

P I N C U S H I O N

by

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NIGHT - CALIFORNIA DESERT:

A blacktop highway curls from the foreground to the horizon.

CAR HEADLIGHTS

appear at the far end of the road and rapidly approach.

The edges of the highway are completely overgrown, as though at any moment nature may reclaim the blacktop for her own. On the horizon, broken, derelict powerlines stretch off into the darkness.

We hear the whine of a car's engine as the headlights near us... then VOICES... they have a faint electronic ring, as though talking over an intercom or radio of some kind...

MARY (vo)
Anything on the scope?

TOMMY (vo)
No... wait...

The car is a small station wagon painted a dull black. Its rear quarter windows are crudely covered with sheet metal and rivets. It has large off-road tires and is completely stripped of decoration and frill.

The car whips by us in a WHOOSH...

CAR INT

Two people... with no passenger seat, no carpeting and little comfort. The driver is MARY. She's about thirty-five, short-cropped red hair.

The other is TOMMY, ten years older, his face weathered and scarred, a patch over one eye. He sits in the rear in a swiveling chair, facing the back of the car. There's a computer screen and a keyboard in front of him.

They talk above the roadnoise through lightweight headsets.

MARY
What is it?

TOMMY
Kill the lights and slow down!

POV - THROUGH WINDSHIELD - MOVING

MARY
What do you got?

TOMMY

I don't know... something in the road
up ahead.

Mary slows the car... In a moment we see a fire up the road a
little. It gets larger as we approach. It's a burning car.

MARY

You know it?

CAR INT

as it slows to a stop.

TOMMY

Fred Maywood's got a hardtail Ford
like that... found it in a ravine up
in the valley...

MARY

We better take a look.

TOMMY

Whose turn is it?

MARY

Yours... Check environment.

Tommy spins and clacks at his keyboard. He studies the screen
for a moment.

TOMMY

...trace of radiation... probly
natural. Airborne, we got small
levels of Turner's spore, carbon
monoxide... some neo-oxides... all
breathable.

Tommy climbs up out of the back of the car and out through the
passenger door.

TOMMY

...sometimes I think it'd be worth
dying from plague... just to stay
outta that detox room.

Mary undoes the bolts on a roof hatch... a rough hole with a
plywood lid.

CAR EXT

She stands up through the hole and drags up a large shotgun.
She primes it with a snap of her elbow.

TOMMY

I hate all that pokin' and scrubbin'
...and the topical is the most dis-
gustin'...

Mary smiles at Tommy. She looks around, the gun ready.

Tommy approaches the car. It's nose is pointed down an embankment. He gingerly steps down the slope.

TOMMY

Hell I don't think this is Freddy's
rig.

CLOSE ON MARY

about to speak, when we hear another voice...

VOICE

Just hand me that gun.

Mary's head snaps at the sound of the STRANGER.

POV

She finds herself looking down the barrel of an old, large revolver. It's held by a tall, GAUNT MAN in his late forties. He has the tired all-too-human face of a dust-bowl survivor.

She hands him the shotgun.

GAUNT MAN

We were just about ready to give up.
James! Bring him back over here.

WIDE

JAMES is a large man with an enormous, misshapen head. He has an old rifle pointed at Tommys back as they walk towards Marys' car.

JAMES (thickly)

We ain't gonna hurt nobody. Just be
quiet and we ain't gonna hurt nobody.

GAUNT MAN (to Mary)

Get down and open the back... James,
get the car outta the ditch and get
it up here...

Mary climbs down off the roof and moves to the back of the car. The stranger wraps his arm around Tommys neck and holds the gun at his head.

Mary unbolts the rear hatch and swings it open.

GAUNT MAN

What're ya carrying tonight, friend?

MARY

I don't know... We don't worry about that...

Inside is a long flat shipping case. It's made of fiberglass, heavily reinforced. Mary pulls it out.

GAUNT MAN

Is it vaccine?

MARY

I don't know... We don't... We're just delivering it...

James pulls the other car next to them. It's worn and battered, the paint burned and scarred. Whatever fire there was seems to have been minor... a fake. James hops out...

Mary hands the case to him.

GAUNT MAN

We'll take that can a gas too...

Mary reluctantly unbolts a metal gas can from the back of the car and hands it to James.

GAUNT MAN

...In the car, James.

James circles the car and climbs into the passenger seat.

The gaunt man pushes Tommy in front of him, towards Mary, and climbs into the drivers' side of his car.

He waves the gun through the window.

GAUNT MAN

You folks can go now...

Tommy and Mary move slowly around their car and climb inside.

TOMMY (whispering)

Let's get outta here...

Mary revs up the engine and turns and looks at the stranger. He addresses her softly, as though she were a child...

STRANGER (to Mary)

I'm sorry 'bout this... but I wanna
live as much as the next man...

(a pause)

G'wan... go home... I hope your boss
understands...

Mary pulls the car slowly down the road.

INT. GAUNT MAN'S CAR

The man turns around to James, who has the case on his lap.

STRANGER

What do we got?

JAMES

Food I hope...

INT. MARY'S CAR

Tommy's moving around, frantically climbing out of his
coveralls as Mary accelerates down the road.

MARY

Did you check levels?

TOMMY

I'm workin' on it...

There's a loud BEEPING SOUND.

TOMMY

...Shit, I got it all over me!!

They are fifty feet down the road from the other car. Tommy
pulls open a window and chucks out gloves, mask, and coveralls.

TOMMY

...I knew they were dirty. I swear to
God every time I step outta this car
I get burned!

INT OTHER CAR

James pulls at the clips on the packing crate. The gaunt man
leans over his seat to watch.

The box won't come open.

STRANGER

...just pull the latchpin on top
there...

JAMES

I can do it!

As he pulls the lid open the box EXPLODES in a white hot FLASH...

INT MARYS CAR - MOVING

The strangers' car BURSTS into flames in the rear window. Mary, in the foreground stares straight ahead. Tommy is turned full around, staring at the raging fire.

TOMMY

Damn... that was a good one.

MARY

We don't make any money blowing things up.

TOMMY

You gotta admit it's fun though...

CLOSE: MARY

finally looks up into her rear view mirror at the fire.

MARY

(in a whisper, to herself)
Hell... they were dyin' anyway.

THE BURNING FIRE

It's as hot and loud as a blast furnace as it destroys the car and all it's contents.

CUT TO:

HIGH AND WIDE ON ROAD

Mary's car speeds down the broken highway and into the night.

CUT TO:

A PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A man in a suit, tie, and trenchcoat, walks slowly under a lone, bent streetlight. He is CHARLES SHEPARD.

The parking lot is cracked and rotting, with occasional clumps of desperate grass punching through the blacktop.

We see a battered sign with missing letters hanging on a large, decrepit building. It says "RAN HO RI JA M LL".

Shepard approaches the building and finds a small side door. He knocks and waits.

A tiny green light above the door flashes.

SHEPARD

The mountain looms over the smoking rubble and my heart longs for home.

The green light goes out and the door CLUNKS open. SHEPARD steps inside.

CUT TO:

DESERT - NIGHT: MARY'S CAR

is stopped in the middle of an empty road. Above it, suspended on rotting wires, an ancient stoplight swings gently in the breeze.

Tommy and Mary stand on opposite sides of the car.

Mary kicks the car violently three times. The sheet metal RATTLES and RINGS in response.

TOMMY

Now cut that out! You think that's gonna help? Bad energy!

MARY

C'mon, the third time this week!

Tommy strides around to the front of the car and lifts the hood.

TOMMY

Some of the parts in this car are forty years old. ...you should treat it with respect!

MARY

Your computer's supposed to tell us when something's gonna go wrong.

TOMMY

The computer says everything's okay.

MARY

Everything's okay, but the car stopped.

TOMMY

I'm workin' on it!

Tommy's working inside the engine compartment. He has a string of wires pulled out.

TOMMY (contd)

I just wish you had some respect for technology...this car is an antique you know...damn few of 'em left... and if the Cross had it's way, there'd be exactly none...automobiles would go the way of sex and fresh fruit.

Mary leans against the car and looks off down the road. A light flickers on her face.

MARY

Tommy.

TOMMY

I'm gettin' it, gimme...

MARY

Tommy, someone's comin'.

Tommy peeks around the hood and looks. Light flickers on his face.

POV

Distant headlights on the road moving straight at them.

TOMMY

Try it...

CAR INT

Mary jumps into the car and hits the starter.

The dashboard lights come up but there's only a CLICKING sound... the engine doesn't turn.

MARY

Tom...

EXT CAR

Tommy is buried in the engine box. He peeks over the hood... the lights brighten on his face.

TOMMY

I got the ignition up but the starter's jammed... We gotta jump it.

Mary climbs out of the car. Tommy slams the hood and runs around the back.

They both lean heavily against the car's mass, pushing it forward... away from the oncoming headlights. Their bodies stretch out almost parallel to the ground. The car crawls along...

THE HEADLIGHTS

brighten... we begin to hear the dull ROAR of the onrushing vehicle.

TOMMY

looks over his shoulder...

POV

The lights are only a few hundred yards away. Suddenly they brighten intensely... other lights on the vehicle FLASH ON!

TOMMY

It's the Cross!

MARY

is now running alongside the car. She pulls open the drivers side door... she throws her feet forward and dives inside...

THE HEADLIGHTS

rush forward... we see a flashing cherrytop... on a big TRUCK. Enormous... ROARING... master of the road. A Red Cross symbol marks the side. SEARCHLIGHTS swing off the back and onto Mary's car. A SIREN wails...

INT CAR: MARY

jams the stickshift into gear.

EXT: TOMMY

runs, panting, his hands flat against the back of the car.

THE ONRUSHING TRUCK

fifty yards away... Its blaring, flashing lights fill the road.

THE DRIVE WHEELS

jerk and skid.. the engine spins... no ignition....

MARY

rams at the gas... Her hair is haloed in the bright backlight.

MARY

Fuck!

THE HEADLIGHTS

fill the frame. The truck engine ROARS.

WIDE

The two vehicles are only sixty yards apart. Tommy's running hard... caught in between...

MARY

pumps the clutch again...

EXT

The wheels grab and turn. A ball of smoke bursts from the exhaust pipe. The car jerks as the ignition catches... it pulls forward... just a few yards ahead of the speeding truck.

Tommy dives at the back of the car and grabs hold of the roof... he pulls himself up and pounds with his fist...

TOMMY

Go Go Go!!!

INT: MARY

jams at the gears and fires the car ahead of the truck.

B-B-B-B-BAM BAM! There's a burst of machine gun fire...

EXT

Mary's car accelerates rapidly and puts on a little distance...

Tommy crawls madly for the roof hatch.

The machine gun BURSTS loudly... then begins to fade as the distance between the two vehicles increases...

The big truck slows...unable to catch the smaller, quicker car.

CUT TO:

DETOX ROOM - GARAGE

A white tile room. TIM BLORE strides heavily through the steam. He is fat, about fifty.

We see showers in the background. A few shrouded workers hose down the floor. Blore stops in a doorway.

POV

A pink, well scrubbed, Charles Shepard, is pulling on a set of white coveralls.

TIM

Mr. Shepard?

SHEPARD

Doctor... Charles Shepard, Red Cross.
ID rank twenty seven.

TIM

Tim Blore. No number...

No hands are offered. Tim steers Shepard out of the room.

TIM

I hope detox didn't treat you too rough, Doctor Shepard. It's not often my staff gets a visit from the enemy.

HALLWAY - MOVING

We follow Tim and Shepard down a long, dark hall.

SHEPARD

I don't consider---

TIM

---they're good people, Doctor... and they've got something in common with you...

SHEPARD

What could that be?

TIM

They hate the plague, Doctor... they hate the plague...

They reach a corner and Tim guides Shepard around it...

REPAIR SHOP - TRACKING

on Tim and Shepard as they walk down a line of partially assembled cars and trucks...

SHEPARD

Mister Blore... This must seem strange... my coming to you...

Tim smiles and shakes his head...

TIM

I truly cannot imagine what the Cross would want from a "plague carrier" like me... isn't that what you call us... "carriers"?

SHEPARD

I'm not here to make trouble Mister Blore... I need your help.

Tim stops in the middle of the floor and stares Shepard directly in the eye.

TIM

As of this morning I have ten cars on the road... a year ago I had thirty five. Five years ago I had a hundred and ten. One hundred and eighty three of my recent employees are dead. Shot down, burned out, hanged... you know why, Mister Shepard?

SHEPARD

Doctor...

TIM

...because the Red Cross shut down the borders... sealed the city and state lines to non-Cross personnel---

SHEPARD

---to stop the spread of disease!

TIM

---to cut off the free market... to freeze out the other medical groups... to starve everyone who chose not to live under the Crosses thumb. But closing roads didn't cure anybody. It just cut out anyone who didn't see eye to eye with the Red Cross way of doin' things.

SHEPARD

I didn't come here to defend--

BLORE

--Why did you come here?

SHEPARD

I have a... package. I need to move it quickly and quietly...

TIM

I can do that... for a price.

SHEPARD

I'll pay you whatever it takes!

Blore waits for Shepard to go on.

SHEPARD

Do have access to an airplane?

TIM (laughing)

A plane? You gotta be shittin' me--

SHEPARD

I'm just--

TIM

--the ozone's shot...go up during the day and you'll fry in the ultraviolet. Even low grade fuel is scarce, anything you could afford to get airborne'd be too slow to jump radar. No...the safest way to get anything anywhere is on the ground, at night... by car.

CUT TO:

MARY'S CAR - EXT NIGHT - MOVING

We see the broken sign, "RAN HO RI JA M LL".

MARYS POV

She downshifts expertly as she turns the car into the abandoned parking lot. She revs the engine and speeds the car along a smooth well-worn stretch of tar.

INT CAR

Tommy presses a few buttons and speaks into his mike.

TOMMY

Zero Base, this is Beta Whiskey Two
Three... uh...

He pulls a slip of paper out of his shirt pocket.

CAR EXT

Mary steers the car into an underground entrance. She snaps the car smartly around concrete barricades... It's an old parking garage...

Tommy reads unsurely, like a third grader:

TOMMY

"The mountain looms over the smoking
rubble and my heart longs for home".

(to Mary)

Where the hell do they get these
things?

MARY

You're supposed to memorize 'em...

TOMMY

Every time I get to know the damn
things they change 'em...

Mary pulls the car up in front of a large set of corrugated doors.

CUT TO:

INT GARAGE:

The big doors roll up as Mary pulls the car inside.

Quickly, the car is surrounded by people in white coveralls. They wear surgical masks, tight bonnets over their hair, rubber boots and rubber gloves...

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

Mary and Tommy climb out and we get a better look at them both. Tommy is short, with a pronounced limp. His hands and face are coarse and scarred. With his eyepatch, he looks like a swabby out of some old pirate movie. In contrast, Mary is tall, handsome and athletic. They both wear gloves, boots, and worn grey coveralls.

They walk around the back of the car. Mary unlatches the hatch and swings it up.

TOMMY

Damn, I hope fuckin' Ruth isn't runnin' Detox tonite... she's got a way with a brush't makes brave men weep...

INSIDE HATCH

Tommy and Mary unbolt part of the floor and lift off the cover. Inside is another shipping case identical to the one we saw before.

ON MARY AND TOMMY - MOVING

MARY

C'mon, Ruth's alright.

TOMMY

The woman hates me...

They each grab an end of the case and carry it toward a nearby door.

TOMMY

(to one of the masked technicians)
Smitty... hey, Smitty! Who's on Detox?
Who's on detox tonite?

The technician doesn't respond. We TRACK behind Tom and Mary.

MARY

I don't think that's Smitty.

TOMMY

They oughtta put numbers on their backs or somethin'.

DISPATCHERS OFFICE:

PAUL, sits behind a small glass window... He wears a headset and sits at a computer terminal...

