes through the space where his head had been. Alexi.

Terdell comes up, and butts Alexi back with his head. Then, he follows with a combination, sending the Russian to the deck. The sledgehammer goes flying.

There's a pause as Alexi wipes some blood from his mouth.

Terdell looks at him.

TERDELL
 Hey, what's the idea? R'you crazy?

Alexi begins to circle.

TERDELL (CONT'D)
 You got no call to go attackin' people, brother. Let's talk this over.

ALEXI
 Who are you? Tell me who you work for!

TERDELL
 Man, I don't know what you're talkin' about. My name's Villa, Terdell Villa, and I don't work for nobody. I'm just a tourist--

ALEXI
 Turr-r-delll... What is that, Spanish for piece-of-shit?

Terdell does not smile at this.

TERDELL

You better watch your mouth,
sucker!

Alexi pops out his blade, assumes a knife fighter's stance.

Terdell looks around for a defensible object. There's nothing nearby. However, behind Alexi, 15 to 20 ft. is the hoe.

Terdell decides to maneuver for it, and guides them that way.

Alexi takes a few swings with the blade, and Terdell dodges them, moving them toward the hoe.

Alexi thrusts, not seeing what Terdell is making for. Terdell dodges, then scurries to the hoe as a path opens to him.

Terdell, hoe in hand, moves in.

Alexi's face shows only contempt and the desire for the kill.

Attacking, Alexi manages to dodge a swing and knocks the hoe out of Terdell's hands, sending it clattering to the edge of the maw.

Alexi readies to finish him, when Terdell dives for the hoe.

Changing direction, Alexi attempts to fall on the scrambling Terdell. As Alexi comes forward, Terdell uses the hoe, impaling and sending Alexi over the edge, and into the pour, below.

The threat over, Terdell relaxes in a heap, breathing hard.

MEN run up to see what has happened, the supervisor of a few minutes ago in the lead.

Terdell looks up at them, still holding the hoe. He gets to his feet, straightening himself out. Looking at the supervisor, Terdell smiles.

TERDELL

Really nice hoe. Really nice!

He puts it down.

The other workmen crowd the rail.

WORKMAN 1
Holy shit, that guy's had it.
Covered 'im right over!

WORKMAN 2
Never git 'im outa there.

WORKMAN 3
No way! Just hafta keep pouring!

SUPERVISOR
(turning to Terdell)
Yup. Hey, fella, who was--Fella?

Terdell has vanished.

EXT. DAM - TOUR

Terdell reaches Ginnie and Hal and steers them away.

GINNIE
Where were you? We were getting
worried.

TERDELL
No time for that, now. We gotta
get our as--ourselves out of here.

EXT. PARKING LOT TO APPROACH ROAD - CONTINUOUS

They creep from car to car, until they reach the R.V. There's no
sign of the Russian car.

Once inside, they back out, and head out of the lot at top
speed, rounding a curve and disappearing out of sight.

From a cul de sac in the rocks, the Russian car suddenly pulls
onto the road and halts. It hesitates and then heads after them.

INT. R.V.

They listen as Terdell explains.

TERDELL
--and so he just fell in and got
covered over.

He shudders.

Ginnie has a look of sickness on her face.

TERDELL

That was it. Nothing they could
do.

HAL

Hell of an overcoat.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The R.V. shoots by in much flatter terrain, composed of desert scrub and mesquite. A few cacti dot the land.

INT. THE R.V.

Hal drives.

HAL

Ginnie, pull out that map. I
believe we're getting close to
Monument Valley.

Ginnie has found the map, and spreads it out on her lap.

GINNIE

According to this, it's less than
thirty miles. Sure is isolated.
There isn't an interstate within
four hours. I'd hate to have to
walk from one town to the next.

TERDELL

'specially in this heat!

HAL

Still nice to see a few places
left which haven't--

They round a curve, and come upon some developments: a foundation site, with a sign in front. The sign reads: "Future site of Bottomless Hole Starbucks."

They stare at this mutely, and then pass on toward the empty desert.

Ahead, they see an R.V. exactly like their own, moving in the same direction. As they get closer, Hal slows down, a hundred yards back.

HAL

All right! Finally! I thought we'd never find one.

Ginnie and Terdell look at one another.

HAL (CONT'D)

A cruiser just like ours. Now we'll shake 'em for good.

GINNIE

Shake who?

Terdell, who had been looking out the back, turns forward.

TERDELL

Look behind. See for yourself.

Ginnie does.

GINNIE

You let them catch up to us? We lost them, and you let them find us again? Hal, how could you?

HAL

Ginnie, everything we've tried has failed. They were back there all along. I've just stopped trying. Up to now, that is. Now all we need is a fork in the road.

Ginnie is silent, but skeptical. Terdell decides to wait and see.

INT. R.V. - DAY

They pass a SIGN:

"Stop in and see the newly opened cave wonderland, The Bottomless Hole. Take Hwy. 17 West 12 miles on the way to Monument Valley."

The other cruiser rounds a curve, vanishing over a hill.

GINNIE

Hal, we're getting pretty close.
What're we gonna do?

They round the curve, and see the other cruiser nearing the turn-off to the cave, and Monument Valley.

HAL

Now, please, don't put your signal
on, please...

(to Terdell)

Terdell, how are we doing to the
rear? Can they see us?

He looks behind.

TERDELL

Nope, the hill's got 'em blocked
off.

HAL

Okay, then here we go...

