

World War Z

Screenplay by

J. Michael Straczynski

Based on the novel by

Max Brooks

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Fade In:

OVER BLACK as we see:

Five Years From Right Now

Still in BLACK, a cell phone rings. It's picked up.

GERRY (V.O.)

Yeah?

DEXTER (V.O.)

Gerry? Dex. Where are you?

GERRY (V.O.)

Home, waiting for the fireworks to start. The army's going to put the hammer down in a way nobody's seen since God smote Sodom and Gomorrah.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE -- DAY

Six companies of soldiers, many wearing bio-contamination suits, fan out across the choke point leading from the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, forming a massive firing line. Other soldiers build up sandbags and take position behind tanks as --

-- panicked civilians race across the bridge toward them, escaping some enemy we don't see yet. Soldiers bark orders, urging them to hurry.

Media helicopters swarm overhead while military choppers hang back. Tanks, Bradleys, Humvees, mortars and trucks with satellite gear roll up behind the soldiers.

HARD CUT BACK TO BLACK UNDER:

DEXTER (V.O.)

Gerry --

GERRY (V.O.)

According to the news they've got it contained. The army set down barricades all along the river to force every Z coming toward Philadelphia up over the Ben Franklin Bridge and the Delaware Expy into a clean kill zone in Franklin Square.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE

Several hundred shadowy, ambiguous forms start to move into the streets that lead to the square. A soldier receives a transmission on his helmet radio, yells to the rest:

SOLDIER

Fire in the hole!

(CONTINUED)

They hit the ground as a Comanche helicopter behind them fires two ROCKETS. They BURST into a hundred smaller bomblets which --

-- EXPLODE over the enemy, causing SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS as they ignite the gas tanks of abandoned cars. Thick black smoke swallows the scene.

The troops CHEER. Media choppers SWING IN for a closer look.

BACK TO BLACK UNDER:

DEXTER (V.O.)

Gerry...I need you to pay very close attention.

(beat)

Remember when you were doing that report for the UN on Afghanistan and I called you right before the Taliban hit the village where you were staying and told you to get the hell out?

GERRY (V.O.)

Yeah...you were on the night shift at CIA Langley when the raw intelligence came in and --

DEXTER (V.O.)

Then listen to me right now.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE

Through the smoke we can make just out hundreds of bodies that lay unmoving on the ground. Then, slowly, we see other figures shuffling and shambling toward us. Lots of them.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

GERRY LANE, 30s, is on the cell phone, looking out the twelfth-story window to the city below long enough for us to take it in. His wife KARIN is watching the TV news. She gasps at what she sees. He turns to look at the TV UNDER:

DEXTER (V.O.)

Get the hell out, Gerry. Get the hell out of Philly right now.

GERRY

Oh my god....

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE

For the first time, emerging from the smoke, we see the enemy: thousands of zombies that SURGE toward us, wiping us into a --

(CONTINUED)

MONTAGE

-- with each shot designed to look and feel heroic, emphasizing the bravery and skill of the soldiers in battle.

Heavy bombardment by artillery, Comanche helicopters fire rockets and bomblets. Soldiers blaze away with automatic weapons from behind cover while others advance bravely into the front lines...only to be overwhelmed by --

-- the wave of Zombies...more and more pouring in as --

-- cannons and chain-guns on tanks and Humvees BLAST out at the approaching tide, shredding the first rows and blowing up buildings on either side. Rockets slam into buildings all around them, but their eyes never leave the soldiers: intense, intent, determined.

Hundreds of mortar rounds explode, transforming the road into hell incarnate --

-- as the tide of Zombies washes over the defenders, a pitched battle that seems to go on forever until a falling body WIPES CAMERA as we go --

BACK TO BLACK UNDER:

DEXTER (V.O.)

Gerry? Are you there? Gerry?

But there's only the electronic *beep-beep-beep* of a cell phone system gone dead. The sound FADES OUT SLOWLY then we

HARD CUT INTO:

EXT. STREETS - PHILADELPHIA -- DAY

The streets are a nightmare of unprecedented magnitude. Terror and chaos on the half-shell. Cars blast the wrong way down one way streets, onto sidewalks, crashing into other cars or even pedestrians in their frenzy to get the hell out of town. Looters haul supplies out of shattered stores. Cars and buses are on fire.

Gerry is behind the wheel of one of the cars trying to escape. With him are Karin and their daughters: four-year old **CONSTANCE** and eight-year-old **RACHEL**. Constance is crying, terrified, as Gerry swerves in and out of traffic, avoiding fires, looters and other cars.

KARIN

It's all right, honey, everything's okay. We're just going on a road trip. Constance, sweetie, there's nothing to be afraid of. You're safe. Mommy and daddy are right here, we --

(CONTINUED)

Gerry SWERVES to avoid slamming into a truck. The near-accident amps up Constance's crying. Then: we begin to hear something new over the traffic...a distant ROAR.

KARIN

What's that sound? Gerry...?

He sticks his head out through the window and looks up.

An out-of-control Boeing 757 is *hurtling through the air upside down*, heading right toward us.

GERRY

HOLD ON!

He GUNS the engine, side-swiping cars, knocking aside anything in the way as the plane tumbles and rolls overhead, and --

-- the plane is barely hundreds of feet overhead as we PUSH IN on one of its windows where for one frozen moment out of time we SEE --

-- passengers and zombies STRUGGLING with one another, the scene inside totally out of control as the airplane --

-- SLAMS into the center of Philadelphia and EXPLODES as --

-- Gerry speeds away, barely getting clear of the blast zone as we CRANE UP to reveal Philadelphia floating in a smear of black smoke and fire.

EXT. USED CAR LOT -- DAY

Karin holds Rachel and Constance as, across the lot, Gerry talks with a salesman, who nods to an older model RV, big enough for a family. Gerry hands him a wad of cash and the keys to his car. The salesman goes inside to get the paperwork as Gerry hustles over to Karin.

KARIN

Gerry, what are you doing? That's three times what that crate is worth.

GERRY

Doesn't matter. If Dex is right, money won't be worth a damn soon anyway.

(includes Rachel)

Okay, we need to get everything out of the car and into the RV so we can hit the road as fast as possible.

RACHEL

But I liked the car.

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

It won't do us any good where we're going. Now come on....

He leads them back toward the car.

INT. RV -- AFTERNOON

Gerry drives the RV down a long, rural road, Karin seated beside him, Constance asleep on a back seat, and Rachel perched at a window, looking forlornly out at the passing scenery.

RACHEL

I don't like this thing. It smells like old people.

KARIN

It'll pass honey, as soon as we can air it out a bit.

GERRY

(to Karin)

Keep your eyes open for any stores or supermarkets that're still open. We have to hit every one we find until we're out of money. We'll need flares, candles, first aid supplies, water --

KARIN

What about food?

GERRY

Dry, smoked, salted or in cans, nothing perishable.

KARIN

Not even frozen?

GERRY

Keeping the freezer going means running the engine, and we'll need to conserve gas. Get a few things for now, but nothing long term, it'll just spoil. Once the snows come, we can use that to keep things cold.

RACHEL

I don't understand, where are we going?

GERRY

We're going North.

RACHEL

Why?

GERRY

Because winter's coming.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL

But won't it be cold?

GERRY

That's the idea. See, before Daddy started working for the UN, he went to college with a friend named Frank Dexter, who works for the CIA now and he told Daddy --

RACHEL

You shouldn't talk about yourself in the third person, it's creeping me out.

He looks to Karin, who shrugs.

KARIN

She got an A in grammar this semester.

GERRY

Anyway, my friend got a report from Finland, where it's a lot colder than it is here. They're having the same problem as us, and they discovered that when the snows come, it doesn't make any difference whether you're alive, or --

(beat)

-- or whatever, sooner or later a body exposed to extreme cold stops moving. When the snows come it'll stop those things in their tracks.

RACHEL

Does it destroy them?

GERRY

We don't know. It may just put them to sleep. But with luck it'll keep them asleep long enough for the government to get things under control.

RACHEL

So what about all the people in the south?

GERRY

I don't know, honey I don't know....

(beat)

Anyway, that's why we're going north, away from the big cities and off the beaten track, near the Canadian border. Fewer people means fewer problems. Think of it as a big camping trip.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL
Why don't we just go somewhere the
zombies aren't?

Another awkward pause, then:

GERRY
Because there isn't any such place,
sweetie.

EXT. RV -- EVENING

The RV roars off past a freeway sign: WOLFE ISLAND/CAPE VINCENT
CANADIAN/US BORDER CHECKPOINT 120 MILES.

EXT. ROADWAY - MORNING

The RV moves down on a little-used back road.

INT. RV

Gerry is exhausted, having driven through the night. Karin
wakes up in the back, comes to him.

KARIN
You want me to drive for a while?

GERRY
I'm okay, but some coffee would help.

She starts to move back when she sees a car ahead that's gone
off the road. A WOMAN in her 50s is flagging them down.

Gerry hesitates, not sure if he should stop. Karin nods.
They pull over and open the front door. The woman approaches.

WOMAN
Thank god --

GERRY
What happened?

WOMAN
A bunch of those things came at my
house last night. I lit out, figured
if I drove with my lights off they
wouldn't see me, but that didn't work
out quite like I planned.

Gerry looks to her arm. It's bandaged.

GERRY
What happened there?

She glances to the wound nervously, tries to dismiss it.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Nothing...just a cut. Let me get my things and I'll be right back.

She hurries off. Gerry exchanges an agonizing look with Karin, and the meaning is implicit: what if she was bit?

KARIN

Gerry --

GERRY

We can't take the chance.

She wants to argue...but knows she can't. Before the woman can come back, Gerry closes the door. The RV rumbles off as Rachel watches her recede into the distance.

RACHEL

Mom? Why did you...she's all alone.

Karin, fighting back tears, doesn't answer.

KARIN

I'll get the coffee going.

And the woman waving for help disappears into the horizon.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

The RV has pulled over for the night along a high ridge, a sheer drop on one side, nearly impossible to approach.

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Karin and Gerry are watching a small portable TV, Rachel and Constance asleep. They fiddle with the antenna, annoyed at the snowy reception. The news on-screen shows snarled freeways and panicked crowds.

TV ANCHOR

-- as the infection continues to spread across the country, aided in part by the panic that has sent millions of people fleeing the major cities into the suburbs and the countryside, often taking the infection with them.

Katrina-like footage of thousands of people loaded up with whatever they can carry, clogging shelters or on the road.

TV ANCHOR

Refugees from the areas most heavily hit by the infection continue to overwhelm emergency shelters and pour into neighboring states, many of which have set up patrols to keep these refugees out by any means necessary.

(CONTINUED)

We SEE people trying to get across a bridge, only to be met by weapons fire from waiting police and national guard forces.

TV ANCHOR

Homeland Security officials are pleading with the public to stay off the roads and let the military do its job, but since the fall of Philadelphia that plea carries little weight, especially in light of the decision made earlier today to evacuate the White House.

Now: helicopters on the White House lawn take off as similar choppers rise from the Capitol Building.

TV ANCHOR

The President, Vice President, his cabinet and their families were taken to an undisclosed location along with members of Congress and other officials needed to deal with the current crisis, sometimes with only moments to spare.

A horde of zombies penetrate the barricades as the last chopper takes off. It feels very much like the fall of Saigon.

TV ANCHOR

After the evacuation, military forces pulled back to areas that could be more easily secured...abandoning Washington to the infected.

(beat)

We repeat...Washington has fallen.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The RV lumbers down a narrow mountain road never meant for vehicles of this size, barely making it to --

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY

-- where several campers are already parked. As the RV comes to a stop, several MEN approach, led by STAN ROSEN, 50s. They're armed but not threatening. Gerry appears in the door.

GERRY

Hi...is there a problem?

STAN

I'm Stan Rosen, we're the welcome committee. Just want to make sure you're not carrying anybody infected with you. Is that okay?

GERRY

I suppose.

(CONTINUED)

Stan nods to one of the men who enters the RV.

STAN

Don't worry, we're not after your stuff. Since we got here first we made the rules: everybody lives off what they bring with them or catch. No stealing or begging for food or supplies from anybody else. Trade, barter, those are fine, but nobody brings a stranger into camp. Other than that, you're welcome.

The man emerges.

MAN

They're good.

The "welcome committee" visibly relaxes. Stan extends a hand.

STAN

Make yourself at home. I'll check back after you've settled in.

They head away. Gerry puts on his best face for Karin.

GERRY

It's perfect. No cities or towns for thirty miles. Nobody infected. We'll be safe here.

But she looks dubious as Rachel watches the men head away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND -- AFTERNOON

There's a dusting of snow on the ground. More campers, RVs, mobile homes have arrived, along with a scattering of cars. Not a crowd, but enough to notice.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

I repeat, this will be our last broadcast.

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Karin and Gerry are watching a static-riddled news broadcast. The anchor is exhausted, the camera work ragged.

TV ANCHOR

Electricity is out across most of the country, so we're using the last of our emergency backup power for this final transmission.

(CONTINUED)

Karin holds Gerry a little closer as the anchor continues... they are losing their last lifeline to the outside world.

TV ANCHOR

The President, speaking from an emergency command center at Mount Weather in Virginia, today announced evacuation orders for the entire country.

The PRESIDENT appears on-camera.

PRESIDENT

First, we ask that all citizens located in the suburbs or countryside evacuate immediately to the nearest large city. Defense procedures have been set up to protect these islands of security, which have been designated red zones. If you remain outside of a red zone, we can't protect you.

(beat)

Second, we will evacuate some of the population of each state to areas that are more difficult for the infecteds to reach: inside secluded valleys, on islands, or in other isolated regions. Because they will not require a heavy military presence, putting some of our citizens -- chosen by lottery -- into these green zones will insure that our country continues and allow us to concentrate our efforts on defending the red zones, which remain our primary concern.

The picture returns to the anchor as a crawl of various local addresses appears on-screen

TV ANCHOR

For those without transportation to the nearest red zones, army trucks will come by the pickup centers listed below for the next several days. We'll have more information later regarding the lottery for relocation to the green zones.

KARIN

Should we take a chance on it?

GERRY

No...the roads are full of those things, we'd never make it to the nearest pickup point.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

Besides, they're going to have to bring in food for the cities, that means riots, maybe starvation...we're better off here.

They turn their attention back to the TV for:

TV ANCHOR

When France, England and Australia announced similar emergency evacuation orders, some officials described it as the Radeker plan, after the controversial South African figure Paul Radeker. Later, however, sources with Homeland Security labeled this a misunderstanding, saying that the plan was developed through consultation with FEMA and local emergency agencies.

Gerry looks out the window to see Stan leading his fourteen-year-old son THOMAS back into camp, clutching a bleeding hand.

GERRY

Be right back.

He heads out to --

EXT. CAMPGROUND - CONTINUOUS

-- as Stan sets Thomas down by the door to their camper.

GERRY

What happened?

STAN

Little accident setting a rabbit trap.
(to thomas)
Sit here, I'll try to find something to wrap that up with.

GERRY

I may have something. Just a sec.

Gerry ducks back inside as Stan examines the cut.

THOMAS

Shouldn't we do this inside? It's cold out here.

STAN

Cold'll slow the bleeding. Besides, we don't want blood in the camper. Sooner or later we're gonna leave here and I don't want any of those things smelling blood as we go by.

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS

They'll all be gone by then.

STAN

I wouldn't count on it.

Gerry approaches with a pressure bandage, hands it to Stan.

GERRY

Here you go, this should help.

STAN

Thanks.