There are blinking computer screens everywhere around his room. The walls are covered with maps and notes. Radio transmissions fill the air.

When Mary and Tommy enter the room a loud ALARM horn blasts. Paul hits a button and the alarm stops. He talks to them over an intercom.

PAUL

Man, you guys are dirty...

Mary and Tommy heave the case onto a moving conveyor belt. It disappears into a hole in the wall.

MARY

Had some trouble Paul.

PAUL

So I gather.

MARY

Lost my gun and 20 liters of diesel.

Paul stares at Mary a second, then scribbles with a pencil.

MARY

I need an advance, Paulie...

PAUL

Fourteen forty per liter... that's two eighty eight. Less your hundred for the run... What you got in the tank?

TOMMY

Twenty-one-oh-eight.

Paul taps at a calculator.

PAUL

You owe me one-eighty-one-sixty-eight.

MARY

Lend me a hundred.

PAUL

Can't do that.

MARY

You got your package, man!

PAUL

Talk to Tim about it, he wants to see you anyway.

Mary grunts and scowls at Paul. She turns to Tommy.

MARY

Can you wait a couple of days, Tom?

Tommy waves the question away.

TOMMY

Hey Paulie, who's on detox?

Paul scratches his head a moment and points behind Tommy. Tommy and Mary turn around.

POV

A figure stands in the doorway. It's a large female wearing a huge gas mask. She carries a long, narrow scrub brush in her hand. It's RUTH...

TOMMY

Oh, no...

Ruth walks up to Tommy and clamps a big fist on his shoulder. Mary laughs out loud.

RUTH (muffled)

Don't worry about a thing...

CUT TO:

TIMS' OFFICE

Mary bursts through the door... She's changed into fresh coveralls... her hair's wet.

MARY

Tim, you gotta do something about Paulie, shit...

TIM

Mary... this is Doctor Shepard. He works for the Red Cross...

Mary stops and stares at Shepard.

MARY

The Cross? Who let him in here?

TIM

I did. He wants you to take a ride for 'em, Mare... tonight.

MARY

I don't work for the government.

SHEPARD

The Red Cross is not the government.

MARY

Coulda fooled me.

TIM

State your case, Shepard.

SHEPARD

We need to get a package to Salt Lake City.

MARY

I'm not goin' anywhere for you.

Shepard takes a breath...

SHEPARD

Have you heard of DNV 47X toxemia?

MARY

Ultraplague.

Shepard nods.

SHEPARD

...then you know that this particular strain of plague is exceptionally contagious... it's infected Saint Louis, Chicago. We haven't had a radio signal from New York in almost two months... and last week seventeen cases were discovered in Salt Lake...

MARY

All the more reason for me to stay right here.

SHEPARD

...and ordinarily I'd call that a wise choice... but this disease is obviously, relentlessly heading west, straight for us.

MARY

So whattya want me to do about it?

SHEPARD

Get my package to Salt Lake. I'm a molecular biologist... a geneticist... and I think I've found a way to stop the plagues...

There's a pause as this sinks in.

MARY

Are you kiddin'?

SHEPARD

I'm dead serious.

MARY

Then why don't you go?

SHEPARD

It's become apparent that my superior has no interest in my work ever leaving the lab. My only choice is to go outside the Cross.

MARY

No one other than Red Cross personnel has gotten across the Nevada border in two years.

SHEPARD

Mister Blore seems to think you're the driver with the best chance...

Mary looks at Tim. Tim shrugs.

TIM (to Mary)

I'll get you ten thousand cash on arrival in Salt Lake... I'll front you gas and supplies... Split anyway you like with Tommy.

MARY (to Shepard)

That's a lot of money. What exactly is it you need moved?

SHEPARD

I thought you people didn't ask that question... I thought you just took the money and minded your own business.

Mary frowns and turns to the door. She swings it open and steps half way out...

MARY

Look... there isn't anything I won't carry... alcohol, vaccine, heroine, toothpaste, explosives... whatever you want... as long as there's a payday at the end. But I gotta play the odds... and yours are lousy... No amount a money's worth dying for.... not this or any other job.

SHEPARD

(suddenly, forcefully)

But death is near... for all of us.

Mary stops and looks at Shepard.

SHEPARD

If I fail to get my work across the desert... I promise... within a year... you and every one you know will be dead at the hands of Ultra-plague.

MARY

...and what about you?

SHEPARD

I doubt very much I'll last that long... not once Number One finds out I've been here.

TIM

Number One...? Spoor?

SHEPARD

That's right. Captain Doctor Alwin Spoor...

Mary pauses, shakes her head, and leaves.

CUT TO:

REPAIR SHOP

Tommy and a mechanic, LEO, are going over Mary's car. Mary arrives, waves at Tommy and approaches Leo.

MARY

Well?

LEO

Gonna have to restring the wiring harness.

MARY

So what're we talkin'?

LEO

Five large.

MARY

Come on!

LEO

It ain't easy to find parts, Mare... I got overhead!

Mary breathes a long sigh...

MARY

But... you can wait right?

LEO

You owe me four for the brakes already...

Mary stares at the ground...

MARY (she sighs)

I guess...

(shaking her head)

...maybe Tim...

LEO

I put Sidney and Jeff on it... only keep you in one night.

Tommy moves over as Leo leaves...

TOMMY

I hear Tim's got a big run for us.

MARY

A fuckin' suicide mission's what I'd call it... Salt Lake City... I turned it down.

TOMMY

Utah?

MARY (nodding)

Nobody's even tried the border since Ben Grady died.

Tommy pauses, and leans heavily on the side of the car.

TOMMY

...well... shit... what's it pay?

MARY

Ten thousand...

Tommy whistles... and smiles.

MARY

...which means exactly nuthin' to a dead man.

Tommy purses his lips and looks at the floor.

TOMMY

I been thinkin' a lot about the borders lately.

MARY (suspiciously)

You thinkin' we could get across?

TOMMY

Maybe. I got some ideas...

Mary stares at Tommy... confused. Tim appears across the room and waves at her. She turns and starts towards him.

TOMMY (calling)

Just so you understand... I'm votin' yes...

MARY

(over her shoulder)

You don't get a vote.

TOMMY

Well, let me put it this way...

Tommy starts to smile as Mary stops and looks at him.

TOMMY

...I'd rather die from a bullet than die from plague.

CUT TO:

GARAGE HALLWAY - INT DAY

Tim leans up against a wall as Mary joins him.

MARY

I'm gonna need another loan Tim... If you keep me on the penicillin run outta Barstow... I think I can get it back to you the end of the month.

Tim looks at the ceiling and stares at a crack.

TIM

I already offered you a solution to your financial problems... all you gotta do is drive to Salt Lake... Ten grand plus I'll take care of what you owe Paul and Leo.

MARY

...and I said no... but I need you to lend me a thousand.

TIM

I don't think I can do that Mary.

There's a long pause. They stare at one another.

TIM

What'd Tommy say? He'd like a crack at the wire, wouldn't he?

Mary looks at Tim. Tim smiles, turns and starts away.

TIM

His cargo's got a limited storage life... you'll have to move fast. I'll tell Leo to set you up.

CUT TO:

TIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Paul, Tim, Mary, and Tommy lean over a large map of the western United States... It's tattered and frayed.

CLOSE ON MAP

Paul traces the two long, straight state borderlines with a finger...

PAUL

Both the California-Nevada and the Nevada-Utah borders are completely fenced. Twelve millimeter stainless steel cable. Rows of three. Straight up and down both borders. Sixty thousand watts in thousand amp bursts...

TOMMY

Leo and me been cookin' up a little item... a bolt cutter hooked to a ceramic/titanium passive ballast... sort of a mega heat-sink. We got the core out of an old dynamo up near Edwards last week. 'Course we haven't had time to test it...

Tim's fat hands reach in and describe the route...

TIM

You stay off the main roads, the best way looks like Death Valley... that's the first wire... then north of Vegas, across the prairie up to the edge of the Salt Desert. Then cut the border and shoot straight across the salt flats.

CUT TO:

GARAGE HALLWAY - MOVING

Paul and Tim chase Mary and Tommy down a long hall.

PAUL

You make the pickup and hide out in the Sierras until sunset tomorrow. Then drop down and cut the Nevada line. I'll try and find a short, clean route.

TIM

The Cross'll probably chase you with F-tens... they're fast but they need to be refueled often...

INT GARAGE - MOVING

Tommy and Mary enter the garage followed by Paul and Tim.

Mary's car is surrounded by Leo and his crew.

TIM

You can't match them for speed... but you can carry enough fuel to get you there...

MARY

...and the ride back?

Mary and Tommy climb inside the car. Tim hesitates a moment.

TIM

I'll try and have some diesel ready for a return.

MARY

See if you can find something cleaner than the sludge you been sellin' me lately.

The technicians shut the hood and spread out.

Mary revs up the car and gives a thumbs up sign to one of the techies. The big garage door starts to travel up.

Tim slaps the side of the car and grunts.

TIM

Hurry back.

Mary looks at Tim, smiles reluctantly, and nods...

INT CAR

MARY

Ready?

TOMMY

Let's do it.

Mary slaps the stickshift into gear.

THE CAR

squeals on the pavement and bursts out the big door. Paul and Tim are left standing in the big garage. Paul waves at the technician to bring down the door.

PAUL

You want me to start lookin' for fuel out of Utah? Guy I used to work for...

TIM

Don't bother... I'd be surprised if they make the Nevada borderline.

THE GARAGE DOOR

slams shut with a BANG as we...

CUT TO:

MARYS CAR - ON ROAD - MOVING - NIGHT

It WHOOSHES down a smooth stretch of highway.

CUT TO:

CHAIN LINK FENCE - EXT NIGHT

A pair of guards stands silently before a tall barbed wire gate. A single floodlight lights the area.

Mary's car creeps quietly into the foreground.

INT CAR

MARY

You set?

Tommy unbolts a machine rifle from under his seat.

TOMMY

Yeah...

MARY

Environment?

Tommy checks his screen.

TOMMY

It's okay.

Tommy holds the gun down low, out of sight. Mary drives up to the guards. They are both large, heavily armed men.

She cracks her window. One of the guards leans in...

GUARD

Shut out your lights.

The guard moves quickly away... the other guard steps to the gate and pulls it open. He waves them in.

TOMMY (softly)

Nice talkin' to ya... Coupla charmers,
those two.

MARYS POV - MOVING

Darkness. A flashlight beam waves down the road and Mary drives toward it...

As they pass the light, we see another man with a flashlight further along. As they pass him we see another, then another and another... gradually the flashlights lead down a dark track opening into a well sheltered field.

Finally a man steps out in front of the car. It's Charles Shepard. He steps around to the drivers' side door. Mary opens her window.

SHEPARD

Just stay in the car. We don't have
much time.

Shepard turns and signals with a wave of his arm.

EXT CAR - SHEPARD

turns again and waves in the other direction.

VOICE (far off)

All Clear!

TOMMY

What the hell is goin' on?

Shepard waves again...

Suddenly, arc lights BURST ON and flood the area surrounding the car... The lamps are mounted on large stanchions forming a rough circle.

There's a flurry of activity... FIVE or TEN PEOPLE run across the lit area in front of the car.

Sitting in the center of the circle is a box... It's about four feet high, two feet wide, three deep. It looks like an ordinary shipping trunk, but covered with valves, pipes, and scuba-like tanks.

ON TOMMY AND MARY

The arc lights illuminate their faces, Tommy's mouth hangs open.

Shepard reappears at Mary's window.

MARY

What the hell is that?

SHEPARD

Get your rear door open.

CIRCLE OF LIGHT

Four or five people converge on the case and carefully pick it up. They circle the car and lift it into the cargo area.

SHEPARD

leans back into Mary's window. He holds a small black box.

CLOSE

The box has a large digital display on its face. Shepard hits a switch on it's top. Immediately the display flashes on. It says: 72:00:00

SHEPARD (quickly)

Seventy two hours, starting now...

Shepard hits another switch and the display starts to rapidly count down in tenth of a second splits.

Shepard hands Mary the box...

SHEPARD

...When you get a hundred miles outside Salt Lake, throw this switch. Tha'll start a 200 ultrahertz microbeacon... that's higher than the Cross normal monitors. Our people'll pick you up.

MARY

They'll have the money?

SHEPARD

They'll pay you then and there.

MARY

What if we go over seventy-two hours?

SHEPARD

Storage life on the cargo is limited... and our associates in Utah can only hold out for so long... seventy-two hours is the cut-off. After that you might as well keep right on going... straight to hell for the good it'll do...

Shepard hands Mary the running clock. We hear the sound of the rear hatch being shut.

SHEPARD

...we'll get you back to the main gate... then you're on your own.

A siren begins to WAIL loudly in the distance. Shepard looks nervously off into the darkness.

The arc lights cut out with a CLUNK. Shepard fades into blackness.

SHEPARD

Be careful... and good luck... we're depending on you.

Mary slams the car into gear and spins it into a hard one-eighty. She guns the car back the way they came. The siren WAILS again.

MARYS POV

Faster now, she steers the car past the flashlight men. Finally the gate is in sight...

TOMMY

Hold it! I got somethin' on the screen.

CAR EXT

Mary slows and stops the car.

RADAR SCREEN

The arm swings... a large BLIP.

TOMMY

Outside the gate... maybe quarter mile... it's moving and moving fast...

Mary pulls out a pair of binoculars and looks...

POV - THE GATE

The guards pace nervously, their guns at the ready.

TOMMY

...maybe two hundred yards...

CLOSE: MARY'S FACE

tenses. There's a long pause.

TOMMY

...Wait... I lost it...

(pause)

...mighta been another courier...
picked us up and thought we were
medical.

GATE:

One of the guards turns slowly and faces the direction of Mary's car... He steps directly in front of the gate...

Suddenly a huge Red Cross truck SMASHES through and flattens the gate, trapping and crushing the watching guard. Sirens WAIL and the huge searchlights on the back of the truck BLAST ON!

THE SECOND GUARD

dives to the ground... He lifts his gun and sends out a blast of machine gun fire. B-B-B-BBAM-BAM-BAM!

The truck never pauses but ROARS past him and heads straight ahead towards Mary's car.

INT CAR

TOMMY

We're fucked!

MARY

We gotta get around 'em...

Mary hammers at the accelerator and jerks at the wheel. She steers the car down through a ditch next to the road.

Tommy pulls open the roof hatch and sticks the nose of his gun out. He opens fire... B-B-B-B-BAM BAM BAM!

WIDE - EXT

The truck slows as the big light swings around and picks out Mary's car.

In the beam of the searchlight Mary charges over the rough field... trying to get around the truck.

INT. CAR

MARY

Try and knock out that light!

Tommy hangs out the roof hatch slinging lead. B-B-B-BAM! Mary hammers at the steering wheel.

EXT

A big cannon swings around on the truck and fires a volley... SHOOOP!

The missile lands a few feet away from the car. BOOM! WHOOSH!

INT CAR

A tremendous heave of earth rains over the windshield. Mary ducks as she tries to steer around it.

EXT

Mary's car jumps inot the path between the gate and the truck. SHOOOP! BOOM! WHOOSH! Another shower of dirt pours over the car.

THE SECOND GUARD

stands up and rushes towards the big truck. His gun flares in the blackness.... B-B-B-B-BAM-BAM-BAM!

INT CAR

Mary jerks at the wheel as Tommy fires another loud barrage.

WHOOSH! Another heave of dirt crashes across the car windows. Tommy ducks back inside, covered with dirt.

MARY

Did you hit anything out there?!

TOMMY

They'll cream us if he gets it turned around...

BOOOM! Another shell lands next to the car. Mary fights the wheel. Tommy jerks back out the roof. BAM-BAM-BAM!

EXT CAR

BOOOM! Another shell goes off... Mary jerks the car around it. The second guard is running at her, waving her towards the gate. He rushes the truck and keeps his gun firing.