Hal floors the gas pedal, turns the wheel violently, and quickly passes the other R.V.

Instantly, he slams on the brakes, almost causing the other R.V. to smash into them from the rear. Its driver lays on his horn, as Hal signals to turn. Terdell looks back.

TERDELL

They're over the rise, and can see
us. What now?

Hal turns onto the cave road, and smiles.

HAL

Watch.

The other R.V. continues on its way on the original road, and the Russian car stays behind it rather than following them down Highway 17.

GINNIE

Hal, you're a genius. And we're
even on the right road to the
Valley.

TERDELL

You're a regular Mario Andretti.

HAL

Both highways go to Monument Valley. Ours is just the longer way. But, if we're quit of them, we can go in after. Let's hope they don't pick up on the license plates too early.

GINNIE

Oh, God, that's right. What if they do?

HAL

Phase Two, that's what.

He smiles.

HAL (CONT'D)

I wonder how many people are seeing the Bottomless Hole today...

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR ON HIGHWAY

The Russians move up behind the other R.V.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

VALNYA

Other one could have been them. We must close in and make certain.

MUSHKIN

Unavoidable. Khan!

The car moves ahead swiftly.

EXT. HAL'S R.V. - PARKING AREA - THE BOTTOMLESS HOLE.

The R.V. passes several cars.

INT. R.V.

They continue to move slowly through the lot, scanning for something. Suddenly Ginnie's eyes light up, and she points:

Another R.V. similar to theirs, stands parked in a section set aside only for big cruisers.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Hal guides them into a spot next to it.

INT. HAL'S R.V.

Hal throws it into park.

HAL
Ginnie, there's a tool kit in the
cabinet behind you.

She gets it and hands it to him. He opens his door, and jumps down. Looking back in, he says:

HAL
Stay inside.

EXT. R.V.

Hal walks to the rear. He looks around, and seeing he's not watched, takes the rear Washington D.C. license plate off.

Then he goes to the other cruiser, and removes its plate (California).

Finally, after looking around again, he puts his D.C. plate on the other cruiser.

Hal moves to his driver's door, climbs in, and shuts it.

INT. R.V.

He looks at them.

HAL
They'll be looking for D.C.
(MORE)

HAL (CONT'D)

plates, now. We've got California. Ginnie, you and Terdell will head out now for Monument Valley. Terdell drives. You keep low, in case you pass them coming this way. We're only 20 minutes away at most--it's just the other side of these mountains, you should get there by sunset. Once there, learn the layout and ditch yourselves somewhere out of sight.

GINNIE

What're you gonna do?

HAL

I'm gonna wait for them. If they don't show, I'll hop a ride to the Valley and link up with you. If they do show, I'll make sure they see me, hopefully before the last tour today, and then I'll head for the cave as though I'm going on the tour. Inside, I'll give 'em the slip, and hitch a ride to you. It's on Navajo land, so I'll head for the nearest Reservation settlement.

TERDELL

What if you can't get in a tour group?

HAL

I'll have to take my chances.

GINNIE

I won't do it. There's got to be a better--

HAL

--There isn't!!!

(beat)

Now, if you don't hear from me by dawn, you should go ahead by yourselves.

TERDELL

You mean we should find the thing?

HAL

Yeah, and get out of there. It could be plenty dangerous. Head any direction but back this way. And then... I don't know. They'll probably stop at nothing to get their hands on it. Try to make the Feds listen somehow.

GINNIE

But--

HAL

--No "buts," do it! We're losing time!

He opens his door, starts to exit, and Ginnie stops him. Leaning over, she plants a kiss squarely on his mouth, then...

GINNIE

Promise you'll be careful, Hal.

HAL

I will. Good luck. See ya in a few hours.

Hal climbs out and heads away. Terdell climbs into the driver's seat.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Terdell backs the R.V. out, and drives out.

Hal watches them disappear.

EXT. DESERT - HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The Russian car approaches out of the sun.

It passes a SIGN:

"Hwy. 17, Bottomless Hole and Monument Valley Scenic Drive."

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

VALNYA

We've been tricked! By amateurs!
What could they want in cave?
Could that be location--?

MUSHKIN

--I don't think so. But we must be
close, or they wouldn't have
brought us to so remote a place.
Moscow wants answers. They will
not accept failure. This has taken
far too long already. Koblenki
threatened Siberia in last call.

Valnya sobers.

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR

They reach the turn as the R.V. appears.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

Valnya looks at Mushkin.

MUSHKIN

License is California.

VALNYA

Mushkin, another trick?

MUSHKIN

Did you not see driver?

VALNYA

Yes, but stranger with them looked
like negro, remember?

MUSHKIN

Was bright sunlight, not skin
color. Shadow covered his face.

EXT. RUSSIAN CAR

It enters the parking lot, and cruises through, looking for the land cruiser. Finally, they sight it, and park nearby.

INT. TOUR BUILDING

Hal sees them.

Next to him, a TOUR GROUP has assembled, and begins to exit, following the GUIDE. Hal goes along.

EXT. TOUR BUILDING

Hal moves with them but is somewhat behind.

Khan spots Hal.

The Russians climb out of the car.

INT. BOTTOMLESS HOLE CAVE - ENTRANCE

Hal and the tour group enter, and begin to descend. Hal stays to the rear.

Hal looks behind and sees the Russians run up to the entrance. The Cave Guard refuses them entry.

Hal ducks into a depression along the cave wall, and as the tour group moves deeper, he watches Mushkin and Valnya misdirect the guard, allowing Khan to slip in.