(as he works)

We got everything we needed when we headed out except medical supplies. Every drug store and pharmacy we came across was empty. Between the looters and the Zs, wasn't much left. So I appreciate this.

GERRY

Not a problem.

STAN

I can give you something in trade.

GERRY

Maybe later.

(to thomas)

So where'd you learn to make a rabbit trap?

THOMAS

There's a guy over in the next town, Garcia Mendez, came over from Puerto Rico. Used to be a gardener. Now he teaches all the guys he used to work for -- all these CEOs and big deal millionaires -- how to catch food, cure meat, that sort of thing. It's a long walk, but I can introduce you.

GERRY

That'd be great, thanks.

They turn as a CAR with a camper shell arrives in the campground. It glides toward an open spot a few hundred yards away. Stan shakes his head as the car settles in.

STAN

Another one for the welcome committee. You want to handle this one while I take care of Tom?

GERRY

Sure thing.

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Don't know what good that shell's gonna do 'em out here when the real snows come. I'd bet good money they don't have more than a few days worth of supplies in there. They'll start coming around for food real soon.

(beat, softer)

You sure you got enough ammo for the long haul, Gerry?

GERRY

I'm good.

STAN

Those things out there are bad enough. Having to watch out for our own kind, that's hard. Can't blame 'em, I guess. The schools teach you everything except how to survive. Kids come out knowing all about every kind of software, but how to look for water? Rotate crops? What part of a tree you can eat and what'll kill you?

(rubs it in)

How to build a rabbit trap?

THOMAS

Dad, can we just --

Suddenly we HEAR the SOUND of iron pipes hitting metal...an alarm from somewhere in the camp. Gerry grabs a shotgun from the RV as Stan pulls a revolver out of his coat.

STAN

It came from back that way!

They start running, other refugees folding in alongside as they run. But they don't get very far when they see --

-- a lone zombie that has stumbled through the line of trees, its skin blackened from frostbite, covered in snow. It's nearly frozen solid, icicles hanging from its mouth and eyes.

Two other campers are already there, hitting it with baseball bats as it snarls ineffectually. They're enjoying this.

FIRST CAMPER

Yeah! Come on! Get some!

SECOND CAMPER

Not fast enough! Come on! Hey, asshole! Remember Philly!

They hit it. The thing swings back weakly. Gerry and Stan look on with disgust.

(CONTINUED)

Then one of the campers gets too close and trips on the icy ground. The zombie springs toward the camper only to be SHOT cleanly in the head by Stan. It falls to the ground, inert.

STAN

What the hell do you think this is,
some kind of fucking game?

FIRST CAMPER

We were just --

STAN

Put it in the hole with the others.
Go on. We don't want the smell
bringing in more of those things.

The first camper looks as though he'd like to argue the point, but swallows it back. Yanks up his friend as if this was all his fault, and they start toward the inert zombie.

Gerry looks to the RV, where Rachel is visible in the window. She's seen all of this. He tries to wave reassuringly. She doesn't even register him.

As he starts with Stan, we notice other refugees cutting down trees for the bonfires that burn nearby. Stan nods at them.

STAN

See that? They should be pruning the
branches, not cutting down trees.
Won't have any left pretty soon.
Just like I was saying. Don't know
the first thing about long term
planning. You live your whole life
never being more than two miles away
from a McDonald's, who needs to worry
about how to live when the supplies
run out?

With that, he goes to attend to his son, calling back:

STAN

Just got to hold on, Gerry, do what
we got to do...for as long as it takes.

Gerry watches him go, then glances to the car that brought in the new arrivals. They're still running the engine, warming their hands on the heat from the vents. They wave to Gerry. He nods distantly, then starts toward them as we go to a

HELICOPTER SHOT

Pulling UP until we're high above the campground, moving faster and higher until we can see abandoned freeways littered with broken cars, covered by snow. A nation on ice.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK SCREEN

Holding for just a moment UNDER the words:

TWO YEARS LATER

Before coming in hard on --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE GERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Once, this was a sleepy bedroom community. Now the buildings have been burned out or boarded up. Debris and signs of looting are everywhere. Feral dogs and cats move freely down the street as slowly --

-- we notice a few people here and there, some stepping down off military buses, on foot or on bicycles. They look around with shell-shocked, haunted eyes, barely recognizing this place. All of them carry holstered handguns, rifles or shotguns with the kind of familiarity that says they've been carrying these weapons for a long time. It's not a statement, it's a life-style.

Among them we FIND Gerry, Karin, Constance and Rachel. They look thinner, pale, exhausted down to their souls. They've come through hell itself to the other side, and they're still not sure the nightmare is entirely over. Gerry nods to an equally shell-shocked neighbor, but the man doesn't respond, doesn't acknowledge anything but what's in front of him.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

PULL BACK as Gerry, Karin and the rest ENTER the apartment, and keep pulling back to find torn curtains and furniture, garbage everywhere. Graffiti has been spray-painted on the walls, most prominent among them the words *Remember Philly!*

Like a man in a trance, Gerry walks to the window, for the first time getting a real bird's eyes view of --

-- the city below, which looks vastly different than when we first looked out of this twelfth-story window: offices and apartment buildings have been burned down or blown apart by artillery shells. Stores have been looted. Below, people sift through the rubble of their homes, no working cars for as far as the eye can see...and in the distance, pyres of bodies being burned.

What was once a fashionable neighborhood now looks like something out of Iraq, or the aftermath of Katrina.

We end on Gerry's haunted eyes as he takes all this in.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gerry, Karin and the kids are all asleep together on the living room floor, a single candle guttering in the darkness...until six-year-old Constance opens her eyes and looks to --

-- the door, where shadows from the candle dance and flicker. CUT back and forth between the door...her face...the gap beneath the door...back to Constance until finally --

-- she carefully extricates herself from Karin's arms and goes to a nearby duffel bag. She pulls out a door jamb and shoves it in beneath the door, wedging it closed. Only then does she go back to the others to try and sleep.

EXT. WATER ALLOCATION CENTER - DAY

Gerry and several hundred others are carrying large plastic bottles, lined up to get water from an army supply truck. As the workers go about their efforts, Gerry looks off to --

-- a row of brownstone apartments, which have been vandalized and spray-painted with graffiti, including *Remember Philly*.

Some of the buildings also have official looking markings spray-painted on their doors. The markings on one door reads 2 DNZ 1 ZD; another reads 0 DNZ 4 ZD, 2 ? Some doors don't have any markings. Gerry nudges the man next to him in line.

GERRY

What're those?

The man glances in the direction Gerry's pointing.

MAN IN LINE

The war's over, but like every war, there are always some who get caught behind the lines. The Z's are no different...some of 'em got locked in cellars or attics by relatives. Others don't have legs to walk out on but the rest of 'em works just fine.

He points to the markings.

MAN IN LINE

The marks are left behind by the sweep and clear teams. 1 DNZ means one dead non-zombie; 1 ZD means one zombie destroyed. This way the burn teams know what they're walking into.

GERRY

And the doors without markings...?

(CONTINUED)

MAN IN LINE

Means they've been padlocked but the teams haven't made their final checks. Usually they're empty, but like everything in life, you never really know for sure what's on the other side of the door until you knock, eh?

GERRY

So what're the question marks for?

MAN IN LINE

Some folks couldn't handle the stress of the war and went crazy, started acting like zombies, kind of like that Stockholm Syndrome, but way out of control. Some of 'em are so far gone you can't tell who's what until you get close. The S&C teams take 'em out just to be safe. Suits me fine. When in doubt, shoot 'em in the head and run like hell.

Gerry nods, but something in his eyes is very worried by this as he moves up to accept his ration of water.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gerry is painting over the graffiti. He comes to the *Remember Philly!* spray-painted on the wall. He hesitates, as though it would be disrespectful to cover it up...then does so.

EXT. WATER ALLOCATION LOT - DAY

Another day, another line. Gerry is standing in line with everybody else when he sees a sweep and clear team come roaring up to an apartment buildings with unmarked doors. They pile out, take up position at the door, and RUSH inside. For a moment, silence.

Then: the sound of GUNFIRE comes from inside. When they emerge, they spray-paint 2 ZD on the door, then move off.

The line hardly notices.

EXT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gerry is dumping debris into the piles that line the street when he sees a car coming in his direction. Aside from the supply trucks, this is the first working car we've seen since his return. It slows and stops at the curb in front of him.

The door opens and ROBERT MCENROE emerges: British, patrician, old school, practical, 50s. He looks to Gerry. Smiles.

MCENROE

Hello, Gerry.

(CONTINUED)

Gerry looks at him from behind eyes that have lost the world that was. It takes a moment to focus on him, then:

GERRY
...McEnroe...?

He reaches to McEnroe, as if to confirm that he's real.

GERRY
Sonofabitch! You made it through!

And the two embrace.

MCENROE
Yes.

GERRY
How?

MCENROE
Last chopper out to the Montana green zone. They needed somebody from the UN to help coordinate the war efforts overseas, and everyone else --
(beat)
-- well, everyone else was either dead or missing in action.

It's an uncomfortable subject. McEnroe looks to the debris being put out on the street.

MCENROE
I see you're heavily into cleanup.

GERRY
It's going to be a long process, that's for sure.

MCENROE
Which brings me to the reason I'm here, other than to see you alive and well of course. When the army said it was going to start moving civilians back into cleared areas, I had the sweep and clear teams look for your name on the refugee lists. So when I heard you were back --
(beat)
I have a job for you, Gerry, if you want it.

Gerry reacts to "a job" as if the words came from another time and place.

GERRY
A what?

(CONTINUED)

MCENROE

Well, you're doing such a good job on cleanup here, I thought you might like to try it on a somewhat wider scale.

(a smile)

It's a long story and I don't want to keep you. I'll send a car tomorrow at nine to get you. That all right?

GERRY

I...sure, I mean, yeah, I guess....

MCENROE

Then I'll see you in the morning.

He gets back into the car and drives off. Gerry watches it go with something close to astonishment before heading inside.

EXT. UNITED NATIONS BUILDING - MORNING

The area around the UN building is nearly deserted as a car pulls up and deposits Gerry out front. Bits of paper swirl in the empty street as he looks around and enters.

INT. UNITED NATIONS BUILDING - HALLWAY -- DAY

Gerry walks with McEnroe past workers cleaning up debris and replacing broken windows.

MCENROE

Bit of a mess, eh? The good news is we should have the electricity back on in a few days. Not for long, just a couple of hours a day to start, but it'll be a big help. I'm pretty sure your place is in the coverage grid.

GERRY

Can I tell Karin? She'll be relieved.

MCENROE

Of course. So how did you do it?

GERRY

Do what?

MCENROE

Survive. Some of us were lucky enough to be chosen for the green zones, or quick enough to make it to the red zones, but others were caught outside and...well, they had a much harder time of it. So what did you do to --

GERRY

We did what was necessary.

(CONTINUED)

He says it hard, cutting off both the discussion and the emotion behind it. McEnroe lets it go.

They pass a suite of debris-filled offices identified by a sign as UNITED NATIONS INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES. Gerry looks at the names on the door, seeing his own there. His fingers graze some of the other names.

GERRY

Theresa Camafelo...did she --

MCENROE

No. She didn't make it.

GERRY

Rudy Rose? Big John...?

MCENROE

Everyone in your division is either dead, missing or out of it. You're the only one left that I can count on. That's why I wanted to see you.

McEnroe moves on, his mood somber. Gerry takes one last look at the suite, then follows into --

INT. MCENROE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

-- where McEnroe and Gerry sit across from each other.

MCENROE

Millions of people died in the war, Gerry. Once the final figures are in, the number may be in the tens of millions. People want answers. They want to know why those in charge didn't connect the dots, why it happened, what went wrong and who's to blame. Since the UN is in the best position to make that determination, we've been given the job of investigating the question and filing a report. Now I'm giving that job to you...if you want it.

GERRY

A report on the war? I wouldn't know where to start. It's too big....

MCENROE

Approach it like a systems analysis. Why and how did the emergency infrastructures here and abroad fail to respond to the threat posed by the infection?

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

And everyone's going along with this?
The US, China, all the other countries,
they're okay with me asking questions
about why they dropped the ball?

MCENROE

I won't lie to you. Everyone wants
you to find who's responsible as long
as it's not them. They'll cooperate,
but only to a point. So if you take
the job, you're going to spend a lot
of time looking over your shoulder.

McEnroe goes to the window, looking at the ruins of New York.

MCENROE

You'll start domestically -- we've
set up meetings for you in San Diego,
Chicago, a few other places -- then
move on from there. We've secured
permission for you to travel to China,
Israel, Germany, anyplace you like.
It's the first time anyone's been
authorized for that kind of travel
since the restrictions were put in
place to contain the infection. You'll
see the world...what's left of it.

GERRY

And I can interview anyone I want?

MCENROE

Within reason. To expedite things,
each country has given us a list of
people they think we should talk to.

GERRY

Meaning there's probably an even bigger
list of people I shouldn't talk to.

MCENROE

And none of them will be very happy
to see you. It's a thankless job.
But it's yours if you want it.

GERRY

It's just...a job this big could take
months. Karin and I, and the kids,
we've just started putting our lives
together again. How can I justify
taking that kind of time away from
them now?

MCENROE

Because now you can? Because you're
the best person for the job?

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

The best surviving person.

MCENROE

Not true. I know you. You're like a dog with a bone: once you start you don't stop until you get to the end. I need that determination. I need you.

He approaches Gerry, his tone quiet, reflective.

MCENROE

The war's over, Gerry. We've survived. Now it's time for someone to tell the world why so many of us had to die in it. To make sense of it all. If you can think of anything more important than that...let me know.

McEnroe lets the question hang between them.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The apartment is lit by candles, kerosene lamps, and crank-powered lanterns marked with Red Cross logos. In the aftermath of dinner, Karin is cleaning up alone and in silence...that kind of awkward, painful post-argument silence punctuated by dishes clattering too loudly in the sink. A moment later, Gerry comes into the kitchen. Looks to Karin. She doesn't look back. He finally breaks the silence.

GERRY

I tucked Rachel in. Constance was asleep before her head hit the pillow.
(no response)

McEnroe says the power should be back on in this part of town any time now.

Dishes clatter. She doesn't acknowledge the information.

GERRY

I've decided to take the job.

The clattering stops. The argument starts.

KARIN

When did that happen? Half an hour ago you said you were just thinking about it.

GERRY

Like I said...I was tucking in Rachel, and looking at her like that, I --

(CONTINUED)

KARIN

What happened to Rachel is probably the best reason in the world not to do this thing.

GERRY

Karin --

KARIN

Nobody's going to want to read it, Gerry. Nobody wants to re-live the last two years. Not me. Not Rachel. Lord knows not Rachel.

GERRY

What happened, happened, Karin. We can't just pretend it didn't.

And there's steel in her voice.

KARIN

I can. I can do that just fine.

He studies her eyes, knowing what she's talking about. Goes to hold her. She backs away. He doesn't push it.

GERRY

I could give you all the logical arguments, about how we could use the money, about how this will give us some structure for the first time in a long while, but the truth is --
(beat)

I need to understand why we went through all this, why it happened. I need for the world to make sense again.

KARIN

There's no sense to make, Gerry! It just happened, like an earthquake or a tsunami. I want to move on with my life, not spend it looking back. Who did this, who did that, who cares?

GERRY

I do. A lot of people do. And you should.

KARIN

No --

He takes her arm, pulls her around to face him.

GERRY

Go into Rachel's room. Look at her. Look at her.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

If something could have been done to prevent what happened, wouldn't you want to know?

KARIN

Why? So I can torture myself even more than I already do? What's the point?