THE FIRST GUARD'S BODY:

lays crushed under the smashed chain-link.

Mary's car CRASHES over it again.

THE SECOND GUARD

stops just a few yards from the truck... the searchlight finds him... he shines white hot in the night... his gun shoots wildly B-B-B-B-BAM-BAMBAMBAM!

Suddenly a burst of gunfire from the truck rips into his chest. He falls...

EXT GATE

Mary's car skids around the corner onto the road surface and momentarily leans up on two wheels.

Another BLAST from the Cross cannon digs into the roadway in front of them. BOOM! WHOOSH!

INT CAR

As it slams back down on four wheels, Mary accelerates and skids around the shell hole in front of her.

EXT: DOWN ROAD

The tires whine on the road surface as the car roars off into the moonlight.

INT CAR - MOVING

MARY

Are they following?

As the car BANGS and ROCKS on the road, Tommy peeks out the rear and checks his instruments.

TOMMY

No... They headed the other way... but I don't think our new friends back there are gonna make it.

MARY

I'm not sure I'd call 'em friends... That's no care package we picked up.

Tommy glances nervously over his shoulder...

CLOSE ON TRUNK

Six pilot lights on the shipping case flash. They are all bright green. The trunk shudders with the rough jerking of the car.

TOMMY

Four hours to daylight... we can just make the mountains.

FADE TO BLACK.

In black: A machine gun BURSTS...

FADE IN:

EXT: FIELD - NIGHT - LOW ANGLE ON GROUND

A body in a Red Cross uniform falls with a THUD. We PULL BACK...

WIDER

There are other bodies on the ground. The big Red Cross truck stands in the background. Its engine throbs at idle, filling the air with a deathly vibration. Its spotlights blare brightly in the night.

A Red Cross guard holds a smoking machine gun. Behind him is a tall middle aged man. He is DOCTOR ALWIN SPOOR. Spoor wears a patch on his chest. It says, simply... "#1".

Spoor turns to the man next to him, it's Charles Shepard, in handcuffs... a stunned expression on his face.

SPOOR

When did you become dissatisfied with the organization, Charles?

SHEPARD

When the organization became more important than it's purpose.

Spoor calls out to his guards...

SPOOR

Burn the dead!

(a pause, to Shepard)

You've failed to understand the economic and political ramifications of your success... For the last time... what have you done with our little machine?

Shepard stares at Spoor... and doesn't respond.

SPOOR

(to an assistant)

Release the dogs...

(to Shepard, tightly)

Nothing can be more important than the Cross!

Spoor spins and walks away towards the truck.

SPOOR

Clear the area!

Shepard raises his head solemnly as the dogs BARKING grows louder.

SHEPARD'S POV

Five or six snarling GERMAN SHEPARDS rush straight at him.

CLOSE ON SHEPARD

The dogs attack... their teeth rip into his flesh.

CUT TO:

CAMPSITE - SIERRA NEVADAS - DAY

Mary's car, with the trunk still strapped in its cargo area, sits in the background. A bright sun has risen over a nearby mountain.

Mary bends over the big map we saw earlier. A small cookstove sits next to her and she absentmindedly stirs a simmering pot of something brownish. She sips at it with a large spoon.

Tommy is a few yards away from the car. He peers out over the edge of the campsite with a pair of binoculars.

MARY

Anything?

TOMMY

Nope... we're not bein' followed.

She stirs the stew.

MARY

...I guess this stuff's about as good as it's gonna get.

Tommy puts down the binoculars and joins Mary at the stove. She hands him a bowl of the goop.

Tommy examines the bowl. He pulls a spoonful of the brown stuff and sniffs it.

TOMMY

Where the hell did you learn to cook, anyway?

MARY

Fuck you. You don't like it, do it yourself.

TOMMY

I fix the car, I man the radio... if I cooked, and believe me I could do better than this, what the hell would you do? It'd be embarrassing.

MARY

I'd never let you touch my fuckin' food.

Despite the talk, they both eat hungrily.

MARY

You know I been thinking about this Doctor Shepard character... what if... his method of stopping Ultraplague is to wipe it out... kill off everything and everyone.

TOMMY (with a smile)

You mean... take out the entire eastern United States.

MARY

Could they do that? An H-bomb or something. Just kill every living thing. Plague included.

TOMMY (still smiling)

I don't know... Looks like the Ultra might beat 'em to it anyhow. A bomb would have to be pretty big.

Tommy gestures towards the car.

TOMMY

Bigger'n that I think...

(pause)

...course ...we could always open it up and see what's inside...

MARY

You know a lot about nuclear weapons?

They both got on eating.

TOMMY

I was just kidding....

CUT TO:

TIM'S OFFICE - INT DAY

Tim sits, working at his desk. There's a KNOCK at the door.

TIM

Come in...

The office door swings open and a hooded technician steps in. A ridiculously large gas mask covers the face.

TIM
Ruthie? What's the problem?

Ruthie approaches Tim slowly.

CLOSE ON TIM

TIM
Ruthie... Ruth?

In a quick move, Tim snaps open a drawer and picks a revolver out with his right hand.

RUTHIE

swings a machine gun out from behind her back...

TIM

can't get off a shot. The machine gun BURSTS... Tim slumps behind his desk.

CUT TO:

INT MARYS CAR - MOVING

TOMMY (on radio)
Zero Base, Base... this is Beta
Whiskey Two Three. Beta Whiskey Two
Three... come in...

Tommy throws a switch and waits. We hear radio white noise.

TOMMY (to Mary)
Where the hell is he?

MARY
We've never been this far out before.

TOMMY
That ain't it. Somethin' else goin'
on.

He pauses a second...

TOMMY (into radio)
Zero Base... Base... this is Beta
Whiskey Two Three. Come in...

PAUL (vo, on radio)
Beta Whiskey this is Zero Base... go
ahead.

TOMMY
Paulie? Shit, where you been?

PAUL (vo)
...had a problem with the transmitter,
had to replace a board... Listen...
Ben Grady picked up a report off the
blackmarket... Head straight up 190 to
Route 374... That looks like the
cleanest spot to cut the wire.

Mary and Tommy look at one another.

TOMMY
Got it... uh... better keep this
short.

PAUL (vo)
Right... over and out.

Tommy punches out the radio.

TOMMY
Did you hear that?

MARY
Yeah... Paulie just got a report from
a dead man.

CUT TO:

DISPATCHER'S OFFICE - INT DAY

Paul has a big gun pointed at the back of his head. He switches
out the radio. Doctor Alwin Spoor stands nearby.

SPOOR
That was very good. You've been very
helpful, son...

Paul stares at Spoor. His face looks bruised... beaten.

SPOOR (to assistant)
...Let's get the fastest cars out of
the pool... And alert the Red Cross
installations in western Nevada. I
want this entire compound and every-
thing in it burned to the frostline...

Suddenly Paul spins... his face is red, he breaks the guards hold on him and lunges at Spoor...

PAUL
You'll never find them... they'll
outrun you...

One of the guards hammers Paul's skull with the butt of his gun. Paul falls at Spoor's feet.

SPOOR (quietly)
Now, son... that car is carrying the
most dangerous medical weapon of this
century... I cannot afford to let it
out of my control...
(turning to the door)
...you've been very helpful.

PAUL (bleeding, glaring)
You... fucking bastard.

Spoor stops and turns to Paul. He throws him a fatherly grin.

SPOOR
Have you had a blood test lately, son?

Paul stares. The guard over him grabs him by the hair and jerks his head back.

SPOOR
...We can use healthy men like you...
(to guard)
Bring him over to the labs and have
him tested. I think he may make a good
vehicle for some of our experimental
project
(to Paul, soft, smiling)
Tomorrow, you may wake up with an
extra hand grafted to the back of your
neck... or a parasitic brood of skin-
worms implanted in your chest... and
perhaps then, you'll wish you were
more polite to me.

CUT TO:

DEATH VALLEY - ROADWAY - NIGHT

Marys car streaks down the long flat road.

INT CAR - MOVING

Mary's at the wheel. Tommy sits in the back. He's digging through their food stores. He pulls a can out of the box. They talk loud over the roadnoise, without the intercom.

TOMMY

Corned beef hash... 1979...

MARY

Oh an excellent year!

ROADSIDE - EXT

Mary's car FLASHES by a low sand dune. A small figure, a DWARF, rises from a prone position and waves at someone offscreen.

A beat up black Toyota (circa 1975) pulls up near the dwarf, he dives in the missing passenger window. The Toyota spins its' wheels on the loose dirt and charges out on the roadbed.

INT CAR

Tommy continues to dig through the foodbox...

TOMMY

...my personal favorite... Beef Stew... '84... three of 'em.

THE TOYOTA

Lights out, it speeds down the road.

TOMMY'S RADAR

A BLIP shows up.

TOMMY

...and two baked beans... no vintage.

WIDE AGAIN

Mary yawns.

The radar BEEPS... and Tommy looks casually at the screen.

TOMMY

Shit.

MARY

Tom?

Suddenly a shot BLASTS OPEN the passenger window.

MARY'S POV - OUT SHATTERED WINDOW

The black Toyota is riding inches away from Mary's car.

MARY

Shit! Tommy!

INT. CAR

Mary ducks down below her steering wheel as another shot BOOMS! and the driver's side window SHATTERS!

Mary's foot hammers at the gas pedal.

EXT CAR - MOVING

Mary's car jerks ahead of the Toyota.

INT CAR

Mary pops back up and grabs the wheel. Tommy is alert, working his keyboard. The wind HOWLS through the broken windows.

TOMMY

Shit... are they Cross?

MARY

I don't think so... Where...?

TOMMY

Right behind us...

There's a BANG - BANG and the car jerks.

TOMMY

They're shootin' for the tires.

Mary pulls the wheel to the left and the right.

TOYOTA'S POV - DOWN RIFLE BORE

Mary's car sways laterally across the road... making the tires a difficult target. The rifle fires... BANG! And again... BANG!

INT MARY'S CAR

The WIND and ROADNOISE ROAR.

MARY

Switch with me!

Mary sits on the right edge of her seat and reaches down and pulls a glass bottle from under the dashboard. It's filled with amber colored liquid and has a cork stuffed in the top.

In a well practiced maneuver, Tommy squeaks up around Mary and into the drivers seat. Mary swings over into the empty area where the passenger seat would be.

BANG! BANG! The car JERKS from the impact of more bullets. Tommy grabs the wheel with both hands as Mary lets go. He tries to keep up the same wavering avoidance maneuver, his head darting back and forth, muttering all the while...

Mary pulls the cork out the bottle and stuffs a short length of rag in the opening... a perfect Molotov Cocktail.

MARY (shouting)

When I tell you, lock up the brakes.

TOMMY

Whaaat!???

MARY

Just do it!!

Mary knocks out the remaining glass from the passenger window. The wind tears at her hair and howls inside the car.

MARY

Stay hard to the left and pick a straight line!

TOMMY

Jesus Mary! One-eyed people are not known for their driving ability. It has to do with depth---

MARY

---Just hold it straight!

EXT CAR

Tommy straightens the car and puts it on the left side of the road. It kicks up dirt and rocks from the left side shoulder.

The Toyota charges forward, staying to the right and advancing on Mary's car.

MARY

lights the cocktail and leans out the window, bracing herself against the car door.

MARY

Lock'em!

Tommy looks at Mary... hesitates.

MARY

Lock the brakes!

THE CAR TIRES

are spinning and jerking violently. Suddenly they stop spinning and LOCK. They SCREEECH on the roadway.

MARY'S TORSO

slams against the window opening.

EXT: ON TWO CARS

The Toyota jerks to the right... and SCREAMS by Marys car. She cocks her arm and throws... hard.

The cocktail CRASHES through the driver's window.

WHOOSH!! The inside of the Toyota lights up... it streaks down the road and goes up like a fireball, as Marys car squeals and jerks to a halt.

The burning car tears off the roadway into the brush. It careens across the desert, then slows to a stop.

A flaming figure, the dwarf, crawls out of the car and runs into the desert.

After a few steps... he falls.

CUT TO:

DEATH VALLEY ROADSIDE - EXT - NIGHT

Marys car is hidden off the road behind a huge old billboard. The rear hatch is open and the trunk sits on the ground.

Tommy works on the skin of the car, patching it with a trowel and fiberglass compound. The area is lit by a large gasoline lantern that hisses nearby.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Mary kicks her way over a low hillside. She carries a long - flashlight and a small box with a handle and a bunch of wires hanging off. She has a rifle slung over her shoulder.

Tommy turns and looks up.

TOMMY

How'dya make out?

MARY

Two bodies... Small traces of plague... but... there wasn't much left...

Mary tosses her stuff down and sits near the light.

MARY

How's the car?

TOMMY

Not bad... I covered the windows with plastic... and I'm pluggin' the skin... It won't be pretty but it'll keep out the germs.

Tommy smooths the putty over a bullet hole with a trowel.

TOMMY

I'm sorry about takin' my eye off the radar back there, Mare.

MARY

Well... I guess I wasn't payin' attention either... Thirty hours and we're not even out of California.

TOMMY

I'm afraid we got another problem.

MARY

The box?

Tommy finishes up the patching and scrapes off his tools.

TOMMY

Yeah. I found three bullet marks. None of 'em broke the skin but one busted up a valve line to an external tank... there's been leakage. I think one of the tanks is empty...

MARY

What kind of leakage?

TOMMY

A liquid... Could be fuel... maybe refrigerant. I'm not sure. I know whatever's in there... could be spoiling...

Tommy squats down next to Mary. Together they stare at the trunk.

POV

The trunk sits on the sandy desert floor... it's chrome lines glow in the golden lantern light.

Of the six flashing pilot lights, three have changed from green to red.

MARY

We don't get paid if whatever's in there isn't a hundred percent... whatta ya think?

TOMMY

Well... it's almost dawn... let's sleep for a while... then if the rest o' those light's go red... we make like Christmas mornin'....

CUT TO:

BEHIND BILLBOARD - NIGHT

Tommy's asleep next to the car.

There's a NOISE offscreen somewhere and Tommy wakes. He reaches for his gun and quickly moves off...

POV

There's a light on the other side of the billboard.

TOMMY - MOVING

He sneaks to the far leg of the billboard structure and looks around.

POV

A flashlight beam moves slowly in the dark.

TOMMY

Who's there?

MARY (vo)

It's just me.

TOMMY

relaxes and steps away from the foot of the big sign and moves into the dark towards the voice.

MARY

sits on the ground staring above at the billboard. Tommy joins her.

TOMMY

What're ya doin'?

MARY

Just lookin'...

Mary shines the light up into the darkness. Tommy looks.

REVERSE

Mary's flashlight moves slowly across the sign. We see it's a tattered old advertisement for a some kind of seaside hotel.

MARY

What's it say?

WIDE

TOMMY (haltingly)

Pacific Beach Resort Hotel.

MARY

Slow.

TOMMY

Gimme.

Tommy takes the flashlight from Mary and picks out the syllables with the spot of the light.

TOMMY

See... Pa- ci- fic...

MARY

Pa- si- fick... That's a "c"... I thought "c" was ka...

TOMMY

Not here it ain't... it's an exception to the rule.

MARY

I hate that.

TOMMY
Beach...

MARY
Beee... cha.

TOMMY
Re... sort...

MARY
Ree... zort... What the hell is a re-
sort anyway?

As they read and talk we...

DISSOLVE TO:

BEHIND BILLBOARD - DAY

CLOSE ON TRUNK

All six LEDs are red. They FLASH insistently.

TOMMY

is boring out the cylinder on the trunk lock. He frees it from
the top of the trunk.

TOMMY
That's it... grab the other side.

WIDER

Mary moves to the other side of the trunk. We see that they've
already disassembled most of the plumbing mounted on the skin.

They grab the ends of the lid and slide it off.

There's a second lid fastened down with simple clasps. Excited-
ly they tear at the clasps and lift the lid clear.