Hal crouches down to let him pass.

INT. CAVE - WITH KHAN/WITH HAL - CONTINUOUS

Alert, Khan moves slowly.

WITH HAL

Hal's foot brushes some debris LOUDLY (OS). He freezes.

WITH KHAN

Khan hears. Then: RUNNING (OS). He picks up his pace.

EXT. CAVE - EXIT

An earlier GROUP full of CUB SCOUTS, emerges from the exit.

Mushkin and Valnya approach from the cave entrance, a few hundred yards away. TWO GUARDS watch them.

As the Russians approach, the Cub Scouts head for the parking lot with the other tourists.

Valnya absently watches a family arrive at the R.V. with Hal's plates on it. She doesn't realize for a moment. Then--

VALNYA

Mushkin, look.

He looks. They stare at one another, and then start for the R.V.

It starts up, pulling away from a hedge, revealing its original CALIFORNIA PLATE on the front.

They stare, open-mouthed.

Then, as the R.V. drives away, the back plate becomes visible.

They get it.

MUSHKIN

Get in car!

VALNYA

What about Khan?

MUSHKIN

We have no time, get in car!

They hurry, talking as they go.

VALNYA

Mushkin, others were in truck all along?

They get in the car. Mushkin starts it, and backs out.

INT. RUSSIAN CAR

MUSHKIN

Fool woman! Of course. But we saw
Robertson enter cave, so the woman
and the other one have truck. They
turned west.

She opens a map, reads.

VALNYA

But there is nothing to west for
hundreds of miles. It is
reservation for aborigines. No one
goes there, Mushkin!

MUSHKIN

Precisely where one would hide
something.

INT. CAVE - WITH HAL/WITH KHAN - CONTINUOUS

Hal moves deeper. Ahead, the cave guide TALKS to the tourists
(OS). Looking behind, Hal sees no one.

Seeing another "cul de sac" in the cave wall, he ducks in and
sees a passage, BARRICADED and plastered with WARNINGS:

"Danger, do not enter; closed for research"

He looks back to the main passage, then steps over the
barricade, and moves down the passageway strung with harsh,
TEMPORARY LIGHTS, looking for a hiding place.

WITH KHAN

Khan approaches the "cul de sac," the tour SOUNDS (OS) ahead.
Seeing it, he peers in and sees the shaft.

He begins to take the main passage, then, on an impulse, turns,
steps over the barricade, and heads down the new tunnel

Hal, hidden down the tunnel, decides he's safe, and steps out
and into Khan's view.

They see one another at the same time. Hal moves first. He turns
and runs deeper into the unexplored passage.

Khan follows.

INT. R.V. - SUNSET

Moving fast, they wind down out of some desert foothills, just outside Monument Valley.

The day is nearing its end.

GINNIE

I'd give anything to know what's
happening back there. I hope he's
alright.

TERDELL

He'll be fine. Probably already
gave 'em the slip and on his way.

They round some rocks, and INTO VIEW comes MONUMENT VALLEY. It is at its most breathtaking, stretching for miles, a flat desert expanse, interrupted here and there by the unique MESAS rising vertically, hundreds of feet above the desert floor.

The sunset sends great crimson hues through the valley, creating patterns of light and shadow: Purples, siennas, rosey reds, and midnight blues. Against the darkening sky, it's beautiful.

And devoid of life, interrupted only by the empty black road.

Then, as they descend, Terdell sees something. He points.

TERDELL

Good God, look at that!

Ginnie looks out and up to see TWO HOT-AIR BALLOONS floating over the desert, decorated with NAVAJO ART, gliding through the scene.

Terdell looks back to the road.

TERDELL

Looks like police cars ahead.

EXT. R.V.

They move up to TWO CARS and stop.

They get out and approach TWO OFFICERS standing, talking.

GINNIE

Excuse me officer, can you tell me
which way the Indians live?

The cop looks up at her, removes his AVIATOR-STYLE SUNGLASSES: a
NATIVE AMERICAN.

The other does the same.

INSERT - CAR DOORS

"Reservation Police"

BACK TO SCENE

TERDELL

Let me handle this.
(to Cop)
We, uhh... We're looking for the,
uhh--

He's interrupted by the SQUAD CAR RADIO. The cop leans in and
answers the call. He leans back out, MIC in hand:

COP (DANNY VICTORIO)

Yeah, Jimmy, be right there. Got
some foreigners here asking
questions.

Terdell and Ginnie look at one another. Terdell manages a weak
smile as the cop (20's, good looking) puts back his mic.

TERDELL

We're wonderin' if ya'll got a
tourist information center--

GINNIE

--and maybe show us a place to put
our rig and stay the night?

DANNY

Sure.

GINNIE

Fantastic! Uh, we're looking for a
sort of a guide, to show us the
(MORE)

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Valley. I'm Virginia Nash, and
this is my friend, Terdell Villa.

DANNY

Danny Victorio, Reservation
Police. I think we can help you
out. Just follow my car.

He gets in and starts it up.

Ginnie and Terdell move to the R.V., At the door, as Terdell
gets in, Ginnie turns with the open door in hand.

GINNIE

Oh, by the way, we're not really
foreigners. Well, he is, sort of,
but I'm from Washington D.C.

Danny nods and smiles.

DANNY

Yeah, foreigners.

He and the other COP drive their cars onto the highway, leaving
Ginnie standing at the door.

TERDELL

Well, get in.