She studies his eyes, and sees that his decision remains.

KARIN

Didn't even make a dent, did I?

She turns away as he reaches for her.

KARIN

So how long is this going to take?

GERRY

Six months. Maybe more.

She nods: businesslike, formal. Cold.

KARIN

I'll need some way to get hold of you if there's an emergency, or a problem with Rachel.

GERRY

I'll have Mac get me a sat-phone. Even with all the land-lines and cell repeaters down, those will still work. I can --

KARIN

Fine. Then go.

And she stalks out of the room, leaving him alone with his decision. He goes to the window, looking out at a night filled with candles glowing in a hundred windows.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - MORNING

Devastated and burned out.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CHICAGO -- MORNING

As Gerry wakes up. A window running the length of the room reveals morning light, a balcony and the cityscape beyond. He slowly sits up, rubs tiredly at his face and walks OS.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Gerry is sitting on the outdoor patio of the hotel room, the sat phone in hand. We HEAR it ringing at the other end, then:

OPERATOR
Central Intelligence Agency.

GERRY
Yes, hello, I'm trying to locate a friend who used to work at the DC office, Frank Dexter. I wanted to see if he's still alive or --

OPERATOR
I'm afraid we don't give out that information.

GERRY
I understand, but if he is alive, I'd appreciate it if you could pass on my number: 001-474-288-2000.

OPERATOR
I'll see what I can do.

She hangs up. He sets down the phone and moves off UNDER:

GERRY (V.O.)
So, tell me about flight 575.

INT. STARK ROOM -- DAY

CHARLENE ROSE, 40s, is seated at a table with a glass of water in front of her. She shifts uncomfortably.

CHARLENE
What do you want me to say? I mean, hasn't this been talked to death?

GERRY
Just tell me what happened, in your own words. I --

CHARLENE
I'm just saying, is this really necessary? It's not like it'll make a difference or --

GERRY
I'm trying to find how the infection spread from Asia to Europe, the United States and beyond. Depending on the severity of the wound, it can take as little as a few minutes to a few hours for someone who's been infected to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

turn. That's shorter than most intercontinental flights. But cases were popping up in rapid succession all around the world. Flight 575 is one of the few recorded cases where --

CHARLENE

I know, it's just...after a while you don't want to look back anymore, you know?

Gerry nods. She takes a moment. Glances down at her hands.

CHARLENE

We were about three hours out of Hamburg, inbound to Los Angeles. Halfway across the Atlantic.

INT. PASSENGER AIRLINE - FLASHBACK -- NIGHT

A two-years-younger Charlene is an airline attendant. She moves down the aisle, checking on the passengers.

CHARLENE

Would you like another glass of merlot?

PASSENGER

Yes, thanks.

She moves off to get it as another ATTENDANT approaches.

ATTENDANT

Charlene, you got a second?

CHARLENE

Sure.

The attendant pulls her aside into the galley.

ATTENDANT

We may have to land for a medical.

CHARLENE

You're kidding.

ATTENDANT

I know, I know. He was looking pretty pale when he got on board. I didn't think too much of it, but now he's wheezing and gray and --

CHARLENE

Heart?

(CONTINUED)

ATTENDANT

I don't know, maybe. Can you keep an eye on him while I talk to the pilot, have him radio ahead to JFK and get us a landing clearance?

CHARLENE

Sure thing. Which seat?

ATTENDANT

14E.

The attendant heads away as Charlene moves down the aisle.

CHARLENE (V.O.)

You have to understand that word was just getting out about the infections. We hadn't been briefed on what to do, what to look for, who to let on and who to keep off. The system hadn't caught up.

She gets to row 14, where a man in a dark suit is sitting slouched his seat, head down. The passenger beside him on the aisle holds a handkerchief to his nose, keeping out a foul smell. She leans over the other passenger toward 14E.

CHARLENE

Sir? Are you all right? Can I get you anything?

(beat)

Sir...?

She reaches toward the seat as suddenly the man in 14E LUNGES at her with a strangled cry, his mouth an angry slash.

She JUMPS back as he twists in his seat, tangled in the seat belt. He turns on the passenger beside him and TEARS at his throat, blood gushing everywhere, killing him instantly.

Passengers try to flee as it tears through, but there's nowhere to go...and we PAN BACK as the first passenger killed by the zombie suddenly opens his eyes and joins the attack.

EXT. PASSENGER AIRLINE -- NIGHT

A window is spattered with blood from inside as the plane ANGLES AWAY from us UNDER:

GERRY (V.O.)

So how did you survive?

INT. STARK ROOM - DAY

Back with the two of them.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLENE

I locked myself in the aft bathroom.

GERRY

And the pilots?

CHARLENE

They followed emergency procedures, meaning they were not to open the cockpit door no matter until the plane was on the ground and in the control of local authorities.

GERRY

How did they know passengers were being attacked?

CHARLENE

The screaming....

GERRY

No one got on the intercom to tell them what was happening, or who was doing the attacking?

CHARLENE

There wasn't time.

GERRY

So other than the fact that passengers were being attacked, the pilots had no idea what was happening. As far as they knew, it could have been terrorists, or hijackers or --

CHARLENE

Yes.

GERRY

But you knew.

CHARLENE

Yes.

GERRY

And you didn't make any attempt to warn the pilots about the cargo they were now carrying?

CHARLENE

The intercom was too far away, and with those things in the way...I never would've gotten close to it.

GERRY

So then what happened?

EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - NIGHT

The plane has landed, away from the terminal.

CHARLENE (V.O.)

We landed.
(beat)
All of us.

SWAT teams surge up an airport gangway toward the door. They force open the door and zombies POUR out, overwhelming the police. They swarm down the gangway and across the tarmac, heading for the terminal....and thousands of waiting victims.

INT. STARK ROOM

Gerry checks his notes, the silence in the room.

GERRY

The pilot didn't survive the war, but in his testimony before the FAA he said that if he'd known the passengers had become infected, he would have followed recent issued emergency instructions and ditched the plane at sea rather than unleash five hundred cases of infection inside the US.

CHARLENE

The pilots were told about that policy, but that information was never conveyed to me or the rest of the flight staff.

GERRY

So the knowledge that the plane would have to be destroyed with everyone on board had no bearing on your failure to tell the pilots what was happening.

INT. AIRPLANE

As passengers and crew battle the infected, we find Charlene standing between the bathroom and the intercom, which is within easy reach. There's time to grab it and warn the pilots, but she makes a conscious decision not to do so. She runs into the bathroom and latches the door.

INT. STARK ROOM

As Charlene shakes her head.

CHARLENE

No. Of course not.

She looks off self-righteously, but we know the truth: she let the flight continue to save her own life. Then:

(CONTINUED)

BORDER GUARD (V.O.)

I was working day shift on the San Diego Border Patrol, checking vehicle traffic northbound out of Tijuana.

INT. ANOTHER INTERVIEW ROOM -- DAY

A retired BORDER PATROL GUARD, his face hard, sits with his arms folded across his chest, giving a report he doesn't want to give.

BORDER GUARD

As you know, it can sometimes take as long as three days for someone who's been infected to flip. But for the coyotes bringing folks up from Mexico, the trip can take six or seven days... changing cars, hiding out in the day to avoid the federales....

(beat)

Halfway here, they'd flip. Now, the coyotes didn't want a bunch of Z's running around compromising their routes, and little Jose and Emilia didn't want to leave their daddy by the side of the road, so they'd tie 'em up and shove 'em in the trunk.

EXT. SAN DIEGO BORDER POST -- DAY

Cars are lined up in the lanes marked NOW ENTERING UNITED STATES as border guards and soldiers check IDs and conduct random searches. One of them is our Border Guard, two years younger. He approaches a car filled with a family: a man, his wife or sister, and several younger children. He shines a flashlight in at them, then moves to the back of the car.

BORDER GUARD (V.O.)

The way we used to find 'em was that half the time, they'd cut air holes in the trunk. For Z's. Can you imagine? Fuckin' air holes.

He looks at the trunk of the dusty car. Doesn't see anything amiss. Then he looks a little closer. Brushes away the dust to REVEAL four or five tiny holes. He leans down, LISTENS... and hears the sound of scratching.

He draws his gun, calling to the other officers.

BORDER GUARD

WE'VE GOT ONE! OVER HERE!

More officers come on the run as the driver gets out of the car, trying to talk his way out of this.

(CONTINUED)

DRIVER
(pleading in Spanish)

BORDER GUARD
Out of the way! Out of the fucking
way!

He shoves him aside as another officer comes with a crowbar.

BORDER GUARD
Go, go, go!

The officer shoves the crowbar into the trunk, YANKS it open --
-- and a zombie that was once the driver's brother LEAPS from
the trunk, wrists bound.

BORDER GUARD
TAKE HIM DOWN!

They FIRE, hitting the zombie until it finally goes down.
For a moment, all is silent. Then: the sound of scratching
returns. The border guard looks to the trunk, where --
-- a zombie that was once a four year old girl snarls, and
LEAPS, its small form WIPING FRAME with a SCREAM as we

HARD CUT BACK TO:

INT. ANOTHER INTERVIEW ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

-- and the guard looks away, pushing down the memory.

GERRY
So you were good at what your job?

BORDER GUARD
Goddamned right I was.

GERRY
Then why were you pushed into taking
early retirement?

The guard chews the inside of his mouth, still angry.

BORDER GUARD
I caught what I thought was a Z trying
to get through the fence. I yelled
for him to stop, but he didn't answer,
just growled then lunged at me...so I
shot him. Turns out he wasn't a Z.
He was drunk. Okay, my bad, I'll
take the rap for it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BORDER GUARD (CONT'D)

At the inquest, I pointed out that the culture of illegal immigration, where people try to slip past the authorities regardless of their physical condition, was making the infection harder to control.

EXT. SAN DIEGO BORDER POST - DAY

There's a rally at the border post, with protesters carrying Mexican flags and banners.

BORDER GUARD (V.O.)

Next thing I know, everybody's twisting that to mean I said that Mexicans were responsible for the infection. They said illegals were being unfairly targeted, that I was a racist, a bigot. My situation wasn't helped by all these right-wing radio nuts who jumped in and said I was right when I never said any of that in the first place.

INT. ANOTHER INTERVIEW ROOM

Back with Gerry and the Border Guard.

BORDER GUARD

So when the government offered me full benefits if I'd retire early, so they could tell the media I'd been "disciplined," I said hell yeah. Who wouldn't? Who needs this shit? It meant I could move back here to Chicago, be close to my kids.
(beat)

You want to hear the funny part?

EXT. ROAD - SOUTH OF SAN DIEGO - NIGHT

The Border Guard is driving alone at night down a small back country road when a zombie staggers out into the headlights.

BORDER GUARD (V.O.)

Six weeks after I quit, I was driving south of San Diego, out by Chula Vista on Otay Mesa Road, when I spotted a Z come out of the brush. He couldn't see me past the headlights, and I had my gun in the car so I wasn't worried, I could take him out no problem. Then I realized...

We see that the zombie is wearing the remains of a well-tailored suit. He staggers across the road to the other side.

(CONTINUED)

BORDER GUARD (V.O.)
He wasn't heading north. He was headed south, into Mexico. And you know what I did? Nothing. I let him keep right on going. Fuck 'em, you know?

INT. ANOTHER INTERVIEW ROOM

Finishing the interview with:

GERRY
If you had it to do over, would you still do the same thing? Let it go?

BORDER GUARD
I dunno. Yeah, probably. Why the hell not?
(beat)
So, you got any other questions?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gerry is asleep when the sat-phone rings. He answers it.

GERRY
Yeah...?

DEXTER (on phone)
Why did the zombie cross the road?

Gerry smiles, recognizing the voice.

GERRY
I don't know, Dex...why did the zombie cross the road?

DEXTER (on phone)
Nailed to a chicken. How're you doing, Ger?

GERRY
I'm alive. Everything else is negotiable.

DEXTER (on phone)
Yeah, I hear that. So what's up, pal? I'm guessing there's a reason you knocked on the wall besides seeing if I've still got a pulse, which by the way, I do, thank you very much.

GERRY
I assume you know about the report I'm doing for the UN?

(CONTINUED)

DEXTER (on phone)

No, the letters CIA stand for Can't Investigate Anything. Of course I know. Half the people at the agency are worried about what it's gonna say. Why?

GERRY

The list of people I've been authorized to talk to, they're all low-level guys who don't have any big-picture information, it's all --

DEXTER (on phone)

It's bullshit.

GERRY

Yeah.

DEXTER (on phone)

Of course it's bullshit, Ger. You think they're gonna give you anything you can actually use?

GERRY

No. That's why I called. I figure if anybody who can point me in the right direction, it's you.

(beat)

Dex?

DEXTER (on phone)

I'm here.

GERRY

Is this something you can help with?

DEXTER (on phone)

Like I said, there are a lot of people keeping an eye on where this report is going. Half of 'em want it to dead end. The other half want the facts about the war to get out. But they don't want to get nailed for it either. They're not gonna stick their necks out unless they know it's gonna mean something.

GERRY

I understand. Listen, I'm leaving tomorrow for China, and that's a long way to go for nothing, especially since that's where this whole thing started. I have a two-hour layover in DC. Do you think you can get me something by then?

(CONTINUED)

DEXTER (on phone)
I'll see what I can do, no promises.
Stay out of the line of fire, Ger.

Click and disconnect. Gerry goes back to sleep as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. O'HARE AIRPORT -- DAY

Hauling his bags, Gerry walks through the nearly deserted airport, passing unoccupied airline kiosks, heading for --

INT. INSPECTION AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

There are two lines, one for men, one for women. Heavily armed SOLDIERS look on as they are directed into a screened off area where Gerry removes his clothes as more soldiers and a doctor look on. When he is naked, the doctor runs a hand-held ultraviolet scanner over his body. Looking for bites. In a tone that suggests such questions are routine, he asks:

DOCTOR

Have you had any physical contact with strangers in the last thirty-six hours? Any blood transfusions or injuries from bites, scratches or shared needles?

GERRY

No.

The doctor gives him a final once-over, then nods to the soldiers, who step back and relax slightly. One of the soldiers approaches Gerry.

SOLDIER

Transit papers.

Gerry hands over the papers as he starts getting dressed. The soldier glances over the papers, noting the UN seal, then hands them back.

SOLDIER

Gate seven.
(calling off)
Next.

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - DAY

ESTABLISHING shots of a war-ravaged city. Whole blocks have been burned down. Army trucks and tanks still remain in place. We see more cars here than elsewhere, but it's still nothing by comparison to a normal day.

INT. WASHINGTON AIRPORT - DAY

Gerry sits by himself in the nearly empty concourse. He closes his eyes, tired. Give it a BEAT, then:

DEXTER (O.S.)

What do you call ten thousand zombies
in Washington, DC?

Gerry opens his eyes. Dexter is sitting across from him:
African-American, 30s, a gentle face framing hard eyes.

GERRY

I don't know, what do you call ten
thousand zombies in Washington, DC?

DEXTER

Redundant.

(beat, a smile)

I don't have much time, I have to be
back at the office for a meeting in
an hour. I managed to get a few names
for you. It's not much, but it's a
start. I'll try to get some more for
you later. Just do me a favor and
burn this as soon as you can, so this
doesn't come back at me later.

He hands Gerry a sheet of paper containing names and numbers.

GERRY

Thanks. It's good to see you in one
piece, Dex.

DEXTER

Guys like me don't die. It's against
the rules. I take it that for once
you followed my advice and went north?

GERRY

We did.

(changing subjects)

And you? How'd you get by?