CLOSE ON THEIR FACES

as their mouths drop...

POV

The inside of the case is like an artist's rendering of an
embryo in the womb:

There's a thick block of foam, completely filling the interior
of the case. Inside the foam there's a perfect negative impres-
sion, a precisely formed hole that caresses and protects its
cargo...

That cargo... is a small human being...

It lays sideways in the foam, locked in a fetal position. It has a large breathing apparatus strapped to its face. There are wastepipes and tubes strapped around its midsection.

The entire body, and all its paraphenalia are wrapped, mummified really, in long greasy strips of white cotton.

CUT TO:

ROADWAY - MOJAVE DESERT

Three big old cars marked with Red Cross insignia pound across the desert road. They're outfitted similiarly to Mary's car... sheet metal rivetted over the windows, electronic equipment mounted on the roofs. They're painted dull brown and wear big, lugged tires.

INT CAR

Doctor Spoor sits in the rear seat. There's a radioman next to him, a driver and armed assistant in front. They all wear Red Cross uniforms. Badges with distinct numbers are prominent on their chests.

SPOOR (to radioman)

The border office should expect our arrival in four hours. The carriers are to be captured alive. That's important. Alive.

RADIOMAN

I'll stress the priority, sir.

SPOOR

Son, I don't want you to "stress the priority". I want you to tell them that Captain Doctor Alwin Spoor is on the way... and that no one in that car is to be hurt... and I want that clear!

(to driver)

I thought these were our fastest units?

DRIVER

Yes sir, our fastest cars... but the roads are not the easiest...

SPOOR

Perhaps I should have asked for our fastest drivers too.

CUT TO:

BEHIND BILLBOARD - DAY

Mary holds the body as Tommy unwinds the long greasy wrapping.

We see that the figure is indeed human. A large oxygen mask covers most of the head. Carefully Mary and Tommy pull off the mask and the pipes and lay the body down on a blanket in the sand.

THE BODY

is that of a young boy... maybe twelve years old. His head is completely shaved. His skin is pale... almost white. He is thin and has almost no muscle tone. There are deep blue bruises covering the insides of his legs and arms.

Mary lays her face on the boys thin chest.

MARY

Heartbeat's faint.

Tommy sniffs at the gas mask.

TOMMY

He had air... mixed with some kind of knockout gas... probably kept him completely narcotized...

Mary pulls open an eyelid and peers into it.

Tommy studys the trunks interior apparatus.

TOMMY

Quite a rig... complete environment. Waste lines... intravenous feeding tubes... Only way to travel...

MARY

...But I don't get it... Why not just send him as a passenger... Why keep a kid like this locked up?

TOMMY

Maybe he gets car sick....

ANGLE ON THE BOY

He lays pale and innocent on the blanket.

MARY

Did you see his arms?

TOMMY

Yeah... he's got needle tracks like a junkie.

MARY

You think he's dangerous?

TOMMY

No plague symptoms....

Tommy goes back to examining the trunk.

CLOSE ON BOY

An odd looking kid... almost not human... face too round...
brow too flat... eyes too narrow.

Slowly, the boy's eyes open. They shut sleepily for a second...
and then open again. They're light blue and have an eerie,
alien quality.

Marys' breath catches in her throat.

WIDE

MARY

He's awake!

Tommy moves quickly over next to Mary.

TOMMY

What's he got in his hand?

CLOSE ON HIS HAND

His fist is tightly clenched.

Mary's reaches in and gently pry at his fingers. His palm opens
and reveals his secret...

...a broken seashell.

CUT TO:

ROADSIDE BEHIND BILLBOARD - DAY

There's a large sand colored tarp stretched and staked out over the car and a small portion of the ground. It forms a sort of porch that provides a little shelter and shade.

Tommy and Mary are sitting in the back of the car working on his computer. looking over a frayed roadmap.

Mary joins him.

CLOSE ON MAP

Tommy points out the locations...

TOMMY

Here's where Paul sent us... 374. I'm assuming his information is no longer any good... so we came up further north on 267.

MARY

How far from the border?

TOMMY

About forty miles... but I'm sure the Cross'll be watching all the open roads.

MARY

If we go off-road... and cut in up here...

She points to a spot northwest of their current location.

TOMMY (considering)

It'll be slow...

MARY

You just worry about cuttin' that wire. Sun's gettin' low... we better eat.

Mary bends over a little stove and stirs a pot of mush.

The boy sits idly on the blanket. Mary shoves a bowl of the brown goop in front of the boy. He stares at it.

Tommy sticks a spoon out toward him. He retreats when Tommy nears, then tentatively reaches out and takes the spoon in his pale hands. He has obviously never handled one before and holds it like a dagger.

Mary hands Tommy a bowl and takes a third for herself.

TOMMY (mouth full)
Don't mind the taste kid... just pre-
tend your someone else and swallow.

Mary snorts...

MARY
Don't let him scare you... it's not
that bad....

Mary takes a spoonful. She swallows.

MARY
Well... it's hot anyway.

THE BOY

watches the others. He sticks the spoon straight in the bowl
and pulls it out. A huge wad of stew hangs on...

He brings it up in front of his face... and aims for his mouth.
Half goes in, the rest PLOPS on the blanket.

Mary looks at the boy curiously.

CLOSE: ON MARY'S ARM

She reaches forward to clean up the spilled food. Her arm is
bare and pale. Her hand is rough and calloused.

Suddenly there's a HISSING NOISE... then THWAACK! A long feath-
ered arrow bursts into and through the palm of Mary's hand.

WIDE

Mary grimaces and yelps...

Tommy is up in a flash... He reaches the side of the car and
grabs his gun.

Mary dives in front of the boy... flattening him against the
ground and keeping herself between him and their unknown, un-
seen attacker. The arrow hangs grotesquely out of her hand.

HISS... THOCK! Another arrow shoots over Marys' head and
through the stretched out tarp above them.

Tommy fires his gun B-B-B-BAM BAM!! in the direction the arrow came from.

Mary scrapes The boy up off the ground and crawls for the car door.

HISS! TONKK! Another arrow flies and hits the car sheet metal.

Mary shoves the boy into the car and dives in after him. B-B-B-BAM BAM BAM!! Tommy fires another burst of cover and ducks behind the open door.

TOMMY

You alright!?

MARY

...except there's a fuckin' arrow in my hand...

MARY

puts her hand on the floor and steps on the arrow with her boot. She pulls up with her good hand and breaks the arrow in half.

She lifts her hands and gingerly grabs the arrow behind the head. She begins to pull the broken shaft through her palm.

ON MARY:

Pain and fright on her face. She looks at Tommy.

MARY

Can you see 'em?

TOMMY

(gesturing with his chin)
Over there somewhere I think.

HISSSS! THWAAACK! Another arrow flies through the door... straight into the car... It sticks in the dash next to the kid.

THE BOY

sits up in Mary's front seat with an expression of half fear, half wonder.

MARY

Get down, you idiot!

He's stunned by her bark and disappears under the steering wheel.

ON MARY

With one smooth jerk she pulls the broken shaft of the arrow through the messy hole...

She whitens and gasps...

WIDER

Tommy, in sympathetic pain, watches, then stands and throws a long burst of lead across the camp. B-B-B-B-BAM! -B-B-B-B-BAM!

Mary wraps her hand in a piece of cloth.

MARY

Tommy get inside! I swear you can't shoot worth a damn!

She slides across the car to make room for Tommy. He throws himself inside as another arrow HISSES and TONKS!

THE BOY

lifts himself up onto the drivers seat and watches Mary and Tommy in the back.

WIDE

Tommy puts down the gun and hammers at the buttons on his computer.

TOMMY

How's the flipper?

MARY

Hurts. Can you get anything on radar?

TOMMY

Only if he's metal.

ON THE BOY

We see the plastic sheet on the driver's window behind him. He watches Tommy struggle with the computer.

Suddenly something sharp cuts hard through the plastic window. A hairy hand and arm burst through and grab The boy around his thin chest.

They violently jerk him back through the plastic...

WIDER

Mary sees it... She hurls forward and grabs The boy by the legs. His head and shoulders have disappeared out the plastic. His feet kick wildly.

Tommy leans over the front seat and jams the barrel of the gun through the plastic.

TOMMYS POV

He can't see where the gun points...

MARY

Shoot it... Kill it!!

TOMMY

claws and punches at the window with his free hand.

TOMMYS POV

The plastic gives way... and just for a moment we can see a dark, thick chested man with large teeth pulling at the boy.

The muzzle of the gun waves in the air... in front of the boy's head and then just below the jaw of the intruder....

The gun fires... B-B-B-B-BAM BAM! Blood splashes on the torn plastic.

WIDER

Mary pulls on the boy's body and guides him inside. He cries noiselessly on the front seat.

Mary examines his head and shoulders.

MARY

I think he's okay.

Tommy peeks out the window. Then heaves himself up and out the passenger side door.

EXT CAR

Tommy stands over a human form heaped on the ground. It wears tattered clothes. An archer's bow is looped over it's back.

Tommy kicks it. Then squats down next to it.

Mary steps around the car and joins him. She has her rifle and looks around warily.

TOMMYS POV - ON THE INTRUDER

A human face... but different... wild, mutant... small fangs protrude from his lips. His cranium is large, swollen.

TOMMY

Well... the good news is... he's not
Cross... ugly fucker... cannibal I
guess...

MARY

I take it back... about not bein' able
to shoot.

TOMMY

Yeah... thanks.

CUT TO:

DEATH VALLEY - INT CAR - NIGHT

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

Tommy sits in his chair. He has his hands on the console and he stares at the VDT.

The boy is strapped to a makeshift chair next to Tommy. He wears a cutdown pair of grey coveralls that fit him badly. He stares out the windshield, an expression of fright and wonder pasted to his face.

TOMMY

Just stick to this heading and we
should hit the border fences in the
next hour.

MARY

Keep your nose to the radar... I wanna
see them before they see us.

Tommy looks at The boy thoughtfully.

TOMMY

You never seen desert before, have ya,
kid?

The boy turns and looks at Tommy dumbly.

TOMMY

...You ever been outside before?

The boy continues to stare at Tommy. No response.

TOMMY

The kid's never been outside before,
Mare.

MARY

Did he tell you that?

TOMMY

Sort of...

A long pause. Mary looks at the kid.

MARY

I been thinking... Shepard said he was
a geneticist...

TOMMY

So?

MARY

So this kid might be... different, you
know...

TOMMY

Like they gave him an extra chromosome
or something...

MARY

Yeah...

Mary stares at the road. Her moves at the wheel are quick and graceful. She turns and looks at the boy.

The boy stares back at her... wide eyed, his face a mask...

MARY

He gives me the creeps...

Tommy grins and winks at the boy.

TOMMY

Naaah... I kinda like him...

The boy tentatively returns Tommy's smile.

CUT TO:

NEVADA BORDER - EXT NIGHT

Mary lies on the ground behind a low mound of dirt. She has binoculars up to her eyes.

POV

A Red Cross vehicle... a flatbed truck... rolls slowly along a heavy wire fence. It's single searchlight swings and flashes along the ground. It moves off in the distance and starts to disappear.

MARY

looks at her watch.

CUT TO:

MARY AND TOMMY'S CAMP -NEVADA BORDERLINE

Tommy sits on a large rock near the car. He has tools and bolts of fat wire at his feet. He is braiding and soldering the wire to the ends of a boltcutter with a HISSING torch.

Tommy looks up to see The boy hanging out the window of the car staring at the sky. He turns his head to Tommy.

TOMMY

I thought you were in your box...
asleep.

(pause)

...I guess you never seen the stars
before either.

The boy flashes a smile.

TOMMY

...it probly wouldn't hurt anyone if
you came out and looked at 'em.

Tommy signals to him and The boy scrambles out of the car. He sits down and looks up at Tommy.

TOMMY

...that's the Nevada border over
there...

Tommy gestures at the low, moving lights on the horizon.

TOMMY

...you ever heard of Nevada?

A pause, Tommy watches his work.

TOMMY

...used to be a place called Las Vegas there. People come from all over the world to see it... naked women... gambling... that's what I heard, anyway...

(pause)

...bet you'd like to see that, huh?

Tommy looks at the boy, smiles and nods.

The boy smiles and mimics Tommy's nod, then opens his mouth in a laughless laugh. Tommy joins his laughter.

TOMMY

...Yeah... I would too...

Tommy's smile disappears slowly as he looks back at his work.

TOMMY

...The Cross closed it down thirty years ago... cut off the water... shut the airports... nuthin' but a ghost town now.

Tommy pauses... the torch flares on the wire...

TOMMY

Somedays... I can't help but think... we got the shitty end of the stick... born too late... after the good stuff was gone. Humanity already shot its wad...

(pause)

You feel like talkin'... just jump right in.

Tommy flinches as Mary suddenly steps in from behind the car. She looks at The boy.

MARY

Get inside the car, kid.

She pulls open the door and curtly signals the boy inside.

The boy runs frightened for the car and climbs in.

TOMMY (quietly)

He wasn't hurtin' anybody Mare.

MARY

It's our job to get him to Salt Lake, period. He's a package... a ten thousand dollar delivery.

TOMMY

Shit, Mare! He's a human being...

MARY

I'm not so sure about that...

(she shakes her head)

This world's just no place for... a kid... a kid like that.

TOMMY

This world's no place for any of us... it's just all we got.

Mary looks at Tommy and clenches her teeth. She pauses a moment, then decides to let it go.

MARY

They come through ten minutes apart.

TOMMY

What kind of car?

MARY

D - fifties.

TOMMY (smiling)

Slow.

MARY

If we can cut the fence... I think we could make a run for it.

TOMMY

Okay... The fence works like a closed loop burglar alarm: Any break and it sends an alarm to the main station. That alerts them of the break and where it is. It also sends a jolt of live current into the offending party's nervous system. Now I can get around the electric jolt. I've got this ballast wired to the end of my boltcutters. And it'll take one of those trucks at least five minutes to get back here. Fuck the alarm... if we get lucky we can probably be well hidden by then.

MARY

You make it sound easy... but nobody's ever gotten across.

TOMMY

They didn't have our secret weapon.

MARY

...and what's that?

Tommy smiles broadly.

TOMMY

They didn't have me, Mare.

Mary snorts and laughs.

CUT TO:

WIDE ON FENCE

Mary pulls the car up in the foreground.

Tommy pops out of the back of the car. He wears a huge pair of rubber gloves and carries a large, heavy box and a big pair of bolt cutters.

The fence is composed of huge posts supporting three thick strands of electrical cable.

TOMMY

limps to the fence and kneels down over the box.

He hooks two big wires from the handles of the bolt cutters to the box.

He stands and steps up to the fence. He has a large rag in his hands. He tosses it at the wires on the fence. The rag hits and with a loud BLAST and some SPARKS, disintegrates completely.

He turns to Mary, smiles and waves.

INT. CAR

Mary sits in the car and watches Tommy nervously.

The boy's trunk lid lifts up. He peeks out.

ON TOMMY

The boltcutter jaws open and surround one of the thick wires.

Sweat lines Tommy's temples. His hands snap down. The boltcutter jaws clamp hard... there's a blast and a FLASH of sparks.

The boltcutter handles vibrate. The jolt shoots down the line and into the box on the ground.

ON BOX

it smokes and HUMS loudly.

TOMMY

grits his teeth and leans on the cutters.

The jaws SNAP through the wire and the FLASHING CUTS OUT.

Tommy jumps back as the ends of the wire fall to the ground. He turns and waves at Mary.

INT CAR

MARY (to herself)

That's one.

CUT TO:

INT BORDER HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A loud ALARM HORN rings out. There's a Red Cross guard sitting at a computer terminal. He wears a headset and a mike. A public address system CLACKS ON overhead. A pleasant female, electronic voice drones...

P.A.

Emergency, Emergency. We have a break at mile 104. A break at mile 104.