INT. CAVE - WITH HAL/WITH KHAN - CONTINUOUS

They continue to move into the unexplored passage.

Hal tires, covered in sweat. He looks at his watch, then at his
surroundings.

He's in a treacherous area, but the temporary lights are still
strung up, providing INADEQUATE LIGHT.

WITH KHAN

Khan is some distance behind, moving slow to avoid ambush.

WITH HAL

He approaches the end of the lights. Reaching the last, he
encounters a lot of SPELUNKING EQUIPMENT: CAVE HELMETS with

LIGHTS and BATTERY PACKS. Picking up a helmet, he LIGHTS the LAMP, and then looks down at some ROPE and other GEAR.

Khan's approaching footfalls SOUND (OS), so Hal picks up the other HELMETS and one by one, breaks their LAMPS.

Then, as Khan draws near, he moves out of there.

Khan arrives, and after examining one or two broken helmets, is about to resume his chase when he spies a FLASHLIGHT.

Picking it up, he sees that it works, then sets off.

EXT. RESERVATION COMMUNITY CENTER - MONUMENT VALLEY - TWILIGHT

The R.V. and the two police cars drive into the parking lot.

As Ginnie and Terdell stop, and climb out, they see the two hot-air balloons docking a short distance away.

They follow Danny Victorio and the other cop into the center.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER

Inside are some RECREATIONAL GAME TABLES (pin ball, pool, foosball, etc.), and a COFFEE/SOFT DRINK BAR.

SEVERAL INDIANS are present, most gathered at the windows, watching the balloons dock. Eventually turning around, they see Danny and the other cop.

FIRST NAVAJO

Hey, Danny! Stretch!

SECOND NAVAJO

Catch the rustlers, Sheriff?

Danny looks at Ginnie and Terdell and says:

DANNY

You can leave it out there for tonight. I won't ticket you. As for the guide, you can ask around. I'm sure somebody'll do it, there aren't too many jobs around here.

GINNIE

Well, maybe we won't need a guide.
We're looking for a particular
rock formation. It's a tall mesa-
thing with a thin column of rock
beside it.

DANNY

Sounds like one of the mittens.

TERDELL

Mittens?

STRETCH (DANNY'S DEPUTY)

Because it looks like a mitten.
There are two Mesas forming the
left and right Mittens near here.
Where they used to make the
movies.

GINNIE

Yes! That's it...

Just then, the GROUP from the hot air balloons troops in,
composed of TEN or so young NAVAJOS in rugged but modern garb.
They horse around, chiding one another as they go to a pair of
tables to watch two of their group play pool.

Danny greets them, and then turns back to Ginnie and Terdell.

DANNY

Can I ask why you want to see this
mesa?

TERDELL

Well, uhhh... Hey, where'd you get
the hot-air balloons?

DANNY

The D.N.R. used 'em to study the
area a few seasons ago. Then they
gave 'em to us. A few of the guys
fixed 'em up and now they run a
tour service. Y'can see the Valley
better than any other way.

GINNIE

Mr. Victorio, maybe we can show you a picture of the place we're talking about. It happens to be at the end of an old Western movie made out here fifty years ago. We've got a DVD. Would it be alright if we showed you?

The other Navajos perk up.

THIRD NAVAJO

Film? You're gonna show a film?

GINNIE

Well, not all of it

THIRD NAVAJO

Hey, guys, they're gonna have movies!

GINNIE

Only the last few minutes--

FOURTH NAVAJO

Movies! Shoot 'em ups!

FIFTH NAVAJO

Yeah, Indians and Cowboys!

Terdell, who has watched this leans close to Ginnie and whispers:

TERDELL

Listen, we might have a problem.

GINNIE

Oh, Terdell, I don't mind showing the whole thing if it'll--

TERDELL

You don't understand, girl. This is a western, an oater, the bad guys and the good guys. You know who the bad guys are?

GINNIE

Oh-Oh--!

The room is full of excited Navajos, intent, now, on seeing the film.

Ginnie, an awful look on her face, rises to her feet slowly, gulps once, and says:

GINNIE

Well, I guess we could... If everyone really wants it, we can show the whole movie.

Danny and the others in the room cheer.

Ginnie and Terdell head for the door. Danny follows.

DANNY

We don't get cable, and not many movies. You say it was made right here? What's the title?

GINNIE

Ambush at Reneg-- Uh, R-Renegade Pass ... Have you seen it?

DANNY

I don't know...

She moves to the R.V.

EXT. R.V.

Ginnie ducks inside, after Terdell.

TERDELL (OS)

You'd better show as little as possible--

He opens the door as Danny strides up outside.

TERDELL (CONT'D, OS)

--if you want to get us out of here with our scal--

He turns and sees Danny grinning at them. It isn't clear whether he has overheard this. Terdell smiles, and hands Ginnie the DVD.

INT. CAVE - WITH HAL/WITH KHAN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Hal's watch, shows 9:35 P.M.

Hal drops his arm, and, breathing hard, resumes running. The only LIGHT visible emanates from his helmet.

The going is slow, but he pushes himself as fast as he can.

Behind, the light from Khan's flashlight appears.

Hal sees this and, badly tired, curses.

WITH KHAN

Khan moves efficiently, with less wear and tear. He's gaining.

INT. RESERVATION CENTER

A ROOM FULL of Navajos, including Danny Victorio and his deputy, Stretch, watch the film, engrossed.

Ginnie and Terdell sit at the back, watching the backs of their heads, not seeing their faces.