Dexter is uncomfortable with the question, shrugs it off.

DEXTER

Got picked for a green zone during
the lottery. Luck of the draw.

GERRY

Speaking of which, when the evacuation
plans were ordered, I heard something
about Paul Radeker being involved --

(CONTINUED)

DEXTER
Urban legend. Never happened.
(checks watch)
I should go.

He stands, and the two men embrace.

DEXTER
Take care out there, Ger. It's still
pretty hairy in a few places.

GERRY
You too.

Dex starts to turn away when --

GERRY
Dex? When you called to tell me to
get out of Philadelphia, it was before
the battle of Franklin Square even
started.

DEXTER
So? I was right, wasn't I?

GERRY
You were, and that's the thing I can't
shake. Everybody else in DC said
that was going to be a turning point,
this was where we'd take control over
the crisis. Instead, it turned into
the start of the big panic. From
what you said on the phone, you knew
it was going to go badly. How --

DEXTER
Do yourself a favor, Ger. Stay away
from Franklin Square. What happened
happened, and if you stick your hand
in there something's going to bite
you...and we both know how that ends
up. So do whatever else you gotta
do, but keep clear of Franklin Square.

He heads off. Halfway to the corner, he turns and calls back --

DEXTER
Hey, Ger...what do you call a hundred
senators whose brains have been eaten
by zombies? Status-fucking-quo.
(beat)
And what do zombies and governments
have in common?

(CONTINUED)

GERRY
(expecting a joke)
I don't know, Dex...what do zombies
and governments have in common?

DEXTER
Self-preservation at any cost.

GERRY
(doesn't get it)
That's not funny.

DEXTER
Wasn't meant to be. Watch your step.

And with that, he's gone.

INT. WASHINGTON AIRPORT -- LATER

Gerry stands before two CHINESE OFFICIALS who inspect his papers without enthusiasm, then lead him down the jetway.

INT. CHINESE MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANE -- EVENING

Lots of cargo, and a few cramped seats, the plane well on its way. Gerry sits by himself holding his bags, the officials off in another row. From time to time, they glance over at him with cold, unfriendly eyes. Nobody talks.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACK ROAD -- DAY

A Chinese military car bounces through the rural back-country. Gerry is in the car with the driver and a **TRANSLATOR**. They drive past several burned-out villages and --

-- burning PYRES that line the road, blackening the sky. Soldiers in sterile masks stand guard as villagers throw bodies covered in sheets onto the pyres, stacking them like cordwood.

TRANSLATOR
This was a heavily infected area. It was neutralized very efficiently by our forces. Clean-up is also being handled effectively and quickly, with everyone protected from corpse smoke.

GERRY
Yes...very efficient.

TRANSLATOR
Burn teams are organized from local villages, with each team required to burn no less than ten point five bodies per pyre.

(CONTINUED)

This strikes Gerry as blackly comic.

GERRY
Ten point five bodies.

TRANSLATOR
Yes.

GERRY
Where do they get the point five?

TRANSLATOR
Body parts. Torsos. Limbs.
(beat)
Also children under three feet.

The humor leaves Gerry's eyes as he looks out at the pyres.
The translator keeps his eyes on the road ahead. Finally:

TRANSLATOR
When we get into the city, there will
be a reception to welcome you.
Everyone has been told to answer any
question you may --

GERRY
I understand there's a field hospital
around here somewhere.

TRANSLATOR
Yes. It coordinates clean-up for the
provinces around Shanghai.

GERRY
I'd like to see it, talk to whoever's
in charge.

TRANSLATOR
It's not on the list for visits. We
will be late for the reception --

GERRY
Mr. Xiao, your government assured me
that I can go anywhere and talk to
anyone I want. Is that no longer
true?

TRANSLATOR
No, of course, you can do as you wish.

He instructs the driver in Chinese as Gerry looks out at the
road...smoke from pyre after pyre billowing into the sky as
more bodies are piled on. He shakes his head.

GERRY
Ten point five.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

(looks out)

It's a hard road.

The translator nods but doesn't meet his gaze or look outside.

TRANSLATOR

Yes. A very hard road.

And the car continues on its way to a --

EXT. MILITARY FIELD HOSPITAL -- AFTERNOON

-- set well off the main roads. Jeeps and cars are parked in front of it, including the one that was carrying Gerry earlier.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Gerry looks up as the Translator enters with DOCTOR SOONG TSAI, thin and straight and very, very careful.

TRANSLATOR

Mr. Lane...Doctor Soong Tsai, director of field inspection services.

Dr. Tsai bows. Gerry returns it.

TRANSLATOR

You may ask whatever questions you wish, and I will translate.

Tsai looks to Gerry with a sense of "the translator will only tell you what he wants to tell you."

GERRY

Does Dr. Tsai speak English? I find that interviews can be conducted more freely if we can speak alone.

TRANSLATOR

No. He does not speak English. You will ask your questions, and I will translate.

Another glance. Tsai can't make the first move without getting in trouble. Finally, Gerry seems to go along with it.

GERRY

Well, then, I suppose we should get started. Please, sit.

Tsai moves toward a chair on the right. Without gesturing or looking up, Gerry says:

GERRY

You'll find the chair on the left is more comfortable.

(CONTINUED)

Tsai hesitates, then sits in the left chair, proving he understood. The translator flushes as Gerry looks to him.

TRANSLATOR

I apologize. I misunderstood your question. Yes, he does have some English. But to avoid any further misunderstandings, I should --

GERRY

No, it's all right. I understand that Dr. Tsai's English is limited, and I will take full responsibility for a less than complete interview. I'll let you know when we're done.

The translator doesn't like this, but there's not much he can do. He bows, turns and heads for the door, pausing to throw a warning glance in Tsai's direction. When the door is closed:

GERRY

I hope that little stunt of mine doesn't get you in trouble.

And in absolutely flawless English:

DR. TSAI

In China, the ability to follow orders instantly, without hesitation is highly prized. I will explain that my mistake was caused by my absolute dedication to always do exactly what I am told. So please, ask your questions.

GERRY

The very first instances of infection took place here in China, even though your government went out of its way to deny that there was anything wrong.
(beat)

You don't have to comment on that.

DR. TSAI

Thank you.

GERRY

Do you have any information on how the plague got started?

DR. TSAI

A patient zero? No. And because the government cauterized the area, I don't think we will ever know. It could have been caused by a virus, a biochemical accident, radiation --
(rueful smile)

Have you ever heard of the Jiang Shi?

(CONTINUED)

Gerry shakes his head, no.

DR. TSAI

It means Walking Corpse. The legend dates back to the Quing Dynasty. When someone dies far from his village, and the family cannot afford to transport him home, they hire a Tao priest who has the power to reanimate the body and teach it to walk back to its village for burial.

(beat)

Perhaps one of them decided to keep walking.

GERRY

Were you on-site for any of the early outbreaks?

DR. TSAI

(nods)

I was working night shift at a hospital ten kilometers north of New Dachang when the call came in.

EXT. NEW DACHANG - FLASHBACK -- NIGHT

An elderly woman leads Tsai toward a low-slung metal shack as other villagers look on, fear and worry on their faces.

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

I got to the village around midnight. As soon as I saw their faces, I knew this was serious.

The woman pushes the door open. Tsai pauses at a stench from inside before following the woman into --

INT. SHACK -- CONTINUOUS

-- where several men and women lay on straw pallets, fevered, pale, moaning softly in pain. Pulling on latex gloves, Tsai bends to examine the woman nearest him. Her skin is mottled and dark in places, as if bruised from the inside-out.

She moans as he turns her arm, revealing a bite mark, red and inflamed. He glances at the next patient, who has an identical bite mark on his shoulder. *Note: All dialogue except for VO dialogue is in Chinese with English subtitles.*

DR. TSAI

Do they all have such bites?

(she nods)

How did it happen?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

While they were fighting with him,
trying to subdue him.

DR. TSAI

Subdue who?

EXT. ANOTHER SHACK -- MOMENTS LATER

A villager stands guard outside the padlocked shack. As the woman and Tsai approach, she nods to him and he unlocks the door. After glancing inside to make sure it's okay, he opens the door the rest of the way. Tsai precedes the woman into --

INT. ANOTHER SHACK -- CONTINUOUS

-- and the stench is even worse here. A single bare bulb hangs from the ceiling, swinging slightly as we reveal --

-- what was once a young man, now shackled to a post, bound and gagged, his complexion gray, eyes rolling and unfocused. But when it sees Tsai, it locks on with frightening intensity.

Tsai moves slowly toward the young man, who is pulling at his shackles, focused on Tsai and nothing else. Still wearing his gloves, Tsai begins an examination. The young man's head rolls and lolls, his mouth snapping and closing on the gag. Tsai reaches for the young man's wrist to take his pulse.

DR. TSAI

No pulse...he has no pulse.
Impossible.

He digs in his bag for a stethoscope. Puts it to the man's chest. No heartbeat. He reaches for the bag again.

DR. TSAI

What happened to him?

WOMAN

Three days ago he was swimming in the lake where some other men had disappeared. He said that something under the water bit him.

He injects a needle to draw blood. Pulls back on the syringe. After a long moment, a thick, dark brown fluid enters the syringe, like blood that has nearly coagulated. Tsai is still trying to come to grips with this when --

-- the young man lunges at him, pulling the gag free. Tsai scuttles back across the floor as the infected man yanks at the chain that restrains him.

Suddenly there's the SNAP of a shoulder separating and the manacled arm is RIPPED FROM ITS SOCKET. No blood drips from the wound, only a brown, thick sludge.

(CONTINUED)

As it LUNGES for Tsai again, the woman cries out hysterically and yanks Tsai out the door to --

EXT. ANOTHER SHACK -- CONTINUOUS

-- where the guard SLAPS the padlock on again. From inside we hear the thing scratching and clawing, trying to get out. As Tsai tries to process what he has just seen, we HEAR:

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

I didn't know what I was dealing with, except that it was virulent and contagious and beyond anything I'd been trained to handle.

EXT. NEW DACHANG -- MOMENTS LATER

Tsai is on a cell phone, pacing.

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

So I called the Ministry of Health to report my findings. The voice at the other end was hard, official, routine in a way that made me think that I was not the first to make such a call.

VOICE ON PHONE

Those who are already infected should be restrained. If any have passed into coma, vacate the room and secure the exit.

DR. TSAI

It's already been done. Look, we're going to need a full medical team here. We have to quarantine the area, post warnings --

VOICE ON PHONE

Are you armed?

This stops Tsai cold. He takes a BEAT, then:

DR. TSAI

Excuse me?

VOICE ON PHONE

Are you armed?

DR. TSAI

No...no, why should I be?

VOICE ON PHONE

Stay where you are. Support will arrive within two hours.

Click and disconnect. He hesitates, then dials another number.

(CONTINUED)

DR. TSAI (V.O.)
I knew then that something was wrong.
More wrong than I had suspected. So
I called an old friend at home, Dr.
Gu Wen Kuei, of the Institute of
Infectious Diseases at Chongqing
University. He was well connected
inside the government. If anyone
knew what was going on, he would.

INT. SHACK -- MOMENTS LATER

As the woman looks on, Tsai passes the cell phone over each
of the wounded villagers, sending back photos.

DR. TSAI (V.O.)
When I told him what I had seen, he
asked me to show him those who had
been infected.

Finished, he puts the cell phone back to his ear.

DR. TSAI
So what do you think? Gu?

KUEI (on phone)
Have you had any direct skin-to-skin
contact with the infected?

DR. TSAI
No.

KUEI (on phone)
And you've already called it in?

DR. TSAI
Yes, of course. The medical team
should be arriving at any time, and --

KUEI (on phone)
There are no doctors coming. Do you
understand me, Soong? There are no
doctors coming. If you want to live
get out of there! Get out of there
right now!

Kuei hangs up. Tsai hesitates for a BEAT, then heads out of
the shack toward his jeep, walking fast, then running.

EXT. ROAD -- LATER

Tsai is driving back to the hospital when he passes a convoy
of military troop trucks toward the village. Tsai watches
them as they pass, then continues away UNDER:

(CONTINUED)

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

When I got back to the hospital, I called the Ministry of Health to follow up on my report. They said they received no such report.

(beat)

I tried calling my friend Gu, but he was not at home, and he was not taking calls at the university.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Back with Gerry and Tsai.

DR. TSAI

There is something about the day that dispels fears that seemed so real in the night. So by late afternoon I was ashamed of my decision to flee, and decided to go back to the village to see how things were going.

EXT. NEW DACHANG - DAY

Tsai drives into the village, then climbs out slowly, looking with horror at something we don't yet see.

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

What I saw....

(beat)

There are no words.

He starts walking forward and we COME AROUND to REVEAL that the village has been burned to the ground and everyone killed, whether infected or not.

Charred bodies lay in the dirt, cut down while trying to escape. Bullet holes riddle everything in sight. Tsai falls to his knees, tears coming as the horror sinks in.

GERRY (V.O.)

So what did you do then?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

Back now with Gerry and Dr. Tsai, as the latter looks off into the distance.

DR. TSAI

What did I do?

EXT. NEW DACHANG - DAY

Tsai struggles to his feet, wipes away the tears, and walks back to the car. With one last look back, he drives off.

(CONTINUED)

DR. TSAI (V.O.)
I walked to my car, drove back to the hospital, and went back to work.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gerry looks up, struck by this.

GERRY
You...went back to work.

DR. TSAI
Yes.

GERRY
As if nothing had happened.

DR. TSAI
Yes.

GERRY
And you told no one?

Tsai hesitates, a look of guilt and shame coming over him.

DR. TSAI
Three weeks later, I was in Beijing for a medical conference along with other guests from the United States, England and Switzerland.

EXT. BEIJING - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Tsai is held against a wall by two Chinese intelligence officers, one of whom whispers into his ear.

DR. TSAI
The night before the conference, I was visited by agents of the PLA Second Department, our version of your CIA. They said that I was not to spread rumors the government would find counter-productive. If I told anyone what I had seen, I would lose all I had. If I remained silent, I would be rewarded.

They drop him and walk out of the alley.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Back with the two of them.

DR. TSAI
So I stayed silent.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DR. TSAI (CONT'D)

And every day since then I wonder what might have been changed had I but found my voice, and my courage, for just one moment.

GERRY

So why are you telling me now? Isn't there still an element of risk?

Tsai looks out the window to the pyres in the distance.

DR. TSAI

Of course. Terrible risk. For both of us. But one must ask, in the world that exists now, in all of that...what is "risk?"

GERRY

Dr. Tsai, plagues like Ebola stay contained because the disease is so aggressive that victims die before they can get very far. So how did an infection as aggressive as this one spread from an isolated part of China into Europe?

DR. TSAI

Before the War, China exported many things: Toy trains. Vegetables. Cat food. We were also the number one provider for illegal organ transplants to the rest of the world. Hearts, kidneys, corneas...a request would come for an organ from someone with a rare blood type, and soon there would appear that exact organ from a donor with that exact blood type.

INT. FIELD HOSPITAL - OPERATING THEATER -- DAY

An anonymous **SURGEON** examines the body of a young man as a military officer looks on. The surgeon notices that the fleshy part of the deceased man's hand has been bitten.

DR. TSAI (V.O.)

Those who harvested the organs at the other end were interested only in money, not the bulletins warning about people found with strange bite wounds.

The surgeon reluctantly takes the scalpel and slides it in.

DR. TSAI

If just the saliva in a bite from an infected case can infect someone else, imagine the impact of a whole organ.