The computer operator jumps into action. He hammers at the keyboard...

COMPUTER MAN (into mike)

Border patrol ten, border patrol ten, there's a break at one-oh-four.

INT HALLWAY - MOVING

Spoor and his assistants run down a cold tile hallway.

P.A.

...a break at mile 104. A break at mile...

INT RADIO ROOM

Spoor and the others charge into the room...

RADIOMAN

About thirty miles north of here,
Doctor Spoor. We have a patrol near-
by... they should reach the break in
about four and a half minutes.

Spoor darts for a doorway... his henchmen follow.

CUT TO:

FLASHING BOLTCUTTERS

cut through the second wire. SPARKS fly.

CLOSE: BOLT CUTTER HANDLE

The heat is corroding the soldered connection. It glows hot-
ter... white hot.

THE JAWS

cut through the wire. The flashing stops. The wire falls away.

MARY

chews a lip.

MARYS POV

Tommy waves back at her with a big smile. He turns and grabs
the last wire.

THE END OF THE BOLTCUTTER

glows white hot. The solder falls away from the handle. The
cable wiggles inside the end sleeve.

TOMMY

grimaces as he leans into the handle of the cutters. Suddenly
his face darkens.

END OF BOLTCUTTER:

The cable rattles inside the handle. More solder falls out. The
handle glows white hot and the whiteness reaches the big rubber
gloves. The gloves begin to melt.

TOMMY

looks at the end of the cutter as the shock shoots up his
hands.

The boltcutters light up, SPARKS FLY. The shock flies up into Tommys body.

MARYS POV

The bolt cutters glow white. Tommy is frozen to the wire.

ON MARY

Her eyes widen, she realizes Tommy is in total shock... stuck to the fence.

She revs the engine and jams the car into gear. She hammers at the gas pedal. Dirt and sand fly as the car jerks forward.

ON TOMMY

The shock has coursed through his body. His eyes are wide open. His face is turning black. His clothes begin to smoke.

WIDE

Dirt and sand fly as the car jerks forward, straight at Tommy.

THUDD!!! The car smacks into Tommy and knocks him off and through the fence... freeing him...

The air fills with sparks as the car SCRAPES through the live wires. STATIC zaps through the air.

The car burst through... and clears the fence... It stutters to a halt.

Mary climbs out and runs to Tommy.

CLOSER .

She turns him over. His skin is black. His eyes are closed. She leans her head against his chest.

Mary's jaw is tight, her voice is raw...

MARY

Tommy! Tom!

A distant ALARM HORN wails.

Mary turns and looks off.

POV

A searchlight sweeps the horizon. Two headlights appear on a ridge near the running fence.

MARY

grabs Tommys under the arms and tries to drag him to the car.

INT CAR

The boy pushes up the top of the box and watches Mary struggle with Tommys weight.

EXT WIDE

Mary looks at the truck lights. They approach rapidly... in a cloud of dust.

She drops Tommy and climbs inside the car. She turns the ignition. The starter spins, but the engine coughs and sputters.

MARY

cranks the starter again, the engine jerks and grabs. She spins the wheel and maneuvers the car so the passenger door is next to Tommy. She opens it and jumps out....

ON THE HEADLIGHTS

We can make out the shape of the Red Cross truck as it rumbles down the border road.

INT CAR

Mary grabs Tommy by the armpits and lunges backwards through the door, dragging Tommy's torso into the car.

THE TRUNK:

The boy sticks his head out.

MARY (yelling)
Get back in the box!

EXT CAR

Mary jumps out, stuffs Tommy's legs inside the car, and shuts the door.

The Searchlights shine on Mary. We hear it's blaring P.A...

P.A.
Stay where you are...

Mary dives into the car and rams it into gear.

P.A. (cont'd)
 ...you have violated a legal border of
 the Red Cross... Stay where you are...

The car jerks ahead and begins bounding across the desert floor.

The jeep charges along the road. The P.A. continuing...

Mary's car sprints towards a group of nearby hills.

CUT TO:

NEVADA PRAIRIE - EXT NIGHT

The Red Cross jeep rolls awkwardly amidst the dead brush. PETERSON, Red Cross #1097, stands on it's flat back platform. He moves the light over the rolling prairie.

The driver is HAUSER, #996.

PETERSON
 Fuck... you lost 'em.

HAUSER
 Not yet we didn't.

PETERSON
 Your ass is gonna be in a sling for this one. It's gonna cost at least a hundred digits... maybe more.

HAUSER
 We'll find 'em... we gotta... I only just broke a thousand! I can't go back... I can't go back!

CUT TO:

NEVADA DESERT - NIGHT

Mary is standing over a hole in the ground with a shovel.

POV - INSIDE HOLE

Tommy's body lays in the dry earth. His mouth is open. His jaw slightly askew. His skin is dark... blue-black... burned.

The dirt from Mary's shovel hits him rudely in the chest.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER - ON MARY

...as she finishes the burial. She leans against the shovel. The boy stands nearby, staring at the grave.

Mary turns and dejectedly throws the shovel in the back of the car. She slowly moves for the driver's seat when the grief hits her... she wobbles, then sinks to her knees.

CLOSE ON HER BACK

Her shoulders heave... Her head is bowed... she covers her face...

CLOSE ON THE BOY

Tears roll freely down his cheeks.

WIDER

After a moment, the two of them look at one another. Mary's arms lift... as though she was going to embrace the child... but something in her can't bring it off--

--Suddenly we hear the grind of an engine. The flash of a spotlight whitens against their faces.

Mary dives and jerks the boy down with her.

The spotlight sweeps along and stops on Mary's car.

She pushes the boy to a low spot in the ground. She motions tightly to the boy and whispers.

MARY

Don't move from here!

ON RED CROSS JEEP

Hauser stares out towards Mary's car.

HAUSER

I toldya we'd find 'em!

Peterson holds the light steady. It flares in the camera. Then he picks up a large automatic gun. He strokes it fondly. He looks at his comrade.

PETERSON

...I been dyin' to turn this baby loose. Cover me.

HAUSER

They want 'em alive!

PETERSON

Yeah right! They're fuckin' carriers man!

Hauser considers a moment... then nods.

HAUSER

Stay in the light... and don't hurt the kid... he's the one.

Peterson jumps to the ground and moves forward towards Mary's car, pointing the big gun in front of him.

BACK OF JEEP:

Mary crawls quickly next to the big, lugged wheels.

HAUSER

slides over to the passenger seat and watches the gunner in the bright light. He raises a rifle and covers Peterson.

PETERSON

is moving towards Mary's car. Nothing moves. He looks carefully around.

ON JEEP

Mary peeks up over the driver's side of the vehicle. She creeps up the side of the car towards Hauser's back...

Suddenly, at her side, a light flashes and the radio squawks...

RADIO (vo)

Nevada border patrol ten, border patrol ten... come in please...

Hauser turns to the radio and begins to unhook the microphone before he sees Mary.

She leaps at him. He swings his rifle around at her but she's inside it's arc, she jams the heel of her hand up against his chin, forcing his head back... the rifle falls.

He grabs at her shoulders... his hands clutch and clench at the fabric on her arms... but she's swung her weight on top of him forcing him backwards.

She rams at his jaw... the tendons on his neck stretch and bulge... quickly, before he has a chance to manuever she swats his brow with her other hand and rams his head hard into the dull metal edge of the jeep... THUNK! Again... THUNK!

Blood streams from his nose. His eyes go blank.

AT MARY'S CAR

Peterson turns at the sounds from the jeep... We hear another dull THUNK! And another... THUNK!

PETERSON'S POV

The searchlight FLARES... we can only make out the jeeps general shape.

PETERSON

Hauser?

Nothing...

PETERSON

Hauser... Dave?

PETERSON

is white hot in the searchlight beam. He stares emptily towards the jeep, looks off, pauses, then runs out of the light... We hear his footsteps on the hard ground.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Peterson is running in the dark... Suddenly he trips... and falls... "OOFFFF!!"

His gun flies from his arms. He lifts himself up and raises his head.

In front of him, the pale boy, sits up... terrified, he stares at Peterson.

Peterson, breathing hard, wide eyed, looks as frightened as the boy. He stares, then begins searching for his gun.

Slowly and soundlessly, the searchlight beam strobes across the round and flares against the two figures... Peterson stops and looks toward it...

PETERSON

Hauser? Dave! Hauser?

Silence in return. Peterson stands. Fright fills his face.

PETERSON (mumbling, pleading)

Please... I... we weren't going to hurt you... I... Please... I'll help you... I never...

Peterson stares at the light. Tears fall from his eyes....

PETERSON

I swear I'll never tell anyone... I'll help you....

Mary's voice comes out of the darkness.

MARY

Get down on the ground.

PETERSON

Sure, sure, anything... anything.

Peterson drops down on the ground. Mary steps into the light and points a rifle at Peterson's back.

THE BOY

jerks and trembles as three gunshots ring out... BLAM, BLAM, BLAM!

CUT TO:

WIDE: MARY'S CAMP - DAWN

Mary's black wagon sits in the desert scrub... in the background we see the charred remnants of a small motel... it's battered sign declares it the "STARDUST INN".

Mary's pulling the camouflage tarp over the car. The boy stands nearby, staring out across the desert. Still in shock.

MARY

Where you wanna sleep... outside or inside?

The boy doesn't react.

MARY

You got a problem?

She tosses a blanket down on the ground. She stares at the unhappy boy... her face contorts...

MARY

You think I like killing?

Mary drops to her knees and covers her face with her hands.

MARY

Shit... you're nothin' but a
freak... freak! What are you! You're
a fuckin' pincushion...

She lies down on the blanket...

MARY

...just a fuckin' pincushion....

CLOSE ON THE BOY

His eyes are wide. Tears roll down his face.

CUT TO:

NEVADA DESERT - DAY

CLOSE ON DEAD PETERSON

His skin has turned snow white. We PULL BACK to reveal Spoor and his crew, their cars idling behind them.

Spoor kicks at the dead guard's body.

SPOOR

They can't have gotten far.

GUARD

We've found tire tracks to the
north... heading back to the high-
way. They should be easy to follow.

Spoor starts back to his car...

GUARD

Shouldn't we bury the dead, sir?

Spoor stops and speaks without looking at the guard...

SPOOR

These men were failures... and we've
no time to waste with failure. Pull
their numbers.

Spoor strides back to the car. The guard looks down once more at
the dead gunner and reluctantly turns and follows Spoor.

DISSOLVE TO:

MARYS CAMP - DAY

Mary rolls over on the ground and turns her face in the air. Her
eyes open... then shut. She yawns and looks at her watch, then
next to her on the blanket....

Quickly she sits up.

MARY

Hey?

She stands and steps out into the daylight.

MARY

Hey kid... Kid??

She looks for tracks in the soft ground, finds some and begins
to follow them. She thinks better of it, and runs back to the
car. She pulls a rifle and darts off down the trail.

CUT TO:

DESERT HIGHWAY - INT SPOORS CAR - DAY - MOVING

Spoor leans back in the passenger seat, glum, frustrated. Sud-
denly he leans forward, and peers out the windshield.

SPOOR (to driver)

What's that?

POV

A small grey figure... just a speck in the road.

SPOOR

Stop the car.

REVERSE ANGLE - MOVING

As we TRACK behind him, The boy runs along the highway in front
of us. Out of breath and in a panic... he runs straight at
Spoor's stopped car...

SPOORS CAR - EXT

Spoor opens the door and stands outside. He smiles.

CUT TO:

NEVADA DESERT

A hard, bright day. The landscape is bleak, unforgiving. Short dry brush and light brown earth. Mary pushes through the brush. She bends over... looking.

HER POV

A small human footprint... she stands up and puts her hands around her mouth. She shouts.

MARY

Hey! Hey kid!

She waits a moment... nothing.

MARY (muttering)

You stupid little freak.

She bends her head and studies the tracks as she continues searching... off... into the desert.

CUT TO:

SPOORS CAR - NEVADA HIGHWAY - DAY

The boy sits with Spoor in the back seat.

SPOOR (to radioman)

Where's the nearest hospital?

RADIOMAN

Fifty miles... Saint Andrews... in Fairview... no Red Cross stations until the border.

SPOOR

Are they collaborators?

RADIOMAN

Yes sir.

SPOOR

Get hold of them... God knows what
we've all been exposed to out here.

CUT TO:

NEVADA DESERT - DAY

The edge of the dusty highway. In the background there's a
wasted hamburger stand... a pair of golden arches list eerily by
the bumpy road.

Scratched and sweating in the bright sun, Mary scrambles through
the brush by the edge of the road and studies the ground.

MARY'S POV

There's the boy's track... a small human footprint. It dis-
appears at the edge of the road.

She puts her hands up around her mouth and calls again.

MARY

Hey kid!! Kid!!

She looks off... first one way... then the other. She starts to
cross the dusty, windblown road... when she gets halfway across
she stops... she drops to her knees and stares at the blacktop.

CLOSE ON ROAD

Tire tracks cut through the loose sand.

WIDER

Mary looks off up the road. Her face is grim, tired.

MARY

North.

She stands and quickly heads up, back off the road.

CUT TO:

SAINT ANDREWS HOSPITAL - EXT DAY

A heavily fenced and gated building in the rolling prairie.

A large religious cross stands over the front gate. Spoor's three big cars sit in front of the building.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Spoor and the boy are in a large room surrounded by Spoor's bustling, numbered staff.

SPOOR (to boy)
The people who kidnapped you... the driver... is he dead?

The boy stares at Spoor empty.

A female technician approaches. She wears the number "414".

#414
We're ready for the host, Doctor...

Spoor nods at her, then reaches out and gently caresses the boy's neck.

SPOOR (softly)
I'll make sure it's painless.

The boy's eyes widen in horror. #414 takes him lightly by the shoulders. His mouth opens in a soundless scream...

He resists... The techie grabs him more firmly. The boy hits at her... She struggles for a moment and is joined by another, larger member of Spoor's staff.

In the foreground Doctor Spoor prepares a large hypodermic needle. He turns to the boy and grabs his bare left arm.

The boy kicks and fights like an animal... his thin arms pound at their heads and chests. His feet kick at their groins...

They carry him to a large flat grate and strap him down. The grate pivots in the middle and swings 360 degrees around a fulcrum, like a seesaw with a free arc.

Doctor Spoor jabs the needle into the biceps and injects a huge amount of fluid in the boy's body. The boy's kicking softens and finally stops.

His head nods in a chemical daze as the technicians lather up the dome of his head for a fresh shave.

CUT TO:

INT MARYS CAR ON ROAD - MOVING

Mary drives carefully as she squints at a map in her hand.

After a moment she slows to a stop and gets out...

EXT CAR

She kneels in the road and examines the tire tracks that stretch out in front of the car.

She looks forward to where they lead, then climbs back inside.

INT CAR

She drops her head and grimaces. She starts to unwrap the bandage on her wounded hand.

CLOSE ON HAND

The last fold of the bandage reveals her swollen, purple appendage. A thick glaze surrounds the wound. Black lines spread from a center of red and blue in the bony palm.

CUT TO:

BLOOD ROOM: ON THE BOY

The techies jam intravenous tubes into his arms and legs. An enormous mechanical pump is wheeled next to him.

#414 grabs the foot of the table and swings it one-hundred-eighty degrees so that the boy hangs on the table with his feet in the air and his head pointed at the floor.

WIDER

Spoor and #414 stand nearby.

SPOOR

How long will it take to drain the host?

#414

We have to be careful. The body must be kept alive until the last moment to keep the antibodies active.

With a JERK of electricity that dims the overhead lights, the pump starts WHEEZING... then catches on and begins pumping... THUMP... THUMP... THUMP...

ON PUMP

Blood flows quickly out of The boy's arms. A bright red stream of liquid SQUIRTS into a clear reservoir.

ECU: THE BOY'S FACE:

upside down, pale, completely drugged. For a second his eyelids flutter...