SOUNDS OF GUNSHOTS and SHOUTS of "Dirty redskin!" and "filthy, stinking SAVAGES!!!" (OS). At each insult, Ginnie and Terdell wince, and sink a bit lower in their seats. Then: "Injuns can't hold their liquor!" (OS). Terdell puts his hands over his face.

LATER

Terdell and Ginnie watch, numbed. Then: "Injuns don't fight at night. A'feared their soul won't find its way to Heaven. Ain't that the durned craziest thing yuh ever heerd?" (OS)

Then: "Hell, only good injun is a dead injun!" (OS) The Navajos' heads never move.

Through the WINDOW, a black car pulls into the parking.

EXT. RESERVATION CENTER

The Russians park. Mushkin and Valnya climb out and skulk to an open window at the side of the building. Peering in, they take in the scene. They speak in whispers.

VALNYA

Do you see her?

MUSHKIN

It is too dark with film on. We
must wait until it ends.

EXT. RESERVATION CENTER - WITH RUSSIANS

Mushkin sits, his back against the wall. Valnya watches through
the window.

VALNYA

Ah, film is stopped. Lights are
coming on...

He rises, looks in and sees some boys running for the restroom.

MUSHKIN

They take break--

Ginnie stands at the soda machine, the tv paused.

MUSHKIN

She is showing them film? Why?

VALNYA

Robertson was actor. Maybe this is
one of his films.

Mushkin begins to realize the significance.

MUSHKIN

Of course. Location is in film.
Desert is in film. We are in
desert... Why did we not think of
films before?

INT. RESERVATION CENTER

In the light from the tv, Terdell sneaks out of the men's room,
and slinks back to his seat.

INT. CAVE - WITH HAL - LATER

Hal is losing ground. Exhausted, he stumbles. Suddenly Khan rushes into the same chamber, and halts, towering over Hal. The only light is from his lamp.

Breathing hard, Hal looks up at the Mongol. Between puffs, he sits up, snorts a laugh at him and says:

HAL

Alright, you big ox, you got me.
Now, how're we gonna get out of
here?

Khan senses Hal's resignation, and secure, takes his eyes off him to gaze around.

Immediately Hal whips his helmet at Khan's head and throws an arm behind a leg to flip him. With everything he's got, Hal heaves as Khan reels from the blow by the helmet, still lit at his feet.

But Khan is as unmoving as a 40 story building.

Hal looks up at him, recovered enough, now, to laugh at Hal's feeble attempt.

Hal scuttles away disappearing into the darkness.

Khan flashes the light around, and, finding him, comes on like a freight train.

In a wild leap, Hal throws himself laterally against the big man: finally something effective.

Khan staggers back, losing the flashlight. It hits the ground and rolls over the lip of a hole, falling without a sound.

Hal gets an idea, grabs the nearest ROCK, and heaves it at him.

The rock hits his temple and he falls backward over the edge of the hole, dropping with a scream.

Silence.

After a moment, Hal stands, dusts himself off, and picks up the helmet. He picks a direction, and stumbles off.

EXT. RESERVATION CENTER

Mushkin and Valnya peer into the building.

INT. RESERVATION CENTER

The end is near: the big end-battle raging.

Finally it ends. As the TV is shut off, and the LIGHTS COME UP, Ginnie is afraid to look at the Navajos.

When she does, she sees them smiling. Suddenly, spontaneously, they begin to applaud.

Danny comes up to her.

GINNIE

It didn't bother anyone?

DANNY

No, you know the saying, 'It's only a movie. A pretty old one, too. We've come a ways since then. Besides, if it weren't for John Ford, my father wouldn't have had any work back then.

GINNIE

Your father was in the film?

DANNY

Just about everybody in this room is related to someone in that film or one of the others. He was a great friend. One winter during the war, John Ford had supplies flown in when everybody was starving. Got us through.

TERDELL

We thought you wouldn't cotton to a John Wayne movie, y'know?

DANNY

Anybody who thinks John Wayne was against Indians should look at his films again. Besides, he was acting.

GINNIE

Uhhh... Do you think you can show us where that last battle scene was filmed?

DANNY

Sure. I'll take you out there myself, first thing tomorrow morning.

GINNIE

That'd be great. Those mesas sure are big... Anyone ever climb one?

DANNY

Yeah, but it ain't easy. Takes a pro. The rock is sandstone. Treacherous. If you want to get to the top, your best bet is by chopper, ...or balloon.

TERDELL

Balloon... That's a great idea. You think we could give that a shot?

DANNY

Wouldn't be too hard. Why are you two so intent on getting to the top of a mesa?

GINNIE

I... p-produce television commercials. We're scouting locations. Monument Valley is perfect for the concept I have in mind.

Terdell has turned away and rolls his eyes.

DANNY

Uh huhh, Just like those Ford ads a few years ago. And the Budweiser horses.

GINNIE

Right. So you think you could get us to the top of the Right Mitten by balloon?

DANNY

The least we could do for the free
movie.

EXT. RESERVATION CENTER

Mushkin and Valnya look at one another and smile. Then, they
skulk off in the direction of the black car.

INT. CAVE - WITH HAL - MUCH LATER

Hal stumbles, exhausted, lost.

The LIGHT goes out.

HAL

SHHHITTTTTTT!!!!

Silence.

HAL

Well folks, we'll just have to
crawl.

He starts to crawl [evident only (OS)].

Then, he begins to hum a song, Yankee Doodle, and then breaks
into the lyrics.