EXT. ORGAN BOX - EFX SHOT

CAMERA is attached to the back of the organ box so that it stays constantly in the center of FRAME as it goes from jeep to airport to cargo hold to an airport in Hamburg, Germany --

-- to an ambulance, a hospital, an elevator, a gurney, and into an OPERATING THEATER where a patient waits and a doctor in green surgical sheets opens the box.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Alarms sound as doctors rush down the hall toward a high-priced hospital room. They BURST into the room to find --

-- the same patient tearing out the throat of a nurse. It looks up and LEAPS at them with a SNARL.

INT. FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY

Back with Gerry and Tsai, who looks off into the distance, where the smoke from hundreds of pyres rises into the sky.

DR. TSAI

When I came here to supervise the cleanup -- my reward for keeping silent -- every waking moment I was aware of the smell of burning bodies. At night, I would go into a garden behind my house, to lose myself in the smell of flowers. Now...I hardly notice.

(beat)

And I no longer go into my garden, because I am afraid I will discover that I have lost the sense of smell.

And a final silence fills the room.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BEIJING - ROOFTOP PATIO -- EVENING

A reception is underway at an expensive suite overlooking the city. Music and conversation filters through doors that open out onto the rooftop. Gerry emerges from the party, in search of some air. He stands at the edge of the rooftop, looking out at the brightly-lit city for a moment before:

OFFICIAL (O.S.)

The lights are back on, do you see?

Gerry turns to see a Chinese OFFICIAL approaching, drink in hand. It's not his first. Also not his fourth.

GERRY

Kind of hard to miss it.

(CONTINUED)

OFFICIAL

We do what we have to, you see. We get it done.

(beat)

Are the lights back on in America?

GERRY

In some places. Where I live in Philadelphia they'll have the power on full time in a few more weeks. The hospitals have to come first.

OFFICIAL

Of course. You see? You also do what is necessary.

(beat)

My family and I visited Philadelphia once for a conference on international relations. Our hosts took us to a place for a...what is the term...a Philly cheese steak. You have had a Philly cheese steak?

GERRY

On occasion.

OFFICIAL

Do you like it better with the American cheese or Cheese Whiz?

GERRY

American.

OFFICIAL

My wife liked the American cheese. I liked the Cheese Whiz. I wonder if it is still there.

GERRY

Has there been any word on my request?

OFFICIAL

My superiors say we cannot allow you into the Northern provinces. The radiation level is still too high. It is not safe.

GERRY

I understand. Well, I had to ask.

OFFICIAL

Of course.

(beat)

Do you have family still in America?

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

My wife, Karin. Two daughters, six and ten. Before the war we used to talk about taking a trip to China together. Never thought I'd get here without them.

OFFICIAL

To be away so long...this must be hard on them.

GERRY

(nods)

And you? Is your wife here with you in Beijing?

OFFICIAL

No. She --

(beat)

At the height of the crisis, she went into the Northern provinces to help evacuate her family. That is where the infection was at its worst. By some accounts there were over half a million cases. The night before she was to return, I learned that our government had decided that the only way to stop the infection was to... cauterize the wound.

He throws a sharp look to Gerry, who suspects what's coming.

OFFICIAL

I was told that no one must know, that the fate of the country depended on it. But I knew she would call that night, and if I heard her voice, I would have told her the truth because --
(I loved her)
-- so that night, I did not answer the phone. It rang all night. Then, the next day....

EXT. CHINA - RIVER ROAD -- DAY

A flood of refugees line the road as far as the eye can see. We FAVOR a young woman -- presumably the official's wife -- and her family. She is urging them toward a ferry at the river's edge, which is already packed with refugees.

She glances up to see a contrail descending toward them through the flawless sky. She shields her eyes, and her reaction tells us that this isn't a plane, it's a missile, and a second later --

(CONTINUED)

-- a thermonuclear BLAST goes off, WHITING OUT everything. We PULL BACK to the horizon and look back as the nuke's telltale mushroom cloud rises into the troposphere.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BEIJING - ROOFTOP PATIO

Back with Gerry and the official as he looks off, his eyes moist, shoving down the emotion. He knocks back his drink.

OFFICIAL

This is China, Mr. Lane, and in China we do what we must. The lights are on because we are not afraid to do what we must.

INT. BEIJING HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are down as Gerry speaks on the sat-phone.

KARIN (on phone)

So are you getting anywhere on this?

GERRY

A little. I leave for Berlin tomorrow. After that...maybe Israel.

KARIN (on phone)

How much longer?

GERRY

I don't know. It's taking longer than I expected because there's so much bureaucratic red tape --

KARIN (on phone)

I think it's important for you to be home by November at the latest. Before the snow comes.

GERRY

Rachel had the dream again, didn't she?

KARIN (on phone)

The one where she sees you being buried under snow, yeah. She woke up screaming.

GERRY

I'll...do my best. Anyway, I don't want to keep you, it's just...I was talking to some people earlier at the reception, and I just...wanted to say I love you.

There's a long pause where "I love you too" should go.

(CONTINUED)

KARIN (on phone)
Yeah, well, I should get going. Take
care, Ger.

GERRY
You too.

He hangs up and looks out into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND - FLASHBACK - MORNING

Snow covers the RV and other campers. Pale and looking under the weather, Rachel looks out the snow-framed window as Gerry, Stan, his son and several OTHERS get ready to head out, each loaded up with backpacks. Among them are two CAMPERS we saw earlier fighting with a frozen, incapacitated zombie.

Gerry waves encouragingly to Rachel. She waves back, but she's clearly scared that he's going. He then hurries to catch up with the others...walking in the snow over abandoned Gameboys and ipods and other long-dead electronic gadgets.

REVERSE

To her POV of Gerry heading off...disappearing into the snow.

EXT. WOODED ROAD

As Gerry comes up alongside Stan, who is carrying a long home-made metal weapon: a pike with a shovel head at one end, bracketed on either side by ax heads. His son Thomas carries several others bound together by rope. He's also wearing a home-made jacket of a dark material.

STAN
Everything okay back there, Gerry?

GERRY
Yeah, Rachel's just a little under the weather again. Can't seem to shake this cold. I thought I'd try to trade batteries or canned food for antibiotics, in case anybody's holding.

STAN
She'll get past it. She's strong.
Like my son here, the ox.

He claps Thomas on the shoulder, who struggles with the heavy parcel of weapons.

THOMAS
Thanks loads....

(CONTINUED)

STAN

You should be proud...we're carrying on in the tradition of our forefathers, making products with our own hands and traveling to other towns to trade. It's the beginnings of capitalism, it's what made America great.

THOMAS

Yeah, well, what made America great weighs a freaking ton. Itches, too.

GERRY

I was just noticing the jacket. What's up with that?

TEAM LEADER

It's kevlar. I took apart some bullet proof vests we salvaged from a police car, fixed it up myself. Protects the arms from getting bit. We're hoping to trade some of the lobos for more kevlar, make a few more.

GERRY

What're lobos?

Stan hands Gerry his home-made weapon.

STAN

Brand new. Welded these babies myself. The lobotomizer. Lobo for short. Taking out a zombie with bullets wastes ammunition, because the damned things don't stand still. This is made for close-up work. You can crush its skull with the shovel or one ax head, then yank it back to take out another one with the other ax, forehand and backhand, like tennis. Two for the price of one, efficiency in production.

THOMAS

Death by capitalism.

STAN

Damned straight.

He takes back the lobo and they keep walking.

EXT. ROAD TO TOWN - LATER

They walking through a heavily wooded area toward a hill that borders a nearby town. From the amount of snow on them they've been walking for some time. As they come to a clearing they see --

(CONTINUED)

-- a zombie, lightly covered in snow, standing in the middle of the road. It sees them. Based on their prior experience with a frozen zombie, the two CAMPERS don't show much fear.

FIRST CAMPER

Yo, check it out...another corpse-sicle. How's it hanging, iceman?

It snarls as they approach.

STAN

Don't play with it, just put it down so we can get on with --

Then Gerry sees that something's wrong --

GERRY

Stan, look...its clothes...there's hardly any snow. But how's that --

STAN

Look out!

Too late. Moving fast, the zombie rips out the throat of the first camper. Dripping blood and tissue, it turns toward the second camper as Stan comes on the run, lobo in hand.

STAN

Out of the way!

Stan SINKS the lobo into its head, putting it down hard. He no sooner yanks the ax head clear than his attention is drawn by a low snarl. Three more zombies emerge from the woods.

STAN

Tom...Thomas! The lobos!

Thomas quickly hands out the lobos as the zombies ATTACK.

The battle is brutal and bloody...gunfire and lobos cutting a swath through the zombies, who are fierce but out-numbered.

Finally, they stand over the dispatched zombies, exhausted.

STAN

I don't get it...these things should be frozen solid.

He carefully puts a hand on one of the now-inert zombies.

STAN

It's hardly cold at all.

THOMAS

Dad...?

(CONTINUED)

Thomas points to a thin line of smoke that rises from the other side of the hill. They start toward the smoke, but Stan hesitates, standing over the camper that was just attacked and killed. He looks to Gerry.

STAN

Do it quick.

Gerry hefts the lobo over the dead camper as --
-- its eyes OPEN...and the lobo FALLS.

EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING TOWN - MOMENTS LATER

Gerry and the others emerge onto a ledge overlooking the town.

STAN

My god....

The town is ablaze. A tiny gas station BELCHES a steady stream of fire from a destroyed pump and from piles of burning tires. Zombies swarm over the wreckage, devouring whatever they find.

GERRY

That's why they weren't frozen.

THOMAS

Check out all the tires on fire.
They could burn for weeks.

STAN

It'll extend their hunting range.

THOMAS

Far enough to get to us?

STAN

Don't know. But one thing's for sure,
there's nobody left to trade with.
We're completely on our own now.
(beat)

Okay, we head back. Get some branches
to cover our trail. I don't know if
these bastards can read tracks, but
we don't know that they can't either.

They head away. Gerry lingers long enough to glance down at the town one last time, fingering the parcel of goods he was prepared to trade for antibiotics, then slowly heads back the way they came, disappearing into the falling snow.

EXT. BERLIN - GOVERNMENT OFFICE - PRESENT - DAY

Enough to ESTABLISH UNDER:

(CONTINUED)

INFORMATION MINISTER (V.O.)

We appreciate you coming here today
on behalf of the United Nations, Mr.
Lane.

INT. BERLIN - GOVERNMENT OFFICE

A long conference table in a glass-walled office. Several well-dressed German bureaucrats sit at one end of the table. Among them is the **INFORMATION MINISTER**, and a young female **COUNCIL MEMBER**. Gerry sits at the other end of the table. Piled between them is a stack of three-ring binders only slightly smaller than Mount Everest.

INFORMATION MINISTER

In anticipation of your arrival we have assembled much information for you on the ways we dealt with the recent crisis. And we wish to give you our personal condolences for the many losses suffered in the United States.

GERRY

I appreciate that...we've all been through a very difficult time.

INFORMATION MINISTER

Yes, but your country suffered so much more than was necessary, more than any other country, I think. But death is the stepchild of delay, is it not?

Before Gerry can pursue this further, the minister pushes the binders down the table toward him.

INFORMATION MINISTER (CONT'D)

These reports cover our evacuation protocols, use of transportation systems during the emergency --

GERRY

Minister Wallenstein --

INFORMATION MINISTER

-- food allocation measures, affects of the crisis on public morale and private infrastructure, a full system analysis of --

GERRY

-- I'm sorry but I think there's been a misunderstanding. I was looking forward to interviewing you and the rest of the cabinet about what was done during the war.

(CONTINUED)

INFORMATION MINISTER
Interviewing...?

GERRY
Yes. I'm sure you've been very thorough, but I'd still like to meet with each of you privately and on the record to discuss some areas that might not be covered by these reports.

INFORMATION MINISTER
How do you know what is covered and what is not until you read the reports?

GERRY
I'm just saying --

INFORMATION MINISTER
I'm afraid that what you ask is simply not possible. You are free to interview anyone else you desire, but this council is very busy with the task of rebuilding Germany from the ashes of these terrible years. We thought you would appreciate our making such an effort on your behalf --

GERRY
I do, but --

INFORMATION MINISTER
-- and understand our reluctance to duplicate efforts by taking the time to give you this, then talk about what we have given you.

(beat)
Take the reports back to the United States. Review them at your leisure. Then, if you have any questions, send them to us and we will answer them as soon as possible.

Gerry knows this isn't going anywhere, he's being cold-shouldered. And there's nothing he can do about it.

GERRY
Right. Well, it looks like I have my summer reading cut out for me.

INFORMATION MINISTER
Good. Then if there is nothing else to be done, we --

GERRY
Just one question, Minister.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

After the plague spread beyond China, travel restrictions were put in place to slow its spread to other countries. But there were persistent rumors about ships smuggling refugees from infected countries to uninfected ones. Several of these boats were said to be registered to German citizens --

INFORMATION MINISTER

Not true. We launched a thorough investigation into this very question, and no German was ever found guilty of smuggling infected people into other countries. Now, I'm afraid we really must go. Good day to you, Herr Lane, and good hunting.

They stand and head out of the room, shaking hands with Gerry as they pass. The last one to file past is the lone female member of the council. She looks up at him and we can see that she's visibly upset by this. With the others already out of the room, he extends his hand to her --

GERRY

I can see you don't agree with his decision. If there's any way you can help me --

She looks away from him and walks quickly out of the room.

EXT. BERLIN - CAFE - LATER

Gerry is sitting by himself, alone and unhappy. He looks up to see the female council member walking along the sidewalk. She doesn't look at him, but as she passes she drops --

-- a note onto his table. As she continues away, he unfolds the note, where she has written *BRUNO HELF, MOABIT PRISON*.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOABIT PRISON -- DAY

A small prison in what was once West Berlin.

INT. MOABIT PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM -- DAY

Gerry waits in a small, windowless room as a prisoner is escorted inside, *BRUNO HELF*, 40s, wiry. After unlocking Helf's handcuffs the guard steps outside as Gerry extends a hand.

GERRY

Herr Helf, thank you for seeing me.

(CONTINUED)

HELFF

It's not like I was going anywhere.
Do you have cigarette?

GERRY

No, I'm afraid not.

HELFF

You are American, the tobacco fields
are still there, I assumed you would
have cigarette.

GERRY

I don't smoke.

HELFF

Ah. Next time you come to Berlin,
you should bring. Very hard to get
outside. In here, even harder. No
zigaretten, no drug traffic...the
dead have made the world of the living
healthier, yes?

(a laugh)

Did you know that the word zombie is
the same in English, German, French,
Italian, Spanish and Portugese? They
bring us together, eh? You can go
into any country in the world and
yell out, Zombie! and they will know
what you mean. Very, how you say,
handy for us, yes?

GERRY

Very.

(beat)

I understand you were convicted for
smuggling people out of various
countries during the crisis.

HELFF

No. I was convicted for smuggling
goods, not people. The people that
brought the goods with them were not
part of the indictment. The government
did not want anyone saying Germany
was responsible for spreading this
thing. So I was arrested and convicted
for things, not people. They enforced
the law, but kept the mask of blind
justice on the people, not the statue.

He sits back, pissed, then starts again.

HELFF

I had a very nice boat. It carried
twenty passengers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELFF (CONT'D)

People paid to use my boat. Sometimes they brought their friends. Sometimes I would forget to mention to the authorities where I was going, and when I arrived, sometimes I would forget to mention that I was there. Oops.

GERRY

The travel restrictions were put in place so countries could control the infection by better controlling their borders. Didn't it bother you that you were carrying people who might've been infected?

Helf leans in, pissed and making a point.