The pump drums on... THUMP... THUMP... THUMP...

CUT TO:

UTAH PRAIRIE - INSURGENTS HEADQUARTERS

A low, single story building... alone in the salt flats. There's a large radar dish spinning on the roof.

INT BUILDING

Two men stand over a electronic console. One, JAMES SMILEY, over the radar terminal. Next to him is DOCTOR MELVIN RAFKIN.

SMILEY

Nothing... not a thing. No beacon.
No radio transmission...

RAFKIN

Let's be patient... it would be easy
to get off schedule.

SMILEY

It's almost sixty hours... Morgan
thinks the A.M.A. knows where we
are. Those chicken-shits'll spill
there guts if the Cross puts on any
pressure.

Rafkin sighs...

RAFKIN

Any word from Shepard's people?

SMILEY

None. As far as we know the host
never left California.

RAFKIN

Keep the monitor on... have Brownie
check the broadcast channels... I'll
tell the staff to prepare for
evacuation.

CUT TO:

SAINT ANDREWS HOSPITAL - NIGHT EXT

Several Red Cross guards are rearranging Spoor's cars and putting them inside the hospital garage...

PULLING BACK:

...to reveal Mary lying prone in the dust on a small hill, staring through binoculars, watching...

Suddenly, there's a CLICK from behind her... She turns her head.

POV

A dusty pair of boots... black, worn, ankle high... PANNING UP... to a severe human figure towering over Mary... it's clothed in a dust colored robe that billows in the breeze... A belt of rosary beads cuts the robe in two. In the figure's hands is an old shotgun. The head and shoulders are covered in a black habit and a wimple. It's a NUN... a big... ugly... nun.

She primes the pump action shotgun... SLLLLLIDE - CRAAAACK!

NUN

Whaddya lookin' at fuckhead?

WIDER

Mary stares...

NUN

Get up. Leave the gun on the ground.

Mary swings the gun off her back and drops it in the dirt. She slowly pushes herself up with her good hand.

The nun stares at her for a long beat.

NUN

You talk?

MARY

(nodding, soft)

Yeah...

NUN

You don't look like no cannibal.

MARY

I'm not.

NUN
Whaddya doin' out here then... pickin'
berries?

Mary hesitates...

MARY
Yeah... lookin' for berries...

NUN
Ain't no fuckin' berries here... You're
a fuckhead what's you are!

There's another pause while the nun gives Mary the complete
once-over. She gestures with her chin...

NUN
...What's with the hand?

MARY
I... caught an arrow.

NUN
Yeah...? You see the shooter... mutant?
Big head? Big teeth?

MARY
Yeah.

NUN
Dog people. Mean as shit. You kill it?

Mary's not sure what to say.

MARY
Yeah... I...

NUN
Send him back to God... it's better.

The nun waves the gun...

NUN
Let's go.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL HALLWAY

SISTER DOCTOR HELEN FREDERICK, a stately nun, and Captain Doc-
tor Spoor walk down a hallway.

SISTER MARY

...my staff tells me you brought in a patient... and that they haven't been allowed near the blood lab.

SPOOR

Sister Doctor... I'm afraid this is the concern of the Red Cross alone.

Another nun, younger, named SISTER JOAN, runs up behind them...

SISTER JOAN

Sister Helen Frederick!

SISTER HELEN (to Spoor)

I insist, Doctor Spoor, while you're in my hospital, that I have complete knowledge of your activities.

(to Joan)

Yes Sister?

Sister Joan WHISPERS into the Sister Doctor's ear.

SISTER HELEN

...I'll be there in a moment.

Sister Joan runs off down the hall.

SPOOR

Since your hospital exists by the good will of my organization, I'd be careful about who I chose to offend. You're never more than a radio signal away from total annihilation.

The nun looks at Spoor with poised amusement.

SISTER HELEN

My community hasn't survived by incaution, Doctor... and it would be extremely incautious of me to allow you to stay here without a detailed explanation of your presence. And although annihilation is a concept not to my taste... I am still prepared to make your stay here unpleasant... that might be something I'd enjoy... in the same way you enjoy your pompous threats.

(pause)

Or do you, as I'm forced to suspect... have something more nefarious to hide?

Spoor stares at the nun thoughtfully.

SPOOR

I'll meet you in the bloodroom in thirty minutes... Please leave the superfluous verbiage in the chapel... where it belongs.

The nun smiles, nods, turns, and walks quickly away. Spoor walks as quickly and as crisply in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE HOSPITAL

Sister Joan runs across the hospital yard in front of the calm Doctor Sister Helen Frederick. Joan stops, turns and waits as Sister Helen catches up. When Joan starts to run ahead again, Sister Helen grabs her by the back of the habit and slows her...

They approach the tall fence together.

AT FENCE

The two nuns join Mary and the Ugly Nun.

UGLY NUN

Found her in the west perimeter, Sister Hel, watchin' the hospital. Gotta bad hand... Dog people.

SISTER HELEN (to Mary)

Let me see...

With a nudge from the Ugly Nun's gun, Mary sticks her wrapped hand out. The Sister Doctor carefully pulls the bandage away.

CLOSE ON HAND

The wound looks even worse.

SISTER HELEN

Your lucky... any one else on my staff would have sent you straight to heaven.

CUT TO:

INT EXAMINATION ROOM

Sister Doctor Frederick escorts Mary to an examining table. They are accompanied by Sister Joan and another, bigger nun, SISTER GEORGE.

The Sister Doctor points and Mary sits on the edge of the table.

MARY (suspiciously)
Are you Cross?

SISTER HELEN
Your hand please.

MARY
Are you Cross?

Mary holds the hand away from the nun.

SISTER HELEN
No... we're not Red Cross.

Mary grudgingly holds her hand out. The Doctor Sister takes a scalpel and pokes at it.

MARY
But they're here... the Red Cross...
they're in the building...?

SISTER HELEN
Please hold still... this won't hurt.

The doctor scrapes away some of the black stuff in the wound onto a small round dish, covers it, and hands it to the nun standing nearby.

SISTER HELEN
Sister Joan, take this down to the
lab... No one is to know this woman is
here... understand?

The Sister Doctor smiles at Sister Joan... She smiles back... and then runs off....

MARY
Why are you helping me?

SISTER HELEN
I'm a nun... you know what a nun is?

MARY
I've seen a lotta people with religion.

SISTER HELEN

I'm also a doctor... it's my job... to heal...

The nun moves over to a table at one side of the room. With her back to Mary she prepares a hypodermic needle. She faces Mary, carefully shielding the needle.

MARY

Is it plague?

SISTER HELEN

...maybe, maybe not... The early plagues moved through here like brush-fire. They killed almost everything, then disappeared...

She moves back to Mary's side.

SISTER HELEN

...Of course... now we're all waiting... for the Ultraplague. We had a report this morning that there were three thousand more dead in Salt Lake.

MARY

Three thousand? How could that be?

SISTER HELEN

It's moving faster than anyone thought.
(a pause)
Now, tell me who you are...

Mary looks at the nun nervously.

SISTER HELEN

...you're not from the desert and you're not Cross.

The Sister Doctor puts the needle up to Mary's arm.

SISTER HELEN

...you'll have to tell me sooner or later...

MARY

No!

Sister George, grabs Mary hard and Sister Helen quickly plunges the syringe into her arm. They lay her down on the bench.

SISTER HELEN

I'm going to have the room sealed...
You'll be quarantined until I see the
test results...

The two nuns walk out. The door shuts and locks.

Mary lays back, picks up her wounded hand, and looks at it.

POV

The spiderweb of black expands until it fills the screen...

...suddenly it turns bright pink, then blue... and DISSOLVES
into a bursting bank of storm clouds... We hear the sound of
RAIN teeming on the desert floor...

FADE TO BLACK.

IN BLACK: We hear the THUMP... THUMP... THUMP... of the blood
machine.

FADE IN:

INT BLOODROOM - ON BOY

His face is pale, still.

REVERSE

Sister Helen Frederick and Captain Spoor stand over the boy's
grid. They stare down at him. The nun is repulsed by the
condition of the boy.

SPOOR

This is your special guest Sister. Host
One-eleven fourteen A.

SISTER HELEN

A child.

SPOOR

...not a child... a "host"... created
in the lab to produce blood. No more
human than a grapefruit.

SISTER HELEN

He's sick...

SPOOR

Not sick... dying, yes... but not sick.
Far from it.

Spoor turns the nun away, guiding her down a row of medical paraphernalia.

SPOOR

It was ten years ago that my research staff first created a successful anti-plague compound. Unfortunately that protein structure was very crude and very aggressive, and would more often than not destroy the normal body's immune system.

He stops at a bank of colorful video screens... all, no doubt, carrying vital medical information.

SPOOR

Through exhaustive research in recombinant genetic manipulation, micro-cell restructure, and extra-uterine fertilization, we were able to breed a host body that could safely produce the proteins without threat from the immune system. And this is the result of that research. The protein compounds carried in this host's blood resist all known forms of toxemia.

Sister Helen stares at the video screens, then turns to Spoor, her face brightening with comprehension.

SISTER HELEN

He can't get plague...

SPOOR

Right... including DNV 47X... the "ultra" plague... and the blood can be used as a serum directly... with a minimum of antigenicity. Only a small dose is necessary for complete immunity.

SISTER HELEN

The cure for plague! Doctor... that's wonderful! A cure!

SPOOR

Yes, Sister... a wonderful, extremely dangerous discovery.

SISTER HELEN

I don't understand.

SPOOR

Neither did some of my staff. They thought that rather than remain in California... the body should be sent to Salt Lake City... The "front", they called it. They went outside the organization... and hired a courier... a blackmarket messenger, and without my knowledge sent the body across the state line. My staff and I pursued... and intercepted the host not far from here.

Spoor smiles at the nun.

SPOOR

But all of this will be over and out of your way in another day, Sister... We'll be on our way back to California.

SISTER HELEN

...but he could do more good here!

SPOOR

The body will be completely drained and it's heart stopped twelve hours from now. The remains will be destroyed.

SISTER HELEN

Surely with proper care the body could produce an unlimited---

SPOOR

---Yes... I imagine it could... but... Sister I imagine this may be difficult for you to understand. But the power of the Red Cross is not so great that we could maintain our success without the plague. In fact... our strength grows in direct proportion to the level of disease.

The nun stares at Spoor in disbelief...

SISTER HELEN

But we must stop the plague if we can!

SPOOR

The Red Cross has managed to save a great many lives, sister. It's my job to ensure continued success of the Cross itself. Production of this anti-plague vaccine must be vigorously controlled. Do you understand?

SISTER HELEN

No!

SPOOR

Sister, what would gold be worth if there were an unlimited supply? What would the value of the Hope Diamond be if there were ten? I intend to carry four gallons of frozen plague serum back to Southern California. No more will be produced.

SISTER HELEN

Doctor Spoor... I...

SPOOR

You'll be given a small allotment for your own use... you've been very cooperative... consider it an endowment.

SISTER HELEN

People are dying...

SPOOR

You should be thanking me, Sister... an ounce of this blood will be worth millions! I'm giving it to you! Celebrate with me!

SISTER HELEN

We could save people... the human race!

SPOOR

I intend to save people! I intend to save those who've proved loyal to the Red Cross.

SISTER HELEN

Doctor I can't...

SPOOR

I'll save you Sister! ...or I'll damn you here and now!

Spoor glares at Sister Helen, face red, nostrils flaring... When she doesn't respond, he grabs at the rosary strapped around her waist... he tears at the crucifix....

The crucifix clatters across the room... loose beads RATTLING on the tile floor.

SPOOR
...Life or death! Choose!

Sister Helen looks down, then slowly responds...

SISTER HELEN
(quietly, ashamedly)
Thank you Doctor Spoor... I... accept
your generous offer.

The nun looks down at the shattered rosary. She unsteadily retreats, and makes her way out of the room.

As she leaves, #414 enters.

SPOOR
Number Four-one-four, I'd like to you
to ready the apparatus for a major
transfusion of the host's blood tomor-
row morning.

#414
Who will be the recipient Captain-Doc-
tor?

A pause...

SPOOR
I will...

#414
How stupid of me Doctor.

Spoor spins and starts from the room.

CUT TO BLACK:

IN BLACK:

Sound begins: A dull THROB... A HEARTBEAT... Then WHOOOOOSH! The sound of a long submerged beast breaking the surface of the sea.

FADE UP:

ON MARY DIRECTLY OVERHEAD

Her eyes open. She's been cleaned up... her face is brighter. Her hair is clean and shining. Her lips are dry... chapped.

The camera PULLS BACK SLOWLY to reveal Mary lying in a hospital bed. The sheets are white and clean.

Mary stares at her heavily bandaged arm that's hung in a sling to her left.

WIDER

The doorway clicks open and the Doctor Sister appears. Mary jerks up in the bed.

MARY (thickly)
What time is it... what day is it? I
have to... I've...

Mary tries to climb out of the bed. The nun holds her back.

SISTER HELEN
No... later... you need rest.

Mary looks at the nun and purses her lips. She gestures with her chin towards the wrapped limb... The Doctor Sister nods...

SISTER HELEN (gently)
You knew it had to come off...

CLOSE ON MARY

She leans back... a long pause...

MARY (hoarsely)
I just didn't wanna do it myself...

WIDER

Sister Joan bursts into the room.

SISTER JOAN
Sister!

She runs up to the Doctor and whispers in her ear.

SISTER HELEN
Where?

SISTER JOAN
They're starting upstairs.

SISTER HELEN
Tell the others to meet in the chapel.

Sister Joan turns and runs out and the Doctor Sister hurries to Mary.

SISTER HELEN (to Mary)
The earth turns quickly... You're going
to have to get up out of that bed.

CUT TO:

INT HALLWAY

Spoor strides down a hospital hallway in front of three of his rifle-toting guards.

He thrusts his chin at a double door and the guards kick it open with relish... Spoor strides through after them.

INT DOUBLE DOORS - THE HOSPITAL CHAPEL

The room is lit entirely by candles. A single pew faces a simple altar.

Sister Joan, dressed in chasable and tunic, holds a chalice over her head, and mumbles rapidly in Latin. The pew hold five more nuns, all standing.

Spoor pauses, then walks to the front of the room, directly in front of Sister Joan. She puts down the chalice...

SISTER HELEN (from pew)
You're interrupting our service.

SPOOR
Your service will keep. Is this all of
your flock?

SISTER HELEN
Yes.

Spoor turns to Sister Joan.

SPOOR
Get with the others.

The nun scurrys down and takes her place in the pew.

WIDE - AN OBLIQUE ANGLE ON THE NUNS

Spoor stands before them...

SPOOR
Five... five nuns... five holy women.
(a beat)
We've found a car in the desert... not
far from here...

The five nuns sit in a row... The Ugly Nun, Sister Joan, Sister George...

SPOOR

I've tracked it from Southern California... and... though we've recaptured its cargo... the driver has escaped.

Next in the pew is Mary... in full disguise... habit, wimple, rosary, etc....

SPOOR

No one could survive long out here... no water, no shelter...

(pause)

...except for this hospital of course...

...finally, last in the pew, is Sister Helen Frederick.

SISTER HELEN

We don't know anything about your driver, Doctor Spoor. You have what you came for... please leave us alone.

SPOOR

This... man... is a mercenary... a despicable human who cares little for his own or any one else's well being. He works to the level of his reward... and I assure you he's been well paid for this endeavor. He must be punished for his crimes.

Spoor moves to the front edge of the pew in front of the Ugly Nun. He stares at her....

SPOOR

Have you seen anyone around the hospital who was not a member of your community or a member of my staff? Think hard... take your time... Remember: to lie is to sin.

THE UGLY NUN

shifts her weight and stares at Spoor with a cocked eye.

UGLY NUN

I haven't seen a damn thing.

MOVING

We TRACK along the nuns as Spoor moves down the length of the pew and confronts each of them individually.