As it progresses, the SOUND SEGUES (OS) into a different song:
96 Bottles of Beer on the Wall, and then after a verse of this,
SEGUES again to the end of the song.

Then silence.

Finally:

HAL

Mommmmmmmaaaaaaa!!!

Hal collapses (OS) on the cave floor, just barely VISIBLE in the
DIM LIGHT.

After sobbing for several moments, he sees it, looking hard at
his hand. He comes to full alert.

HAL
 Huhhh? Oh, GOD! Oh Jesus! My
 hand!!! It's my Goddamned son-of-
 a-bitching hand!!!

He gets to his feet, and moves into the DIM LIGHT, DIM. It's a thin beam threading down from a shaft ahead and above him in a long, diagonal slope.

Faintly, he can make out the night sky several hundred yards' climb upward. But the angle looks climbable.

Feverish, he moves toward it, scrambling, tripping, and stumbling all the long way.

Finally, exhausted, he makes it up to a small break in the rocks.

Squeezing through, he looks upward into the clear dark night, and collapses into a heap on the ground. After a moment, he rolls onto his back.

HAL
 (to self)
 I'm out. ...I'm out of the cave.
 I'm out! ...I made it! I'M OUT!!!
 I GOT THE HELL OUT!!!

Hal lies there, the flatness and the rocks all around him. He rolls with waves of laughter, exhausted, then falls asleep.

INT. RESERVATION CENTER - MORNING

Terdell buys TWO DANISHES at the MACHINE along one wall, and carries them out the door to the R.V.

EXT. RESERVATION CENTER

Outside, he stops.

The two balloons are docked 100 yards away. A couple of people stand at a gondola.

Terdell continues toward the R.V., then kicks the door twice.

TERDELL
 Hey lady, your pastry awaits.

The door is pushed open, and he steps up and in.

INT. R.V.

He hands Ginnie a danish, and sits down. They begin to eat, as a KNOCK is heard.

Terdell opens the door, and Danny steps in.

DANNY
Mornin'... Sleep well?

GINNIE
Deliciously, but I'm anxious to
get started.

DANNY
Good. They're just about ready to
cast off out there.

Just at this moment, a commotion can be heard from outside. Then a GUNSHOT.

All three of them look out a side window: Mushkin and Valnya have commandeered a balloon, and the TWO NAVAJO PILOTS.

They rise into the sky.

Next to the other balloon's gondola lies an injured MAN, SEVERAL PEOPLE crouched around him.

Danny bolts out the door, followed by Ginnie and Terdell.

EXT. BALLOON DOCKING AREA

They run up as a DOZEN other Navajos of all ages mill about. Among them are TWO BOYS OUTFITTED for BOW-HUNTING, with mean-looking, STEEL-TIPPED and BARBED ARROWS at the ready.

The fallen man is only creased in the shoulder.

DANNY
(Navajo w/subtitles)
What happened?

WOUNDED MAN

(Navajo w/subtitles)

They were tourists. They talked funny. Asked who knew how to make the balloons fly. I told them Willie and Bob, standing at the other one. They pull out guns and make both of them get in.

DANNY

Why'd they shoot you?

OTHER MAN

He wouldn't cut the line, Danny. They fired, and then I cut it. There was kids around, Danny, I had to!

DANNY

Yeah, don't worry about it.

Jimmy runs up, Danny's other deputy.

DANNY

Get the jeep and stay with them the best you can. I'm going up in this.

(to other man)

Get it ready.

A few Navajos begin to unload it and untie some of the lines.

Ginnie steps up to Danny.

GINNIE

Listen, Danny, there's no time to explain this, but those people are not tourists. They're Russian agents, and they've followed us across the country trying to locate something. Now, they know where it is.

DANNY

On the mitten?

GINNIE

Yes. Danny, if they get what they're after, it could be bad, very bad. Terdell's an agent. We're trying to stop them. We're going with you.

Danny looks at her, thinking; then at Terdell.

DANNY

How much you two weigh?

TERDELL

I'm 155.

GINNIE

110.

DANNY

And I'm 163. Nicky?

He looks at the larger of the two bow-hunting boys.

DANNY

Nicky, hop in. Bring your gear, too. You two get in. You others release 90% of those weights. Hurry it up, we're casting off!

Everybody springs into action. The balloon rises.

INT. BALLOON GONDOLA

Danny watches as their balloon moves identically to the first balloon, already a mile ahead.

DANNY

We're gaining. The guys'll slow 'em up as much as possible to give us time.

He looks at the young boy.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You still as good as last year, Nick?

The boy nods in pride.

Ginnie smiles fleetingly, then looks to the other balloon.

INT. FIRST BALLOON

Valnya and Mushkin watch their pursuers.

VALNYA

Mushkin, they're gaining on us. I
told you to shoot other balloon.

MUSHKIN

And I told you it would not have
helped--

(to Navajos)

--Increase our speed!

The Navajo (NAVAJO 1) stands mute.

MUSHKIN (CONT'D)

Increase our speed, I said!
Release weight enough to escape
other balloon, or I will kill you
and throw you over side!

NAVAJO 1

(Navajo w/subtitles)

Get fucked!

MUSHKIN

You don't speak English?

(to Valnya)

He doesn't speak English? What
about RUSS-Achhhh! What kind
American are you?

(to other Navajo)

You! What about you? Increase our
speed or we kill you!