HELFF

No, it did not bother me, and I tell you why. There are rules on my boat, and rule number one is, we do not take chances. It's not good business. My father said, the man who runs into a burning house is not a hero, he is a fool, because the fire does not know what courage is and does not care. So yes, when the borders close I take people on my boat. But I check every one of them. If there are marks, I say no. No marks, I say yes.

GERRY

Even so --

HELFF

People were being over-run by these things, and their governments could do nothing to stop them. They could either stay and wait for those things, or try to escape to someplace where things were better. But with the roads and airports closed, where do you run to? You run to the sea that gave us birth, and to hope beyond.

EXT. CARGO SHIP -- NIGHT

A big commercial cargo carrier glides through the night, and we see crew members running, guns being fired.

HELFF (V.O.)

Because of the embargo, commercial fleets suddenly had no legal cargo to carry. So they took illegal cargo.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HELFF (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But unlike me, they took a hundred,
two hundred people at a time, anyone
who could pay, no questions asked.

EXT. CARGO SHIP - DECK -- CONTINUOUS

Refugees run screaming out of the cargo hold onto the deck,
pursued by newly-turned zombies.

HELFF (V.O.)

Many times, there was trouble.

Armed crew members FIRE at the zombies, taking them down but
hitting others as well, not caring who gets in the way.

EXT. CARGO SHIP - DECK -- LATER

Crew members drag several bound and gagged zombies to the
edge of the ship as others look on, guns ready.

HELFF (V.O.)

Infected passengers discovered after
leaving port would be bound before
they could turn. Then, when the living
became the dead, and the dead became
the undead, they were, shall we say...
unloaded.

Snapping, tearing futilely at their bonds, the zombies are
thrown overboard, disappearing into the dark water.

INT. MOABIT PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM -- DAY

Back with Gerry and Helf. Helf leans in, intense.

HELFF

What the crews did not understand...or
simply did not care...the dead do not
need air. They do not need to breathe.
And in the water, ropes expand...chains
slip....

EXT. FLORIDA - BEACH -- DAY

A group of 20-year-olds are horsing around in the surf.

HELFF (V.O.)

...and sooner or later, every sea
touches the shore somewhere.

Suddenly one of swimmers is YANKED down. He BOBS back up
again, screaming. The others hesitate, not sure if he's just
kidding, then he's pulled down again. Blood stains the water.

SWIMMER

Shark! Get to the shore!

(CONTINUED)

They swim toward shore as, one by one, other swimmers are yanked down, screaming as they disappear into the water.

A few make it to the shore, exhausted and terrified, looking back at the blood-stained surf --

-- as a hundred zombies walk out of the sea and LUNGE at the survivors, their SCREAMS taking us back to --

INT. MOABIT PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM -- DAY

-- where the silence is counterpoint to the screams of a second earlier.

GERRY

When I spoke to your attorney before coming here, he said you made a run to the Indian port of Alang at the height of the great panic, but didn't elaborate.

Help wrestles with this, his eyes heavy with memory.

HELP

No cigarettes at all? You're sure?

Gerry shakes his head, no. Help steels himself, then:

HELP

Alang was not much of a seaport. It had no drydocks, no slipways. You would slide your boat up onto the shore, take on cargo, then push off or be towed back into the shallows.
(beat)

As the infection spread across India, people were desperate to escape. They would pay their whole life savings just for a seat on a boat. Ships were pouring in from all over to pick them up. It was a feeding frenzy. For us...and for them.

EXT. PORT OF ALONG -- NIGHT

Dozens of ships of every size choke the seaport. Sideboats have been beached to pick up passengers. The shoreline rises to a hill crowded with thousands of refugees, crying out, holding aloft passports and money, bargaining for a place, a seat, a chance, a hope.

Fights break out between the desperate and the determined. People wade into the sea, climbing onto boats already loaded to capacity only to be beaten back by men with clubs and guns.

Crew members in side-boats wave flashlights, shouting out their prices.

(CONTINUED)

CREW 1

Give me your money, everything you have, then I'll take you!

CREW 2

Women only! Here! Women only!

CREW 3

What have you got? I'll take food! Food and money!

Crew member 4, Indian himself, shines a light in the face of an Indian woman, then shoves her back.

CREW 4

Too dark...light skinned only, no untouchables, no lower castes!

We FIND Helf's ship parked offshore, where a handful of refugees are being led aboard from a sideboat.

SHIP'S SECOND

That's the last of them.

HELFF

You checked them for wounds?

(he nods)

Then we go.

The ship's second hurries off as Helf goes to the wheel and kicks the engine into high gear. The boat cuts through the night when suddenly, in the distance, we hear GUNSHOTS.

He looks to the shore as we HEAR a SOUND that no one could ever forget: ten thousand terrified people SCREAMING at once.

HELFF

...merciful god....

ON THE SHORE

Thousands of zombies crest the hill, swarming down onto the stranded refugees. What was chaos turns into blind panic. Armed men fire, but the undead tide keeps coming.

People dive into the sea, swamping sideboats as crews kick them away, fighting to get to open water.

A big ship cabled to a smaller one beached on-shore is pulled sideways as more people climb in. The cable SNAPS, spilling refugees into the sea as --

-- more zombies plunge into the water. The sea foams with people swimming toward the boats, which are themselves caught in the maze of ships crowding the port, fighting to get away.

(CONTINUED)

One boat accidentally rams another, capsizing both of them. Screams fill the night air as passengers and crew fight for their lives in the sea of teeth.

Helf is torn by what he sees: the horror, the desperate screams of men and women struggling against the death that prowls below, snatching up at them and pulling them down.

In agony, he turns the boat around, heading for the refugees.

HELFF

Stand by the ropes! Hurry!

SHIP'S SECOND

Captain --

HELFF

Do it!

The ship's second runs off to comply as Helf drives the ship right into the midst of the horror.

HELFF

(half to himself)

"The fire does not recognize courage."

Let's hope the sea does.

(beat)

Stupid...stupid....

But he does it anyway. And within moments the swimmers nearest his boat reach for ropes and hands. Many of them are grabbed by zombies beneath the water and yanked down with a scream.

A zombie starts to pull itself up the anchor line. A crew member FIRES, blowing it back into the sea. The deck is crowded, the boat full. Helf shouts to his second.

HELFF

That's all we can carry...get us out of here!

The second complies as Helf sees a young woman still in the sea, clutching her infant child, fighting to stay above the water. She SCREAMS for help. His reaction is immediate.

He JUMPS down to the lowest rung of the side-ladder, reaching for her as she struggles with sea and child --

HELFF

Here! Over here!

-- as suddenly a Zombie BREAKS surface, jaws SNAPPING for Helf's flesh, barely missing as Helf grabs the woman.

HELFF

Hang on!

(CONTINUED)

He yanks her up as the engines kick in and they fall onto the deck. The boat DARTS forward, speeding through the maze of bigger ships. He views the carnage through eyes numb with horror:

A container ship on fire, GUNSHOTS ringing out.

Another ship sinking as zombies bob all around, feeding.

Finally, Helf turns to his second, looks to their passengers.

HELFF

Are any of them infected?

SHIP'S SECOND

We're almost done checking, but so far --

CREW MEMBER

Sir!

The crew member backs away from the woman and infant Helf just pulled out of the water. He pulls off a blanket to reveal the infant has blood on it.

WOMAN

No! She's not infected! The blood's from someone in the boat! Here, look!

She frantically washes the child's arm, and in a moment it's clear that the blood is only on the surface. The ship's second checks the infant, it's okay. Helf nods to the woman.

HELFF

What about her?

CREW MEMBER

I checked her...no wounds.

They relax as the woman pulls the blanket around her and moves off with her child. But as she walks away we TILT down to her bare feet to find she is leaving a slight footprint of blood from a bite on the bottom of her heel.

EXT. HELFF'S BOAT -- NIGHT

The ship glides through the open sea, far from the madness of Alang. Helf walks past the refugees, who sleep, exhausted, on the deck. He lights a cigarette, his hands shaking.

He takes a breath of fresh air, allows himself the comforting knowledge that he has escaped unscathed...when he hears a wet, tearing sound coming from the aft end of the boat.

He follows it cautiously until he sees the woman he rescued earlier, sitting on the deck, facing away from us, still covered by the blanket. The sound is coming from here.

(CONTINUED)

Helf shines a flashlight on her...comes around to the front... and discovers to his horror that she has turned. The thing that was once a young woman looks up at him absently as she quietly devours her infant child.

Helf's eyes go wide with the light of madness as he reaches for his gun, pulls it out and FIRES.

INT. MOABIT PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The gunshot ECHOES in our ears as Helf continues.

HELFF

Sometimes, since then, I think perhaps my father was right. I don't know....

Helf discovers wetness running down his face. Brushes at it with his palm. Over the SILENCE that follows we HEAR:

WILL (V.O.)

So Frank Dexter gave you my name to talk to?

EXT. BERLIN - WATERFRONT -- DAY

Gerry is walking along the waterfront with a CIA agent named WILL CAFFERTY.

GERRY

You sound surprised.

WILL

Halfway through the war I got dumped into an overseas desk job. I'm surprised anybody still remembers to pay me.

(beat)

Still, Dex is a good guy. He always did right by me, even when nobody else wanted to know I was even alive.

GERRY

Why? What happened?

WILL

Let's just say that what I know makes me a bit...inconvenient to some people.

GERRY

Dex said your job before the war was monitoring communications between various countries and their embassies.

WILL

That's correct. Diplomatic messages are always encoded before being sent.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WILL (CONT'D)

Of course, we had the codes. We had their codes, they had our codes...it was a game.

GERRY

So were you monitoring communiqués to and from China when the plague first appeared?

(Will nods)

When did the CIA first know there was a problem in China?

WILL

Depends on how you define know. From the intercepts we knew something was going on. The problem was, we were too smart for our own good. We didn't know that we knew.

He stops, looks out at the water. Darkens.

WILL

When all this started, it was so... unbelievable. So when we unscrambled the codes we assumed that we were looking at a second code wrapped inside the main code. "Walking dead" as code for compromised agents, suicide bombers, the capitalist system, actors from '70s sitcoms whose best years had passed, how were we supposed to know that when they were talking about the walking dead, they were talking about the walking dead. Nobody speaks that plainly unless --

GERRY

-- something's seriously wrong and there's no time for misunderstandings.

WILL

Right. But we didn't know that. We couldn't know that. But try to explain that to the American people. After the whole "Bin Laden Determined To Attack United States" fiasco can you imagine how they'd react to the idea that we looked at message after message saying there were freaking zombies on the move and still couldn't connect the dots?

GERRY

So why were the Israelis able to figure out what was going on?

(CONTINUED)

WILL

I don't know, but if you find out,
tell me, because I'd love to know.

Will starts walking again, cutting off any further inquiry.

GERRY

It'd be a big help if I could put you
on the record, include your name,
your position --

WILL

Not a chance.

GERRY

Then why tell me all this?

Will stops, starts to answer. Looks off. Then:

WILL

Because Dex is a good friend and I
owe him. And because somebody should
know the truth. I just don't want my
name on it, that's all.

(beat)

I better go. I've had one of my guys
distracting whoever's been tailing
you, but --

GERRY

I'm being followed?

WILL

Twenty-four/seven. What'd you expect?
Even as far in the dog house as I am,
I've heard enough to know that a lot
of people are worried about this report
of yours. Word is you've gone off
the reservation, talking to all kinds
of people you shouldn't be talking
to. Me included.

(beat)

Look, you want my advice? Take what
you've got, write your report and
walk away. Because like we learned
during the war, you should stay off
the road unless you know for sure
what's waiting for you at the other
end. And brother...you have no idea.

Will heads off. Gerry does the same, looking over his shoulder
for whoever's following him. CRANE up higher and higher to
emphasize his isolation, small against the world.

INT. BERLIN AIRPORT - DAY

Exhausted, wary, Gerry sits in the Berlin airport. There are a few other travelers, but still nowhere near what you'd expect. Sitting nearby is a young girl with a snow globe portraying a quaint German village covered in snow. She smiles at Gerry. He smiles back. But his attention is drawn to --

-- the snow globe, flakes of white whirling around in the water, which brings us to --

EXT. CAMPGROUND - FLASHBACK -- NIGHT

The snows have fallen more heavily now, thick drifts engulfing many of the campers. Trees have been cut down all over the place. Gerry walks through the camp, his heavy coat pulled close around him against the bitter cold, carrying a rudimentary snow-fishing rig.

He pauses beside the car with the camper-shell that arrived in a prior scene, now covered in snow. He brushes aside the snow to see the young couple inside...frozen to death, huddled against one another in their last moments.

Gerry turns from the sight and continues toward the RV UNDER:

KARIN (V.O.)

You couldn't catch anything?

INT. RV -- MOMENTS LATER

Karin sits on the edge of Rachel's bed. Rachel is fevered, ill, half conscious. Gerry paces in the main part of the RV, angry at himself. Their two-year-old is crying in BG.

GERRY

I dug a dozen holes in the ice,
nothing. The fish have all gone deep.

KARIN

Or they've already been fished out.

GERRY

There's another lake a couple miles
farther down the road. I'll leave
tonight so I can be there when the
dawn comes, they'll be feeding then.
(beat)

How's her fever?

KARIN

Not good. A hundred and two. We
need to get some solid food in her,
she's not strong enough to fight the
infection on what we've got here.

(CONTINUED)

GERRY
I know, I know....

He goes to Constance, who is crying.

CONSTANCE
Is Rachel gonna die?

GERRY
No honey, Rachel's not going to die.
She's just real sick. But she'll get
better. You'll see.

He glances to Karin, whose eyes show great doubt.

EXT. CAMPGROUND -- LATER

In the pre-dawn hours, Gerry exits the RV, equipped for any fish or game he might come upon. As he starts away, he glances to the shell-covered car, noticing that the passenger door is slightly askew, as though someone opened it but couldn't quite get it closed again.

Not knowing what this might forebode, he moves to the car. Brushes away the new snow. Looks inside.

The body of the frozen young woman is gone. He glances around, finding tracks in the snow where something was dragged.

His gaze follows the drag-tracks to Stan's camper. We continue to FOLLOW his gaze as he looks up...and sees a thin trail of smoke rising from the camper's stove.

Gerry closes his eyes, refusing to acknowledge the horror of what he knows has happened...and continues off as we HEAR:

PA VOICE (V.O.)
El Al flight 754 for Tel Aviv now
boarding at gate 27.

INT. BERLIN AIRPORT

-- as Gerry is pulled out of his reverie. He looks to the girl with the snow globe, picks up his bags, and tousles her hair as he heads tiredly for the gate.

WARMBRUMM (V.O.)
The problem with most people is that
they don't believe something can happen
until it already has.

INT. WARMBRUMM HOME - KITCHEN -- EVENING

JURGEN WARMBRUMM, 50s, avuncular, is cooking dinner and talking to Gerry as kids run in and out, grabbing nibbles from plates.

(CONTINUED)

WARMBRUMM

That's not stupidity or weakness, that's just human nature. I just happened to be born into a group of people who live in constant fear of extinction. It has taught us through horrific trial and error to always be on our guard.

He looks to where a kid is edging toward a piece of dessert.

WARMBRUMM

If you eat that dessert before dinner you will not get another dessert for six months. Your choice.

The kid takes a powder. Warmbrumm looks to Gerry, smiles.

WARMBRUMM

That is what we do in the intelligence service. We provide our politicians with information and the illusion of choice when we have already decided what needs to be done. That is one of the differences between our countries. In America you fix the intelligence around the policy. We fix the policy around the intelligence. In Israeli politics, intelligence comes first. In US politics, intelligence is much harder to find.