SPOOR
(to the next in line)

You?

SISTER JOAN

No sir.

SISTER GEORGE

No... nothing.

Spoor has arrived in front of Mary.

SPOOR

...and you?

Mary stares at Spoor. Her eyes are wide...

MARY

No... no one.

WIDE

Spoor stares at her a moment longer...

SPOOR (to Sister Helen)
This one looks a little pale, Sister...
perhaps some exercise.

He steps forward and faces Sister Helen.

SPOOR

If any of your people are lying... the
consequences would be... regrettable.

SISTER HELEN

I haven't seen your mercenary, Doctor
Spoor. Five nuns... is all we are...
five holy women.

He turns and heads for the door.

SPOOR

...I've put sentries at the gate...
you're all to remain on hospital
grounds until we leave tomorrow.

Spoor steps through the door. The guards follow.

THE UGLY NUN...

spits... it SPLATS on the floor.

UGLY NUN

Fuckheads.

THE SISTER DOCTOR

turns to Mary... their eyes lock.

MARY

Is the boy alright... is he alive?

SISTER HELEN

How much did they pay you?

MARY

Is he alive? Please tell me...

SISTER HELEN

Why do you care? He's just a job to you... is that right... is that part true?

MARY

Yes...! No! I want to help the boy... I want to help... I...

The nun stares at her. There's a long pause.

SISTER HELEN

He's alive... and he must be brought to Salt Lake... he could be... our only chance. All of us.

(pause)

Are you willing to continue your journey...?

MARY (softly)

It's what I came here for... He means... everything now... the boy... doesn't he?

The nun stares at Mary for a moment, judging her sincerity... then spins to her waiting flock...

SISTER HELEN

We have a lot of work to do, Sisters.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL ROOM

CLOSE ON A BRIGHT SPRAY OF SPARKS

Two strong hands hold a grinding wheel against a thick bend of metal.

WIDER

Sister George kneels in front of Mary, who's sitting in a chair. The sparking stops.

SISTER GEORGE

Let's try that.

CLOSE

Mary holds up her wounded arm. She has a sheath of leather, strapped down around her elbow. In place of her missing hand is a large hook of crude iron.

Sister George holds a shiny loop against the hook and locks it in... it pivots freely.

SISTER GEORGE

I'll fix this piece to your steering wheel... it should work...

Mary examines the apparatus...

SISTER GEORGE

...you got a method for crossin' the border... into Utah?

MARY

No... I... my partner got killed crossing the Nevada border.

The nun quickly blesses herself...

SISTER GEORGE

She's in heaven now, I'm sure.

MARY

"He"... He was a "he"...

SISTER GEORGE

Well...

(she shrugs)

...there's still a chance... Anyway I've got an idea about the fence... the trick is, not to cut the wire at all...

MARY

Oh... maybe I should climb over it...
with the car on my back...

Sister George smiles and shakes her head...

SISTER GEORGE

Not over it....

CUT TO:

INSIDE CLOSET

Lined up on a shelf are several tin cans of different size,
with two digit numbers painted on their rusting surfaces.
They're filled with a waxy substance and have metal rings sus-
pended on their tops.

SISTER GEORGE (vo)

Made 'em myself. The numbers are the
delays... you just pull the hook and
let 'er fly...

A big hand separates the cans and lifts out the largest one...
a gallon container.

WIDER

Sister George cradles the heavy can and grins proudly.

SISTER GEORGE

I been savin' this one special.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Doctor Sister Helen peeks around a corner of the hall in front
of the bloodroom doors. She turns, there are two nuns behind
her... the Ugly Nun and Sister Joan..

CUT TO:

BLOODROOM - NIGHT

Two technicians are in front of the video monitors. One,
seated, is #414. The other is male, #654.

The doors swing open and Sisters Mary, Joan, and the Ugly Nun
walk in quickly. Their hands are under their habits. They ap-
proach the two technicians.

#414
Sisters... this room is off...

The Ugly nun pulls a big club from under her tunic. As she sweeps by #654, she swings the club across his face... BASH! The techie goes down and out.

CRAACK! Sister Joan crowns #414. She slumps.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL GARAGE

An armed Cross guard walks by Mary's small car, which is parked in front of Spoor's desert wagons.

There's a noise. The guard spins and sticks his gun out.

CLOSE ON GUARD

CLUMMP! The guard's head jerks, as a big stick sweeps across the frame.

WIDER

Sister George grabs the guard by the feet and drags him into the shadows.

CUT TO:

BLOODROOM: ON THE BOY

The three nuns surround him and begin untying him from the tubes and wires on the grid. He's paler, thinner, barely alive.

CUT TO:

INT GARAGE - CLOSE

on the flashing LED'S of the timer in Mary's car. It says 06:32:04:01 and running.

WIDER

Mary holds the clock in her hands. Sister George is at the rear of the car, emptying a large container into the gas tank.

There's a triple-KNOCK at the interior door. Sister George moves for it...

SISTER GEORGE

That's them!

Mary rounds the back of the car... and opens the rear hatch.

Through the door quietly and quickly step three nuns. Sister Helen holds an IV up high over a stretcher that Sister Joan and the Ugly Nun carry between them.

Sister Helen hands off the IV to Sister George and looks at Mary.

SISTER HELEN

Are you ready?

Mary nods.

The nuns lay the boy inside the wagon and carefully strap him down.

SISTER JOAN

He's awake, sister.

SISTER HELEN

The drugs are wearing off.

CLOSE ON THE BOY

His eyes are barely open. His head moves from side to side.

Sister Helen's hand moves over his face and forms the sign of the cross over his face. His pale, sunken cheeks make his large eyes look even stranger than before.

MARY

approaches, reaches into her clothes and fumbles around for a moment. She pulls something out and moves in close to the boy.

Mary opens her palm... the broken seashell. The boy stares at it... then at Mary.

CLOSE ON THE BOY

With difficulty he moves his hand up from the side of his body. He takes the shell from Mary and grasps it tightly.

MARY (whispering)

I'm gonna take you home now, kid.

The boy moves his head in the smallest of nods, his mouth lifts in the slightest of smiles...

CUT TO:

EXT: HOSPITAL

A guard, PRIVATE BEAN, paces in front of the tall gate. He wears #2,876.

A loud GRINDING noise comes from the hospital building. He turns and looks.

POV - HOSPITAL BUILDING

Slowly, the large corrugated garage door opens.

BEAN

turns to the guard booth.

GUARD

Hey corporal, you know about anyone goin' out?

Another guard steps out of the booth and looks toward the hospital. He is CORPORAL DOWD... #875.

DOWD

Who knows what's goin' on around this dump...

EXT GARAGE

Two nuns stroll out of the garage doors. Their creamy habits flash in the night as they approach the guards.

Private Bean readies his gun.

We see now it's the Ugly Nun and Sister George. Sister George towers over the two guards.

UGLY NUN

How's it goin'?

DOWD

Uh... fine... can I help you with something?

UGLY NUN

Yeah... see the sister and me, we like to take a walk about this time a night... If you'd open the gate...

DOWD

We can't do that... everybody's restricted.

The Ugly Nun leans forward and slaps Corporal Dowd on the shoulder.

UGLY NUN

Ha Haaa! And you're doin' a great job too! But what the boss don't know won't hurt him right...? 'Sides, just com'ere a minute, I need to talk to you.

The nun wraps her arm around Dowd's shoulder and walks him away.

Bean and Sister George are left to stare at one another...

SISTER GEORGE (deep voiced)

So I guess it's just you and me, pal.

Bean looks terrified before the big nun.

BEAN

I...

SISTER GEORGE

Yeah the good sister has her little problems... but ours is a forgiving god...

BEAN

Problems?

SISTER GEORGE

Yeah... she likes to lift her habit, ya know what I mean...

BEAN

Uh... no... I mean uh...

SISTER GEORGE

She lifts her habit... for the boys.

Bean looks off after the Ugly Nun and Dowd... they've disappeared into the darkness.

BEAN

You mean... no! What about like... the plague...

SISTER GEORGE

Plague...? She's a nun!

There's a THUD and a MOAN from somewhere in the dark.

Bean looks off nervously.

BEAN
Corporal? Corporal Dowd?

SISTER GEORGE
Don't worry about them... it doesn't
take long... Lemme explain somethin'...

The nun grabs the guard by the shoulder, turns him around and swats him hard across the jaw with her fist. BOOOOF! He goes down like a sack a groceries.

CUT TO:

INT GARAGE

Mary slides into the driver's seat of her car. Sister Helen leans into the window...

MARY (in a whisper)
What'll happen to you?

SISTER HELEN
I don't know... the worst, might be the
best: We'd all meet in heaven tonight.

There's a noise, they look out into the yard. One of the nuns begins to swing the gate open. The other is waving frantically.

Suddenly a loud ALARM HORN cries through the night air.

MARY
Shit! They had it alarmed!

Sister Helen backs away from the car. Mary spins the ignition.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL HALLWAY - INT

The alarm rings steadily... Red Cross guards, in various states of dress, spill out of doorways...

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL GARAGE

Sister Joan holds a large iron bar up against the BANGING, shuddering door. It shakes in it's frame.

We hear angry SHOUTS from the other side.

Mary's car starts with a ROAR. Mary leans down and grabs something off her seat...

MARY

Here!

Mary tosses her rifle. Sister Helen catches it handily.

SISTER HELEN

You'll need it!

MARY

Not if you give us enough time.

Sister George runs into the garage, pulls open the passenger side door of Mary's car and climbs inside.

SISTER HELEN

God be with you...!

Mary inserts her hook in the fastener on the wheel. She jams the gearshift with her good hand and looks at Sister George, who grins and jams a thumb in the air like every-good copilot.

Mary looks at Sister Helen as the tires SQUEAL...

MARY

Yeah... same to you...

The car tears from the garage...

Sister Helen readies the gun in the crook of her arm and aims it at the doorway.

SISTER HELEN (to Sister Joan)

Let it go, Sister!

Sister Joan stares for a moment at her superior, then backs off the door and ducks away.

The door bursts open, tearing from it's hinges. Six Cross guards dart into the room.

The gun lights up in Sister Helen's arms as she cuts down the guardsmen... B-B-B-B-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM!!!

EXT GARAGE

The car rips across the hospital yard.

THE UGLY NUN

stands in the yard, her rifle at her side. She gives the car a big wave and a casual salute.

UGLY NUN
(to herself, jealously)

Lucky.

She readies her gun and charges back toward the garage... back toward the battle.

THE CAR

bounds through the gate and out into the desert.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL HALLWAY - MOVING

Spoor and a half-dozen of his guards charge down a hallway. Spoor is red faced. Angry.

SPOOR (exploding)
Idiots... ineffectual blockheads...
you've been duped by a coven of cower-
ing witches whose chief activity is
begging for salvation from some effete
mystical force... Nuns! Defeated by
nuns!

They've reached the double-doors of the chapel.

SPOOR
---I'll take a team of two. The rest of
you guard the blood supply until I
return. It's imperative the host is
destroyed...!

Spoor jerks his head to the double doors and the guards file inside. Spoor follows.

INT HOSPITAL CHAPEL

Candlelight. The three remaining nuns are lined up in the lone pew, heads bowed, hands folded. They whisper prayers in unison.

Spoor strides in and steps up to the front of the chapel.

SPOOR
What have you done!?

A pause... Spoor stares...

SISTER HELEN
We are three... three holy women.

Another pause.

SPOOR

Three dead women.

CUT TO:

DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Mary's car accelerates hard down the desert highway.

CUT TO:

UTAH - NEVADA BORDER - DAWN

The border fence hangs straight as an arrow across the flat salt desert.

Sister George is running hard away from the fence towards Mary's car, parked about a hundred yards off. She's smiling, excited.

Suddenly KAAA- BOOOOMMM!!! There's an enormous explosion at the wire... A huge column of sand and smoke lifts into the air.

A brief rain of dust and rock falls over the windshield and roof. The car vibrates from the explosion. The air is filled with smoke.

Mary looks at the big nun.

SISTER GEORGE

I think that oughtta do it.

CAR EXT

Mary pulls the car up next tot the hole. She and the nun get out...

The smoke begins to lift. There's a large hole blasted under the fence... a hole big enough to drive a car through.

Suddenly we hear something... the WHINE of a car engine... They turn and look.

POV

On the flat horizon, far away. A speeding green car. A plume of dust.

CUT TO:

UTAH SIDE OF BORDER

Mary's car lifts itself out of the hole, engine spinning, wheels grinding...

The car spurts forward.

CUT TO:

SPOOR'S CAR - MOVING - EXT

It speeds to the border wire and slides to a stop at the edge of the hole.

Spoor stares through the dust across the salt flats.

POV

Mary's car recedes in the distance.

INT CAR

SPOOR

What are you waiting for?

GUARD

We could have the border station turn off the power sir. This car is quite a bit bigger than...

SPOOR

No time. Through the hole!

The driver is about to protest. But he swallows... and puts the car in gear.

EXT - WIDE

The Red Cross car drops into the hole. It's huge front end disappears under the salty rim.

CLOSE ON ROOF

As it moves forward under the wire. The edge of a small radar

dish nicks the bottom of the wire... there's a BANG! and a brief rain of SPARKS.

The car jerks to a halt. The radar dish has been blackened and sawn in half by the high voltage...

INT CAR

DRIVER

We're scraping sir! I...

SPOOR

(to the guard next to the driver)
Find a way to clear the wire.

The guard hesitates a moment then holds up his rifle to show Spoor it's wooden stock...

GUARD (dimly)

Wood...

Spoor ignores him.

EXT CAR

The guard climbs out the door, gun in hand.

Nervously he looks up at the border fence. With the butt of the rifle, he reaches for the wire.

CLOSE ON RIFLE BUTT

it delicately touches, then more surely pushes up on the bottom wire.

ON TOP OF CAR

The wire clears the top of radar dish.

WIDER

GUARD (nervously)

O... Okay!

SPOOR

Go!

The driver quickly, too quickly hammers at the gas...

The rear wheels spin on the soft earth. The big car jerks and fishtails... slapping into the delicately balanced guard.

The car jerks forward clear of the wire... and the driver hits the brakes.

The guard slips.

The wire falls from the butt end of the gun and catches the guard full in the hand.

In a BRILLIANT, BLINDING, FLASH! The guard SCREAMS and turns into a snowfall of black papery soot... totally, completely, incinerated.

INT CAR

The driver turns to look at Spoor, who's looking unsurely at the air where the guard was a moment ago.

Spoor gathers himself and stares back at the driver.

SPOOR

Think of it... as... the big vacation.

CUT TO:

SPOOR'S CAR

Out of the dirt and up on the flat, it slowly picks up speed. The engine builds into a relentless HOWL.

MARY'S CAR

speeding likewise on the long flat surface.

INT CAR: MARY

looks up into the rear view mirror. Spoor's car forms a long, distant plume of dust.

MARY

They're faster than I thought.

INT SPOOR'S CAR

SPOOR

Faster! Faster!! Catch them! We have to catch them!

DRIVER

We have a much faster car, sir.

SPOOR

He's tricky though... very tricky.

DRIVER

"She" sir... it would have to be a
"she"...

Spoor looks at the driver with disdain.

MARY'S REARVIEW MIRROR

Spoor's car is closing in....

MARY

squints in the bright sun. Her leg tenses as she forces the gas pedal to the floor.

SISTER GEORGE

Clears the hatch from the roof. She's smiling, laughing... never had so much fun.

She drags a big wooden box filled with her explosives next to her. She eyes the rear window and checks Spoor's car.

INT SPOOR'S CAR

As the car SWEEPS across the desert, Spoor struggles to pull something up from the seat...

...a big rifle... He throws the bolt and cranks down the passenger side window...

EXT WIDE:

Mary's car is about a hundred yards down the road... kicking up an enormous cloud of dust.