NAVAJO 2

(Navajo w/subtitles)

Shut your stinking mouth you
steaming heap of coyote droppings!

VALNYA

Mushkin, forget them. We'll use
our guns. Soon we will be there.

EXT. ROCKY AREA - WITH HAL

Hal's asleep as the morning sun approaches some boulders at the opening to the cave passage from which he emerged the night before.

He stirs, and comes awake, squinting in the light. He looks around.

Dawning shock. He looks left. More shock. Right. Still more shock. A wild grin begins to come over him as he spins around taking it all in.

Finally:

He's in Monument Valley. He is, in fact, on top of a mesa; on top of THE mesa. And he knows it.

He checks his memory to be absolutely certain.

HAL
...Between the left Mitten and the
Camel's Hump...

He looks around on the flatness.

Suddenly, he spots a CROSSED PILE OF ROCKS within yards of him.

He sprints to it, and savagely tears away the rock. Using a pointed one, he digs into the spot.

Working feverishly, he finally uncovers a corner of a packet.

Like a madman, he digs it out of its hole. It is a heavily wrapped BLACK PACKET, sealed to keep out the elements. Grasping it to his chest, he rises on his knees and yells for joy.

HAL
I've got it! ...Wow, I've really
got it!!! YAHOOOOOO...

As he screams, a SHADOW covers him suddenly. He looks up and sees the upper two-thirds of a huge balloon. The Russians.

He is completely puzzled, of course, by what he sees. And it is still too far off to see who is in the basket. Then he hears the GUNFIRE.

Hal tightens his grip on the packet, looking around for cover.

At this moment, from behind him, two huge arms pick him up and toss him through the air. Khan. Torn and bleeding. And very, very mad.

Hal rolls, dazed.

Khan moves in.

Hal tries to get up, but Khan reaches him and smashes him across the back, sending him across the mesa-top.

Again, Hal tries to rise.

INT. RUSSIAN BALLOON - GONDOLA

The pursuing balloon is rapidly gaining.

While Valnya holds the two Navajos at bay, Mushkin takes aim at the other balloon's basket and squeezes off a shot.

One of the Navajos looks at the top of the mesa and sees Hal and Khan. His reaction causes Valnya to look.

Seeing Hal and Khan, she quickly looks back at the two Navajos, to keep them under control.

VALNYA

MUSHKIN, below, on ceiling of
mountain... Khan and Robertson...
They are fighting... Below!

He turns and looks.

MUSHKIN

But how? We left them at cave!
This is impossible! How could it
happen?

VALNYA

Mushkin, who knows? It is not
important. Khan is there. He can
handle things. We must concentrate
on other balloon.

Mushkin attends to their pursuers. He shoots twice. Suddenly, an arrow slams into the side of the basket less than a foot from Mushkin's body.

EXT. MESA TOP

As both balloons soar over and past slowly, the fight between Hal and Khan goes on. Khan advances on Hal, paralyzed in fear, helplessly looking for some sort of way out. There is none.

Khan gets in range, and Hal throws a quick, jabbing right up to Khan's face. It has no effect, and Khan lets go with a tremendous punch of his own, sending Hal reeling several feet.

Above them, the pursuing balloon is nearly directly overhead.

Before Hal can get up again, Khan is on him, and brutally punches him three times in succession. Hal is nearly finished, and the Mongol senses it. He gears up for the last big one.

A WOOSH SOUNDS (OS), and a hunting arrow shoots through Khan's throat. As if in a puppet show, he goes down in stages, first to his knees, then to one monstrous hand, and then face down, clutching silently at his throat in vain.

Hal looks aloft, dazed and confused, and sees Ginnie, Terdell, and the boy, Nicky waving at him from the balloon.

INT. RUSSIAN BALLOON - GONDOLA

Mushkin and Valnya have seen this, and momentarily drop their guard.

The two Navajos see their chance, and in one swift motion, knock their guns out of their hands. As the two Russians try to offer resistance, one of the Navajos brings up a balloon weight and clobbers Mushkin who hits the deck. Valnya stops her attack at this, and gives up.

The occupants of both balloons and Hal look off in the distance.

THREE U.S. GOVERNMENT HELICOPTERS approach from the West.

Ginnie and Terdell look at Danny, and then at Hal, below.

DANNY

Cavalry sure ain't what it used to be.

INT. RESERVATION POLICE OFFICES - LATER

A TABLE TOP. Suddenly, the dirty, sealed packet is slapped down.

Seated at the table, Hal Ginnie, Terdell, a CIA CONTINGENT led by the official they went to in Washington D.C., and at the door are a PAIR of MARINE GUARDS.

The C.I.A. official starts to reach for the packet, but is stopped by Hal.

HAL

Excuse me, but for now, this--

He moves it in front of him.

HAL (CONT'D)

--is the property of myself and Miss Nash.

The C.I.A. official smiles as though Hal poses no threat.

C.I.A. OFFICIAL

Look, Robertson, you have no idea, whatsoever what is in that packet, and I assure you that even if you opened--

GINNIE

--In the last weeks of World War II, the Russians marching into Berlin set in motion a plan...