Warmbrumm keeps cooking as Gerry approaches.

GERRY

So how did you do it? Every other intelligence service intercepting communiqués between China and her embassies had the same information. But you were the first to figure out what was going on. How?

WARMBRUMM

In the months before October 1973, Israeli intelligence saw footage of Arab troop movements but unanimously agreed that they did not pose a threat to us. A month later, the Arab attack almost drove us into the sea. So we made a little change. If nine of us look at the same information and come to the same exact conclusion, it is the responsibility of the tenth man to disagree. No matter how improbable it may seem, the tenth man has to start digging on the assumption that the other nine might be wrong.

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

And you were the tenth man.

WARMBRUMM

Precisely. Since everyone assumed that this talk of zombies was cover for something else, I began my investigation on the assumption that when the Chinese said zombies, they meant zombies, that human beings were being reanimated as ravenous killing machines. And slowly, enough pieces began to come together to say that yes, this was true, this was happening, and it was a threat not just to us, but to the whole world.

(beat)

So I wrote up my report, and sent it upstream.

INT. MOSSAD HEADQUARTERS - OFFICE - FLASHBACK -- DAY

The office of the Israeli Secret Intelligence Service in Tel Aviv. At one end of a long conference table sits Warmbrumm. Midway down the table Warmbrumm's **SECTION CHIEF** squirms uncomfortably as a government **OFFICIAL** -- the head of Mossad -- sits at the other end of the table, reading Warmbrumm's report.

The room is silent except for the rustle of pages. The section chief doesn't want to be here, and he keeps glancing to Warmbrumm with a "why are you doing this to me?" expression.

To break the painful silence Warmbrumm points to the report.

WARMBRUMM

I attached some high altitude reconnaissance photos, but they don't really show....

He tapers off at a lethal glance from his section chief.

Finally, the official finishes reading. Re-stacks the pages. Taps them so they're properly lined up. Places them in the folder, closes it. Places his hands flat on the folder as he looks out across the table for another silent BEAT, then:

OFFICIAL

Zombies.

The section chief shifts uncomfortably, seeing his career passing in front of his eyes.

SECTION CHIEF

Minister, I --

The official silences him with a gesture. Looks to Warmbrumm.

(CONTINUED)

WARMBRUMM

The intercepts are very clear about the aggressive nature of the infection. Whether it is spread only by contact or if it is airborne is unknown, but the process is always the same. The infected person dies --

SECTION CHIEF

Or seems to die. It could be similar to catalepsy, creating a condition that looks like death, but --

WARMBRUMM

The infected person dies. The infection then reanimates the corpse at the most primitive, aggressive level. It attacks, it feeds, and continues to do so until destroyed by a bullet to the brain or decapitation.
(beat)

I've spoken to several neurologists who say there could be a bacteria that produces a biochemical bath that preserves the neural system even in death. Because only the instincts necessary for survival are revived -- violence and the need to feed -- it's possible that the infection can only reanimate the most primitive parts of the brain.

OFFICIAL

And your solution to this is a wall?

WARMBRUMM

In conjunction with heightened security checks to isolate anyone who exhibits signs of sickness or disorientation, anyone with visible wounds, especially bite marks. We already have secure fences along the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and elsewhere. We can start there and secure the rest in short order.

OFFICIAL

Your report mentions Jerusalem.

WARMBRUMM

It's too wide-open, too exposed, there is no way we could secure it.
(soberly)

We would have to abandon Jerusalem.

This goes down hard. Warmbrumm leans in, his tone urgent.

(CONTINUED)

WARMBRUMM

The infection spreads with frightening speed. One becomes two becomes four becomes eight and suddenly you are outnumbered. They do not respond to threats. They do not tire, do not register fear, do not notice pain, or injury, or loss of limb. If they are allowed to gain even the smallest foothold in Israel, it will be too late for all of us.

The section chief risks a glance to the official, who is tapping his fingers on the report. Finally:

OFFICIAL

On my way here, I reviewed your personnel file. Ten years with the Mossad and no disciplinary problems, no drinking problems. Your last review described you as "efficient but not terribly imaginative." It pronounced you sane, sober and competent, three words that I wish were not at the other end of this report.

(beat)

You realize that if this report is incorrect, if any part of it is in error, you will be fired in a manner so breathtaking in its rebuke that no intelligence service on the planet would hire you? That your career would be over? That for all intents and purposes you would be the walking dead? Do you truly understand that?

WARMBRUMM

I understand.

OFFICIAL

(sighs)

I was afraid you did.

He takes the folder, puts it in his briefcase, and stands.

OFFICIAL

I will convene a meeting with the Prime Minister at three o'clock. Meanwhile, I suggest you send a copy of this to our American friends. Perhaps they can add something of their own.

And he starts out of the room UNDER:

GERRY (V.O.)

And did you?

(CONTINUED)

WARMBRUMM (V.O.)

Of course.

INT. CUBICLE -- MOMENTS LATER

Warmbrumm closes and seals a security envelope and in SLOW MOTION drops it into a tray and walks away. We STAY with the envelope UNDER:

WARMBRUMM (V.O.)

What happened to it after that, I have no idea.

A hand takes the envelope, puts it on a cart, and --

-- in an EXTREME HIGH SPEED sequence the cart rolls down the hall, turns to a delivery room, it's shoved into a clear plastic box, BLASTS out the building into a truck, then into an airplane cargo hold, it goes dark --

-- back to LIGHT as the box is offloaded onto another truck, it speeds across town, then the envelope is removed and --

-- placed on another cart, ZOOMING down the halls of the CIA until it arrives at a desk where the envelope is dropped into the IN BOX on a CIA agent's desk. He picks it up, flips through it, then picks up the phone. Dials an extension.

AGENT

Arty, Dan. Did you send this? "Send what?" my ass. I'm holding a report on Mossad stationery about zombies. Bullshit, you're the one who sent a fake memo on White House stationery saying we were going to be replaced by space aliens from the Roswell crash. This has your fingerprints all over it.

(beat)

Whatever, fine, it's a great goof but I don't have time for this right now, I've got to get into a meeting. I'll check it out later. Right. Bye.

He hangs up and heads out, tossing the report on a stack of other folders as we go back to --

INT. WARMBRUMM HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Where warm Afternoon sunlight slants through the windows as Gerry sits at the counter with Warmbrumm.

WARMBRUMM

Do you want to know why I think this report of yours is important?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WARMBRUMM (CONT'D)

Not to illuminate the mistakes, those are inevitable. Corruption, foolishness, short-sightedness, yes, they must be pointed out and punished. But more than that, we must bring with us out of this war one singular truth, the truth my people learned in Dachau, at Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Treblinka: no matter how hopeless the situation, no matter how high that black, implacable wall of death we are facing might be, we find a way to get past it. We climb over it, we go around it, we tunnel under it...we hope our way out and we think our way out. We did not just shoot our way out of this mess, Mr. Lane. We thought our way out of it.

GERRY

I don't know...I certainly didn't see much thought leading up to the war.

WARMBRUMM

No, not there...but once the horror was upon us, it was men like Radeker who rose to the challenge. They saw what needed to be done and --

GERRY

Radeker...?

WARMBRUMM

Yes, though his contributions will never be properly evaluated given his past and the nature of his suggestions. Still, I --

GERRY

Do you know where he is?

WARMBRUMM

Dead, as near as can be determined.

GERRY

Then I need to speak to someone who knew him, worked with him.

WARMBRUMM

The details of his recommendations are classified, and for good reason.

GERRY

What reason?

(CONTINUED)

Warmbrumm crosses to the kitchen where dinner is simmering. Gerry follows, his tone urgent.

GERRY

I need to know what happened, why nobody will talk about him, and why the government denied he had anything to do with the evacuation orders.

(beat)

Please.

WARMBRUMM

I'll...think about it. But not today. Today we eat...and celebrate the fact that around most of the world they are no longer eating us.

(calling off)

All right little ones, now we can have supper.

And cheering kids come running into the kitchen as Gerry steps out of the way, knowing he will not get anything else.

EXT. TEL AVIV HOTEL - DAY

Carrying his bags, Gerry gets into a taxi and drives off.

EXT. TEL AVIV - AFTERNOON

Gerry is still in the taxi, being driven down a long, uninhabited road when suddenly there's the sound of GUNFIRE. The taxi SCREECHES to a halt as --

-- armed and masked GUNMEN jump out of a van, weapons raised. They SHOUT at the taxi driver, who flees as the men yank Gerry out of the taxi and fast-march him into the van. They SLAM the door and the van races off.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Gerry is on the floor of the van looking up at the gunmen.

GERRY

What do you want? Look, I'm here on behalf of the United Nations, and --

One of them pulls out a black hood.

MASKED GUNMAN

Put this on!

GERRY

Why?

(CONTINUED)

MASKED GUNMAN

So when someone asks you, "Who took you to see Paul Radeker and how did you get there?" you can answer truthfully, "I do not know." Our mutual friend says you are a good man who should not have to lie about such things.

GERRY

How do I --

MASKED GUNMAN

I was told to say to you this: "No matter how high the wall of death, we always find a way to think our way through to the other side."

(beat)

It's up to you. Do you wish to go where we wish to take you?

GERRY

Yes.

MASKED GUNMAN

Then put it on.

Gerry takes the hood and puts it on.

EXT. AIRFIELD - LATER

Still hooded, Gerry is led into a black, unmarked helicopter. It RISES into the air and moves off as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNIDENTIFIED HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

-- and we could be anywhere as the hood is pulled from Gerry's head. He blinks against the lamp-light. The house is sparsely decorated. Ascetic. He hears someone moving behind him.

RADEKER

Would you like something to drink?

Gerry turns as PAUL RADEKER comes into view: an older man with a shaven head and clear blue eyes. He carries a scotch and soda, and speaks with an South Afrikaner accent.

GERRY

Water...?

He hands Gerry a glass of water. Sits facing him.

(CONTINUED)

RADEKER

You must excuse the precautions, but I am in the unique position of having saved half the world...while condemning the other half of it to death. There are many who would try to kill me for both of those offenses.

(beat)

My name is Paul Radeker. I understand you have been looking for me. When you have rested and recovered from the rigors of your trip, we will talk. I believe we have much to talk about.

With that, he walks slowly out, closing the door behind him.

INT. UNIDENTIFIED HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Radecker sits across from Gerry in a carefully appointed room full of books and maps and other paraphernalia.

RADEKER

In the eighties I worked with the Apartheid government in Pretoria, South Africa. It was a difficult time. On the black side you had the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party, and on the white side were right wing Afrikaners who wanted a racial showdown to prove once and for all who was in charge. We were surrounded by enemies and corrupt governments. The country was resting on a bed of nails.

He gets up, pours a drink.

RADEKER

As director of emergency planning, I was asked to develop a strategy by which a white minority population might survive, even win against a larger, more violent majority. A doomsday scenario, if you wish...the ultimate survival strategy for the Afrikaner people.

He returns, sits heavily, the years weighing on him.

RADEKER

The key was to accept the premise that you cannot save everyone. Imagine a boat at sea being overwhelmed by people struggling to get aboard. If you try to save them all you will sink the ship and doom everyone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RADEKER (CONT'D)

You must decide who can be saved, and who must be sacrificed. In the event of such a calamity, the first casualty must be sentimentality. The plan I developed was bullet-proof. Brilliant, if I say so myself. But it did not exactly endear me to certain portions of our population.

EXT. DRAKENSBERG CABIN - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

A small, quiet, isolated cabin. Heavily armed men in black uniforms and masks are drawing close to it.

RADEKER (V.O.)

Even after deKlerk and Mandela ended apartheid in '93, there were many who wanted to see me dead simply on principle. So I moved to my cabin in Drakensberg and there I stayed, right up to the year of the plague, and the year of the great panic --

In a sudden move they RUSH the cabin, kicking in the door to --

INT. DRAKENSBERG CABIN - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

-- find Radeker reaching for a gun in his desk, too late, as the door CRASHES open and armed men enter, weapons up.

RADEKER (V.O.)

-- when finally the outside world came for me.

TEAM LEADER

Put the gun down! Put it down!

Seeing he's outnumbered, Radeker does as he's told.

TEAM LEADER

Are you Paul Radeker?

(beat)

I ask you again, are you Paul Radeker?

Radeker straightens, determined not to show fear.

RADEKER

Yes.

They remove their masks, revealing a mix: white, black, Asian. The leader approaches and says the unanticipated, the unlikely:

TEAM LEADER

Sir...we need your help.

INT. UNIDENTIFIED HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Back with Radeker and Gerry in the present.

RADEKER

I do not know where I was taken. I was blindfolded, as you were. But in the darkness I heard many accents: one man addressed as Prime Minister, another as Mr. President, Chancellor...
(a smile)

They wanted to know if I had a plan. A doomsday plan for the survival of the human race in the grip of a force that could soon outnumber and destroy them.

(beat)

"Did I have a plan." Idiots. Of course I had a plan.

INT. DARK ROOM

We don't know where we are or who's there. Spared in a single white light, Radeker stands before rows of seats where a number of important people are sitting in the darkness.

RADEKER

Phase one requires moving those you most wish to save and into green zones, areas protected by mountains, rivers or other natural defiles, where the infected cannot reach. These individuals would be chosen by age, IQ, party affiliation, whatever would make them valuable assets in a new world. To avoid riots you would have to pretend that the selections are random, but in fact that must be very deliberate.

VOICE IN SHADOWS

That only covers a small portion of the population. What about the rest?

RADEKER

That is phase two. You pull as many people as you can out of the suburbs and into the major cities...as bait.

There's shouting from within the ranks of the shadowed figures, outrage and dissent, over which he continues --

RADEKER

Human bait whose presence will keep the undead rooted to the spot, trying to get at them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RADEKER (CONT'D)

This will allow you to efficiently eliminate the enemy. Further, every zombie besieging these survivors will be one less zombie throwing itself against the defenses of those you most wish to protect.

VOICE IN SHADOWS

This is insanity --

RADEKER

Of course you cannot tell the people in these red zones that they are bait, because they will attempt to flee. So you will have to present it in such a way that they will believe they are your first priority instead of what they actually are: expendable.

Some of those in the shadows are on their feet, pissed.

VOICES IN SHADOWS

No way we can sell this...it's a public relations nightmare...can you imagine what would happen if this got out...I'd expect this kind of logic from a member of a racist government --

(louder)

Who the hell asked to have this fucking war criminal brought in here?

ROLIHLAHLA (O.S.)

I did.

Then: a figure emerges from the shadows. An African official, **ROLIHLAHLA**, with leonine features, strong but gentle eyes, straight, tall, elegant and heart-broken. The room grows silent as he approaches Radeker, who isn't sure what to do.

Rolihlahla goes to him, studies his face with sad eyes whose gaze seems to go to a place deep within Radeker's soul. He lowers his gaze as the elder statesman puts a hand on his shoulder. Turns to the rest of those who sit in darkness.

ROLIHLAHLA

This man will save our people.

(beat)

This man will save all our people.
God help us.

He looks back to Radeker, and this is the first time we've ever seen him deeply moved.

ROLIHLAHLA

God help you.

(CONTINUED)

And he embraces Radeker.

INT. UNIDENTIFIED HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gerry studies Radeker, eyes are lost in the memory of that moment, misting in the way of men who do not allow themselves the luxury of tears. Gerry is at a loss for words.

GERRY

Mr. Radeker, I....

RADEKER

It's all right. I was there, and even I still do not have the words.
(beat)

It's time for you to go.