Sister George appears at the roof of Mary's car... her habit blows in the wind as her arm cocks and she lofts a grenade back toward Spoor's car.

Spoor leans out into the howling wind and aims the rifle.

BOOOOMMM!!! The grenade explodes just in front of Spoor's speeding car.

Spoor ducks back in the window, reeling.

INT MARY'S CAR

Sister George picks over her collection of blasters....

SISTER GEORGE

Can you let 'me get a little closer?

MARY

What are you nuts?

The nun lifts a grenade and weighs it in her hand. She smiles and pulls the ring.

SISTER GEORGE

Ahh never mind. This one feels about right....

EXT. WIDE

The nun stands through the hatch and lets the grenade fly.

Spoor hangs out the window and fires the gun... BAM BAM BAM!!

Sister George watches and winks at Mary...

SISTER GEORGE

Somewhere in between I guess.

BAM! BAM! Two bullets slam into the back glass... The rear window CRAACKS! and spiderwebs....

Mary ducks, spins and looks... another bullet smashes through the window... now a series of gaping shard-edged holes.

The nun grabs a couple more bombs and stands through the hatch.

EXT WIDE

Spoor's car is weaving left and right fifty yards behind Mary's car....

The nun cocks her arm... timing her release... then quickly lets another fly....

BOOOM! A near miss as Spoor's car reels in the dust... BOOOM!! Closer... Spoor's car spins a little as the back wheels break loose, then grab and hold.

INT MARY'S CAR

Sister George watches... the smile disappears from her face.

SISTER GEORGE

Damn! Gotta get serious!

She grabs a big pound size can, pulls the pin and stands through the hatch.

ON SPOOR

He's leaning out the car window in the roaring wind... His gun is aimed carefully.

SISTER GEORGE

hurls the bomb...

SPOOR

fires BAM! BAM!

EXT WIDE

BOOOOONNNNN!!! A huge blast just to the left of Spoor's car... the car spins and reels, losing some ground but remaining undamaged.

MARY

Drives steadily... she looks at her rearview and mutters under her breath.

Next to her the nun still stands through the hatch.

MARY

Hey. Hey!

She tugs on the nuns robe and the nuns legs buckle and she drops through the hatch. There's a neat red bullet-hole in her chest. Her face is caught in a dead smile.

MARY

Shit!!! No! No! No!!

Mary pushes pushes the nuns body over on it's side, then checks the rearview and studies the windshield.

POV

Empty... barren salt desert...

Then... suddenly, out of nowhere... a building... an old gas station, rises from the horizon...

MARY

Spots it... Another bullet CRACKS and TOCKS through the front windshield.

REVERSE ANGLE: WIDE

THE ABANDONED GAS STATION

sits alone in the salt flats, years of blowing wind have drifted mounds of sand against the building's bleached walls. Like tombstones, three ancient gas pumps stand in the front yard.

In the near distance, we see a plume of dust and the two speeding cars.

The cars get closer and closer... The sound of their HOWLING engines builds...

ON MARY'S REARVIEW MIRROR

Spoor's car is right on top of her.

EXT WIDE

Mary's car nears the front of the gas station.

INT MARY'S CAR

Mary suddenly spins the steering wheel hard with her hook... with her other hand she jerks on the emergency brake...

EXT CAR

It turns wildly around the edge of the building, sliding like a speedboat in flat water...

INT CAR

Mary throws her hand up on dashboard against the G-force of the sharp turn....

EXT WIDE

Spoor's car streaks by the gas station and Mary's car.

INT SPOOR'S CAR

Spoor screams at the driver...

SPOOR

Watch him! Watch him! Turn back...
stop! Get him! Get him!

The driver brakes hard...

MARY'S CAR

spins and stops in the sand...

INT CAR

Mary gathers herself and looks quickly out the window towards Spoor's car.

She CRANKS at the starter... it spins and dies...

MARY

Go... come on... FUCK!

She tries again... this time it grabs and the engine REVS up...

She jerks at the wheel and peels off...

EXT MARY'S CAR

She pulls around the back of the gas station and across to the opposite side... putting the building between herself and Spoor.

She turns and fumbles inside the grenade box... choosing carefully. She kicks at the door and dives outside.

EXT SPOOR'S CAR

They're turning around. Spoor looks out the window.

POV

The gas station... Mary's car is out of sight.

SPOOR

Go! Go! He's turned back... we'll lose
him...

BACK TO MARY

She's outside ...peeking around the side of the building.

POV

Down past the gas pumps, Spoor's car is beginning to accelerate...

MARY

ducks back around the side of the building, leans against the white wall and takes a deep breath.

WIDER

Spoor's car moves quickly towards the building.

Mary stands and readies herself...

Just as the car reaches the far edge of the building she darts out toward it...

INT SPOOR'S CAR

Mary's metal hand bursts through the rear passenger side window... BAAASH! The window explodes into the car.

Mary's metal hook catches the rear roof pillar... She's stuck...

EXT CAR

Mary's body jerks hard as she gets swept up off her feet and dragged along the side of the car.

Spoor struggles with the long rifle. He swings it out the window and back towards Mary's bobbing head.

He jams it up close to her and fires... BAM! She ducks and the bullet whizzes by...

SPOOR (yelling at driver)
Faster! Shake her off...!

WIDER

The car begins to bob and weave. Mary's legs alternately BANG on the ground and FLY wildly in the air. Spoor tries to keep the gun pointed at her head...

Mary punches at the rifle bore... then grabs at the window sill and tries to free herself.

CLOSE

Spoor levels the rifle bore at Mary's brow. His finger jerks on the trigger.

The muzzle of the gun drops as Mary SLAPS at it. BANG!! The bullet punches a neat black hole straight through Mary's neck.

Mary SCREAMS...

...with a grimace, she pulls the ring on the grenade with her teeth. She drops it inside the car with her good hand.

Her sleeve has pulled away to reveal the leather sheath and straps holding the metal prosthetic to her arm.

She grabs the leather and tries to free it. The weight of her body stretches the straps...

ON SPOOR

He looks back at Mary... then his eyes widen.

POV

He spots the armed grenade kicking around the floor of the car. He scrambles for it.

CLOSE ON HER ARM

Mary tears at the straps. The leather stretches to the max... then with a low SNAP... breaks away...

MARY

falls away from the car... leaving her metal hand hanging tenaciously from the side of the car.

BAMMM...! THUDD...! She falls to the ground in a sliding burst of dust.

ON SPOOR

He drops the gun out the window... He looks at the driver and begins struggling with the door handle...

WIDE - ON MARY

She's a bleeding ball of dirt and sand...

Mary lifts her head and looks up...

Spoor's car starts to swing into a turn, when suddenly BOOOOM!! ...it goes up in enormous ball of white-hot fire.

Mary watches for a moment and then struggles to her feet. Blood drains freely from the twin holes in her neck.

CUT TO:

CLOSE

STROOOOCK! A match strikes, and falls on a white layer of fabric.

WIDER

With a WOOF! Sister George's gasoline soaked body goes up in flames.

MARY

watches it for a moment, then turns away.

CUT TO:

INT MARY'S CAR

The boy lays quietly, unharmed in the cargo area... still snugly strapped in...

A shadow falls over him...

REVERSE

It's Mary, she brushes his cheek.

He wakes and stares at her. He moves uncomfortably under the confinement of the straps. Mary loosens them. The boy tries to sit up...

Mary is in the driver's seat...

CLOSER

She shudders in pain. Her head falls... Tears drop from her eyes... she shakes...

ON THE BOY

He watches Mary.

Suddenly something comes over his face... he sees something...

POV

...out past Mary... through the front windshield... a dark, burned man walks struggling into the frame about fifty yards in front of the car... he carries a rifle...

CAR INT

The boy's mouth opens...

Mary's head is down in the front seat... she doesn't see the figure in the window.

The boy's mouth opens wider... his tongue curls and tries to form a word... His chest begins to heave... His breathing is loud.

POV

The figure has a rifle up to his eye...

CAR INT

The boy's face is filled with terror... His breath comes in great clumps...

Finally... a sound crawls dryly, reluctantly out of his mouth.

THE BOY

Hhh...

He raises his hand and points...

Mary turns and looks at him... surprise and alarm fill her face.

THE BOY

Hhh... Hhhii... Him!

Suddenly a bullet CRAAACKS! through the front windshield... misses... and CRAAACKS out the rear window.

Mary spins, looks, and starts the car....

EXT CAR

Wheels spinning, it pulls hard away from the gas station and rapidly toward the figure...

BAM! BAM! There's another rifle shot...

ON MARY

She forces the car forward.

CLOSER ON FIGURE

His hair is burned. His clothes are singed... but we can still make out the "#1" on his chest.

He stands unsteadily with the rifle up to his eye... He fires again... BAM!

We hear the sound of Mary's accelerating engine....

MARY'S POV - MOVING

She closes in quickly on Spoor's standing form.

CLOSE: SPOOR

looks directly at the rushing car... He fires the rifle...
CLICK... CLICK... it's empty.

ON CAR

The wheels tear at the ground... they HOWL unmercifully.

MARY

watches... The sun is golden on her face.

SPOOR

lowers his gun, but doesn't move.

MARY'S POV

Spoor's figure grows large in the windshield... suddenly we're
on top of him...

SMAAASH! Spoor's body crumples on impact... His arms and legs
crinkle like paper...

SPLAASH! His blood SPLATTERS ... covering the windshield in a
thick red glaze.

CAR INT - CLOSE ON DASH

Mary's hand enters the frame and turns a dashboard knob.

EXT CAR - ON WINDSHIELD - MOVING

All we see is the red blood on the glass.

Then, with a SWOOSH, the windshield wipers cut across the
frame... clearing the blood... and revealing Mary's determined
face behind the steering wheel.

CUT TO:

UTAH DESERT - INSURGENTS HEADQUARTERS

INT RADAR ROOM

Rafkin and Smiley are at the radar console. There's a few other
people standing behind them.

Smiley stares at a clock similar to the one in Mary's car.

CLOSE ON CLOCK

The large red LEDs count rapidly... 00:00:02... 00:00:01...
00:00:00... a piercing ALARM goes off...

WIDER

Smiley hits a button... and shuts down the alarm. He sighs...

SMILEY

That's it.

Rafkin continues to stare at the radar...

CLOSE ON RADAR

The arm swings silently.

WIDE AGAIN

The people in the room begin to file out.

SMILEY

Times up... We better get out.

RAFKIN

I guess it was more than we could real-
ly hope for.

Rafkin stands.

SMILEY

I'm gonna set the detonators... I'm
sure it won't be long before the Cross
finds us.

He leaves the room. Rafkin starts to follow him. He shakes his
head, looks at the floor and start to walk out.

CLOSE ON RADAR SCREEN

A small blip enters the edge of the screen and begins to
flash...

Suddenly we hear a low, weak BEEPING...

Rafkin stops in the doorway.

REVERSE - TRACKING

in tight to Rafkin's face. He snaps his head back towards the
radar...

RAFKIN (to himself)
The beacon....
(yelling down hall)
Smiley! SMILEY! THE BEACON!!

RADAR SCREEN - TRACKING IN

on a small, soft, flashing blip... moving left to right in the upper right corner of the screen.

CUT TO:

SALT FLATS - SUNSET

A black truck pounds across the salt flats. Radar dishes spin on it's roof. It has a big double cab, stuffed with people.

INT CAB

Rafkin sits next to Smiley. There's a driver next to them and a bunch of others in the back.

They're all dressed in white coveralls. We hear the soft insistent BEEP of the radio beacon.

POV - THROUGH WINDSHIELD

The dust and low sun make visibility difficult.

INT CAB

Rafkin stares at a small radar unit in front of him...

RAFKIN
Should be up here on the right... no
more than a hundred yards.

The car moves a little further on... suddenly Smiley, staring out the window points...

SMILEY
There!

The driver turns the wheel and steps on the brakes. The car stops.

Everyone in the cab stares...

POV

In the dust and the dim sun we can barely make out the outline of Mary's car... stopped, idle... about thirty yards away.

We hear the crackle of a radio and the swell of white noise.
The beacon continues BEEPING...

TRACKING IN

The car is covered with a thick layer of dust. The grill and hood are battered. One rear tire is missing...

RADIO VOICE (vo)
No other activity... it looks like
they're alone...

CUT TO:

EXT - RAFKIN

approaches the car. Behind him are Smiley, THOMPSON, and HUGHES. All of them have their heads covered in large hoods... they peer through plexiglass masks.

The windows of the car are entirely smudged over with grime or covered with dark plastic... completely opaque... it's impossible to see inside.

RAFKIN

rubs at the dust on the cracked window and tries to peek...

WIDE

Hughes moves up next to Rafkin as Smiley and Thompson move to the back of the car. Hughes points a rifle at the driver's door.

ON RAFKIN AND HUGHES

Their faces are barely visible behind the masks, their hoods fill the frame. Behind them the wind swirls and fills the orange sky with dust.

Rafkin reaches forward and grabs the doorlatch. He pulls... it's apparently jammed with sand... He strains at it...

The door pops open with a CRUNCH and clears the frame...

They both stare...

HUGHES
God...! What the hell...

INSIDE THE CAR

In the driver's seat... covered with dirt, blood and sand is Mary. She doesn't move.

She is slumped forward, her head down...

Her left hand is gone... her forearms lashed crudely to the steering wheel with rope. Her gun is jammed between the front seat and the gas pedal... clamping the accelerator to the floor.

RAFKIN (to Hughes)

Gimme your light...

Rafkin forces his upper body into the car and quickly jerks back Mary's lifeless head...

He peels back an eyelid and peers into it...

BACK OF CAR

SMASH! Smiley breaks the remaining glass in the hatch. He unlocks the hatch and pulls it wide.

POV

A mess... junk everywhere... rope, a gun, blood and sand... In the middle of it all, lays the boy. He doesn't move.

SMILEY

stares at the boy. He reaches in and feels for a pulse on the boy's neck.

THE BOY

moves slightly at his touch. He opens his eyes and turns his head towards Smiley.

SMILEY

He's alive... the host... IT'S ALIVE!

RAFKIN

joins Smiley at the back of the car.

Smiley and the others begin untying the boy as Rafkin digs inside his suit. He pulls out a small object... and holds it out to the boy.

CLOSE

...a broken seashell...

THE BOY

looks at it... and slowly holds up his clenched fist.

His fingers open slowly... and reveal his half of the broken shell.

WIDER

Rafkin takes the two seashell halves and holds them together. They're a fit.

He smiles.

RAFKIN

Welcome.

The boy stares at Rafkin... then turns and looks at Mary. He reaches for her.

Rafkin leans forward and stops him.

CUT TO:

WIDE ON SALT FLATS

The dust rips through the air as the sun is nearly completely set...

The black truck is backed near the Red Cross car... The wind whips up a tremendous blur of dust.

CUT TO:

MARY'S CAR

Rafkin stands, staring at Mary's body, still strapped to the driver's seat.

He pulls a thick envelope from his shirt.

CLOSER

He slips opens the envelope. Inside, is a thick bundle of worn currency... twenties and fifties.

WIDE

He stares again at Mary's ravaged body... as though he's trying to understand...

CLOSE ON MARY'S FACE.

Her eyes are shut. Her face is covered with blood and sand and dirt. Her hair blows across her pale, dead brow in the desert wind.

We hear the noises of the radio and the rescue crew.

WIDER

Smiley approaches.

SMILEY

(referring to Mary)

What do you want to do with that mess?

Rafkin doesn't respond... Smiley shrugs.

SMILEY

...she's not one of us... probly loaded with plague... a fuckin' carrier.

Rafkin tosses the envelope into the car...

RAFKIN

A fuckin' saint is more like it.

Rafkin starts to swing the car door shut...

RAFKIN

Light it up... burn the whole damn thing.

He slams the door. On the dull BANG we...

CUT TO:

CLOSE

...on a roaring fire.

FADE TO BLACK.