Hal, Terdell, and the rest of them all look at her in astonishment, as she continues:

GINNIE (CONT'D)

Realizing that they would never be closer to American Military leaders than right then, they chose several prominent officers in the occupation forces. In their choices, three requirements had to be met. First, that the officers have a family tradition of military service--one that should likely continue. Second, that the

(MORE)

GINNIE (CONT'D)

officers have their families with them for the occupation. And third, that they each have a healthy son whom they hoped would someday become an officer. In the course of a year or so, each of these boys was 'borrowed for an hour or two during an idle afternoon, or a weekend morning of sports. The parents were never the wiser, and the boys could not recall ever having the experience. Precisely what that experience was, we don't know--probably with the aid of certain drugs, captured from the Nazi laboratories, and/or hypnotism, they were given a series of powerful post-hypnotic suggestions. Nevertheless, the intent was clear. When the boys were fully grown, and rising officers, they could be "utilized" for information, even sabotage.

Hal and Terdell, and the C.I.A. Official are all speechless at Ginnie's words. She smiles.

GINNIE

Lt. Nash, Army Intelligence.

TERDELL

Well, I'll be! No Sh--

He looks around, embarrassed.

HAL

Army Intelligence? I thought those words were mutually exclusive.

Ginnie looks at the C.I.A. Official.

C.I.A. OFFICIAL

I see. But why did you two come to us, then, in the first place?

GINNIE

Hal insisted, and I was undercover. My superiors had given me free reign to decide what was appropriate. We had lost this thing once, and none of the "classical" methods had succeeded. In order to maintain my cover, it was necessary. Besides, I knew you wouldn't believe us. If you had, I would have had to change your beliefs with a little of that well-known feminine dizziness. Anyway, you behaved exactly as I expected, like an overconfident ego-maniac.

Terrell and Hal's eyes turn to one another. Smiles cross their faces.

TERDELL

Well, looks like you got the situation under control!

HAL

But that still doesn't explain what is in that packet.

TERDELL

Simple, the names, families, locations, and trigger-words for each boy.

GINNIE

Right. Today that list should still be 70-80% effective, after allowing for accidental deaths, failure of the boy to actually be an officer in the military, and/or death in service already, from Vietnam, for example. Hal, I'm afraid I'm going to cast an aspersion on your Uncle Yak. He came to possess that packet when his best friend during the war passed it to him as he lay dying from a Russian's bullet. The

(MORE)

GINNIE (CONT'D

friend worked for us, and had stolen the list hours before. He was shot escaping with it. Due to the international repercussions such a murder would have caused, the Army was forced by the circumstances into calling it a suicide. Before he died, our man told your uncle, "They did it, they killed me. Don't let them get it!" Yakima assumed he meant Army Intelligence, for our agent had been grousing over some small matter earlier in the day, and had reportedly threatened to report one of his superiors. We didn't learn of this until your uncle had mustered out, and returned to his career in California. We always assumed he possessed the list, but he refused to tell us, and practically accused us of killing our own agent. He said his proof was our fabrication about suicide. Due to the classified nature of the true situation, we were prevented from telling Yakima the truth. Instead, we tried to watch him for evidence of his holding the list. It never showed up, even after we searched his rooms several times. Eventually, we simply gave up, until the last few years when we began to sense certain officers were feeding Moscow information. Then we had to find that list. When Yakima Robertson died, we had to look for it through you, Hal. Your uncle thought he was carrying out a dying friend's last wish. He honestly believed his best friend had been betrayed by his country. I'm sorry he wouldn't believe the truth.

EXT. RESERVATION POLICE BUILDING - LATER

Hal, Ginnie, and Terdell stride out with the C.I.A. agents.
Outside, are Danny Victorio, Stretch, Jimmy, and Nicky.

HAL

So, Mr. Thomas, you don't know who
tipped you?

THOMAS (C.I.A. OFFICIAL)

All we know is that it was
forwarded to our office by the
President of Mexico... And he
isn't talking.

They arrive at the copters.

Under guard, the remaining two Russians stand cuffed awaiting
transport. Beside them is a very long bundle, on a cart, Khan.

Hal turns to Terdell, as he and Ginnie step into the aircraft.

HAL

Dell, thanks for all you've done.

TERDELL

No sweat, compadré. Least I could
do.

HAL

Listen, when you get the cruiser
to D.C., Ginnie says we should be
out of debriefing. We can go to
dinner, a show, make it a night to
remember.

TERDELL

Sounds good. My bosses have their
own plans for me in Washington.
Liaison on border operations, that
sort of thing.

Ginnie kisses him on the cheek.

GINNIE

See ya, Terdell, drive carefully.

HAL
Take care, buddy.

TERDELL
You got it.

They wave at Danny, Nicky, and the deputies, and then the door is closed, the copter rises smoothly into the air.

On the underside is painted, "0ffishal Use Only." (Misspelled)

Terdell sees this, and looks down, shaking his head.

Just then, the Japanese couple tool in on their Kawasakis, covered with dust.

Mushkin and Valnya observe them as they remove their helmets.

VALNYA
Mushkin, the Chinese!

MUSHKIN
Is too late to defect?

Terdell walks toward his new responsibility, Hal's R.V.

INT. HELICOPTER

Hal and Ginnie look at the desert below.

HAL
Army Intelligence, Huh?

She nods.

HAL
Agent, huh?

GINNIE
Uh, huh. You see, nobody--

BOTH
(says it with her)
would think Army Intelligence
would hire
(she stops, he
continues)
A dumb blond.

GINNIE

Hey, wait a minute! What d'ya
mean, "dumb"?!?!?

He takes her into his arms.

HAL

Shut up. Anybody ever tell you you
run off at the mouth sometimes?

They kiss.

EXT. HELICOPTER

The helicopter flies away, gradually becoming a speck against
the sky,

ROLL CREDITS.

THE END