He gets up as a masked figure brings the hood over. Hands it to Radeker, who holds it as he stands before Gerry.

GERRY

One last question. This meeting you describe...when did it take place?

RADEKER

August. I remember because it was very warm that summer.

Radeker studies Gerry's eyes as Rolihlahla studied his own.

RADEKER

I do not know how much longer I will be allowed to live, Mr. Lane. My continued existence is a threat to certain people. Before that happens, I was hoping someone might come here one day, so they might know the truth. To let the world know that I was not the man they said I was...and that perhaps, in the end, I was the man I thought I was.

(trails off)

My report showed a way mankind could survive. Let us hope that your report, and the years that follow, demonstrate a reason why mankind should survive.

The hood goes over Gerry's head, taking us to BLACK and total SILENCE, which continues for a long BEAT before the ROAR of traffic abruptly brings us to --

EXT. TEL AVIV - STREET - DAY

-- where the hood is taken off Gerry's head and he is nudged out of the car, which drives off quickly. Gerry blinks against the sunlight, then slowly, thoughtfully heads off UNDER:

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (V.O.)

Karin, it's me. I just wanted you to know...I'm coming home.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

Gerry trots across the tarmac to a waiting US Air Force cargo plane. He gets inside as the door closes behind him.

GERRY (V.O.)

I've done everything here that I can, there's just a few things left to do and they're all back home. Since there still aren't many flights between Palestine and the US, I'm catching a lift on an Air Force jet to Langley AFB in Virginia, and from there I'll get a plane or a chopper back home.

KARIN (V.O.)

Good, we need you back here.

GERRY (V.O.)

Is something wrong?

INT. CARGO PLANE - DAY

CLOSE on Gerry as he looks out the window to the sky outside.

KARIN (V.O.)

We had an incident with Rachel this morning.

GERRY (V.O.)

Was anybody hurt?

KARIN (V.O.)

No, fortunately I was able to grab her before things got that far.

GERRY (V.O.)

Did anybody see --

KARIN (V.O.)

Yes, but they didn't think much about it. Kids are always tussling, you know how it is. Another few seconds, though, and --

(beat)

I'm glad you're coming home Gerry. Get here soon.

EXT. LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Just enough to ESTABLISH.

INT. LANGLEY - CAFETERIA - DAY

Gerry is moving down the line of food bins, spooning out mashed potatoes, chicken and other food. The place is loud, full of pilots and airmen, boisterous and cocky.

As Gerry carries off his tray, he pauses at a bulletin board filled with mementos: insignia from different states and Air Force divisions, photos, letters from home...and in the midst of it, a sign that reads *Remember Philly*. Gerry glances at it then heads to a table near a group of pilots heavy on adrenaline, beer and bravado.

PILOT

-- and Parker's got me on this approach vector heading right toward a mountain, and I'm like, guys, I'm gonna crash here. Then I saw 'em, over a hundred Z's inside a wash running beside the mountain. So I just fucking unloaded on 'em with everything I had, Hellfire missiles, 50 cal's, and they had nowhere to go, there was arms and legs and brains flyin' all over the place, it was a thing of beauty.

SECOND PILOT

Biggest nest we've found yet, sweep and clear teams never even saw it. Jack here even got down on foot just so he could hit some of the Z's with a pie in the face.

This draws Gerry's attention, and he interrupts with:

GERRY

Excuse me...a pie in the face?

SECOND PILOT

PIE. Short for Pyrotechnical Initiated Explosive Ordinance.

EXT. CANYON - DAY

The pilot is standing in front of the chopper and FIRING PIE rounds at approaching zombies. As they strike, they EXPLODE the zombie's heads like miniature bursts of TNT.

SECOND PILOT (V.O.)

You don't need to get a clean hit to the brain, just sink one of these babies anywhere near the head and the explosive charges do the rest.

(beat)

Like playing horseshoes with human heads and dynamite.

(CONTINUED)

BACK TO SCENE

As the pilots laugh, the pilot assumes a mock serious tone.

SECOND PILOT

Gotta get your fun while you can.
It's getting harder to find new Z's
every day. If we're not careful pretty
soon the Z's are gonna be extinct.

PILOT

One more thing to blame on global
warming, man.

The others find this remarkably funny.

INT. LANGLEY - PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Gerry is on a regular phone line with Dexter.

DEXTER (on phone)

So what happened to you in Israel,
Ger? My people say you went off the
grid for almost twenty-four hours.

GERRY

Do they? And what people are those?

DEXTER (on phone)

Don't play cute, Ger.

GERRY

All I can tell you for now is that
I'm almost done. I just need one
more thing. I want to talk to somebody
who knows what went down at Franklin
Square.

DEXTER (on phone)

Jesus, Ger, let it go --

GERRY

Philadelphia was where we lost control.
What went down that day threw the
whole country into panic. Between
the people who stayed thinking it was
gonna be okay, and the people who
took off in blind panic because of
what they saw and ran right into those
things...who knows how many people
died because of what happened at
Franklin Square?

(beat)

The Pentagon says it was nobody's
fault. That those who served were
heroes, end to end.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

If that's true, then no one's got anything to worry about. But if it's not true --

DEXTER (on phone)

Ger, I've taken you as far as I can. I can't go there with you.

GERRY

Then I'll find a way on my own, I --

DEXTER (on phone)

What line are you calling on? Is this a land line?

GERRY

Yeah, when I found out the phone lines here at the base were working I figured I'd give the sat-phone time to recharge --

DEXTER (on phone)

Shit. Look, don't call here again, okay? Not on this number. Shit....

Dexter hangs up. Quickly.

EXT. LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Gerry carries his bags toward a waiting military helicopter. The same PILOT we saw in the cafeteria smiles with recognition and holds the door open as Gerry steps inside. Then he climbs into the front seat and the chopper RISES into the sky.

INT. AIR FORCE HELICOPTER -- DAY

The chopper is flying above some very rocky and isolated terrain. Gerry, wearing a radio headset, looks down at the ground as it flashes past beneath them, then glances forward as the pilot calls back to Gerry.

PILOT

Sir? We're registering a pressure drop in the fuel lines. We're going to have to land and check it out.

GERRY

Are we in a secure zone?

PILOT

Only partially. Should be okay if we don't stick around too long.

GERRY

Is there any other way to --

(CONTINUED)

PILOT

Negative. We can't risk running out
of fuel at ten thousand feet.
Shouldn't take long.

Gerry nods as the chopper begins its descent.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - GAS STATION -- LATER

The chopper sits beside a deserted gas station on an empty road. The words NO MORE GAS have been crudely painted on the front window. A corrugated tin shack and a storage area border a thick line of trees. The pilot and co-pilot check out the rear of the chopper as Gerry stretches his legs.

GERRY

Anything I can do to help?

PILOT

Not really, sir, unless you'd like to
check the garage and see if you can
find a pipe wrench? Biggest one
they've got. Might save us some time.

GERRY

Right.

Gerry heads across the lot to --

INT. GAS STATION -- CONTINUOUS

-- where he enters through a broken door. The place is a mess. The cash register is open, the drawer empty beneath a note that reads JIM -- WILL PAY YOU BACK LATER -- BOBBY.

He continues into the garage, where some tools remain on the work bench. He picks through them, looking for a pipe wrench. Doesn't see what he needs. Goes to one of two tall storage cabinets. As he approaches one, we notice that the door to the second storage cabinet starts to OPEN behind him. As it CREAKS Gerry spins around at the sound and --

-- a CAT emerges from the cabinet, sees him, and takes off. Gerry smiles, relieved, as he opens the first cabinet --

-- and a badly decomposed zombie in the overalls of a gas station attendant LURCHES OUT of the cabinet with a snarl.

Gerry tumbles over the counter as it lunges at him, its body so decomposed that muscles and tendons hang in tatters.

As Gerry scrambles to his feet and plunges back through the office we HEAR TWO GUNSHOTS from outside. He runs out to --

EXT. GAS STATION -- CONTINUOUS

-- where he heads for the chopper --

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

Over here! Help! Over --

-- only to find that while the chopper is still sitting on the lot, the pilot and co-pilot are gone, raising ominous possibilities about the gunshots heard a moment earlier.

The zombie roars out of the gas station, coming after him.

Gerry runs to the chopper, but the doors are locked. He turns to see more zombies heading his way from the woods.

GERRY

...ogod....

He takes off, running for all he's worth.

The zombies pursue.

Gerry crashes through the trees, breathing hard, terrified, trying to put distance between himself and his pursuers.

We catch glimpses of the zombies in pursuit, hear snarls and the crash of feet against underbrush.

Gerry zigs one way, then another, trying to lose them when he comes into a CLEARING...and stops, his eyes wide in horror.

Dozens of zombies lay on the ground, covering the clearing. They lay side by side, like beetles, blackened by sun, bloated and distorted by rain and the elements. They could be mistaken for dead bodies piled into a mass grave until --

-- Gerry INHALES in CLOSE-UP.

One of the zombies, hearing a living breath, opens its eyes.

They all open their eyes. Snapping awake like trap-door spiders, attentions sprung by the arrival of prey.

Gerry starts running again, his face a mask of terror.

He runs, stumbles, picks himself up, keeps going. The zombies close the gap, swarming at him from all sides. No way out.

Then: there's the RUSH of wind and the ROAR of rotors as the helicopter appears overhead. A rope-ladder is thrown out and hangs suspended in front of him, the space too narrow for a landing.

Gerry sprints for the ladder as the zombies close in, grabbing his clothes, snapping at him, jaws closing on air. GUNSHOTS from above using PIE explosive bullets take out several of them, but the rest keep coming.

With one final LEAP Gerry snares the rope ladder, hanging on as the chopper SOARS up into the air.

(CONTINUED)

Below, zombies glare up at the helicopter with naked rage.

INT. AIR FORCE HELICOPTER -- MOMENTS LATER

The co-pilot helps Gerry into the chopper, then slams the door shut. Taps the pilot on the back of his helmet.

CO-PILOT

Clear!

PILOT

Copy that.

(beat)

How about we save the sweep-and-clear teams some trouble?

CO-PILOT

Works for me.

The pilot brings the chopper around.

EXT. WOODS -- CONTINUOUS

The helicopter comes in low, heading toward the zombies. As soon as it's in range it FIRES from a belly-mounted minigun, splattering and scattering the zombies as, a moment later --

-- the chopper FIRES an air-to-ground NAPALM rocket that SLAMS into the group. The chopper soars upward and the EXPLOSION sends fire and smoke and blast roaring through the woods.

INT. AIR FORCE HELICOPTER -- CONTINUOUS

The pilots WHOOP as Gerry pulls on his headset.

PILOT

You all right, sir?

GERRY

Yeah...yeah, fine...thanks...I'd be dead right now if not for you guys.

PILOT

Yes, you would be.

The pilot turns to look at him, his expression deadly serious.

PILOT

And I'd remember that if I were you when it comes time to file that report of yours. Oh, and one other thing.

(beat)

Stay away from Franklin Square, Mr. Lane. Like the dead, some things don't react well to being dug up again.

(CONTINUED)

And in his eyes we see the truth: they did this to him on purpose, to intimidate him. Gerry says nothing as the pilot returns to his instruments and toggles his com system.

PILOT

Blue-14-alpha to base, tell the colonel...the message has been transmitted and received.

EXT. AIR FORCE HELICOPTER -- CONTINUOUS

As the helicopter soars off into the distance.

EXT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- EVENING

A military car pulls up, and a pale, exhausted Gerry gets out. Closes the door. The car pulls away as he crosses the street toward his apartment.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Gerry enters the silent apartment, closes the door behind him, and sets his bags down on the floor. The place is dimly lit by a few lamps here and there, the rest given over to shadows. We can HEAR water running somewhere.

GERRY

Karin...?

No reply. He continues into --

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

-- where Karin is washing clothes in the sink as he enters. She speaks without turning around to face him.

KARIN

Sorry. I didn't want to wake Constance, she just got to sleep.

He goes to her, holds her. She touches his face, concerned.

KARIN

You okay?

GERRY

Yeah, I'm just...glad to be home.

KARIN

So: tell me it's over. Tell me you got everything you need and we can get on with our lives again.

GERRY

Yeah. It's over. How're things here?

(CONTINUED)

KARIN

Good. We've got power and hot water
five hours a day now.

GERRY

And Rachel?

KARIN

She has her moments. She's in bed.
I haven't tucked her in yet. You can
do it if you want.

He nods, gives her a kiss and heads upstairs to --

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

-- where he nudges open the door to REVEAL Rachel asleep in bed. Moving quietly, he sits on the edge of the bed. Gently brushes the hair away from her face. He takes a long moment, just looking at her face in the half-light as we go to --

EXT. FROZEN LAKE - FLASHBACK -- DAY

Gerry is sitting beside an ice-covered lake, his shotgun a few feet away, half a dozen fishing lines extending into the water beneath the ice. He's been there a long time. There are no fish in the waiting bucket.

Arms folded tight against his chest for warmth, he rocks slowly back and forth for a moment...then slows...stops. Looks off.

A few hundred yards away, a lone deer, nearly starved, tries to find bits of grass beneath the snow. It hasn't seen him.

Hands trembling from the cold, Gerry reaches for the shotgun... but in the instant before he can grab it the deer SEES him and LEAPS toward the protective woods as --

-- Gerry GRABS the shotgun and FIRES wild, missing it. He starts running, feet pistoning snow, pursuing the deer through the woods, running and falling and running. He FIRES again --

-- and falls. When he looks up, the deer is gone. Exhausted and grieving, he SLAMS a fist into the cold ground, as if trying to wound the already wounded earth. He hits it again and again until he falls back, sobbing.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - FLASHBACK -- DAY

Gerry returns to the campground with nothing to show for his efforts. He passes the car with its camper shell.

Now both the frozen passenger and the driver are gone. Fresh drag-tracks lead to Stan's camper. Gerry continues past it.

INT. RV - FLASHBACK -- DAY

Rachel is in bed, fevered, eyes fluttering, barely conscious. As he did in the present, Gerry brushes the hair away from her face, which is sweating, pale. In BG, Karin watches with her hand over her face, tears flowing.

Gerry is also crying, the kind of tears that come in such a constant stream that they're no longer noticed, they're just there. He stands slowly, approaches Karin, who backs away.

GERRY

Karin --

KARIN

Do something.

GERRY

-- Karin, listen to me, I --

KARIN

Do something!

GERRY

There's nothing else to do --

KARIN

(cold, desperate)

Yes there is.

She locks eyes with him, a ferocity and an unspoken ultimatum behind her eyes. He understands at once...and there is horror and inevitability in his voice.

GERRY

No....

KARIN

Gerry, you have to --

GERRY

I can't...don't ask me...we can't do that...can't do that to her --

KARIN

If we don't she's going to die!

She yanks him around to where he can see Rachel.

KARIN

Look at her! Damn you, look at her, Gerry! Look at her and you tell me what you can't do! You tell me --

And she breaks down. Rushes away from him. He looks to Rachel, his soul in agony. He turns, looking for some escape from this moment, but there's nowhere to go....

(CONTINUED)

GERRY
God...god...god help us...god help
us...GOD...!

He turns and BURSTS out the door.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - FLASHBACK -- CONTINUOUS

The door BANGS shut as he leans against it in a moment of silent agony. Then, fighting for every step, he starts across the way... toward Stan's camper.

INT. RV - FLASHBACK -- MOMENTS LATER

We're looking OUT through a window as Gerry emerges from the camper carrying a small parcel wrapped in paper. He continues into the RV --

-- and hands it to Karin. She takes it silently and moves off. We HEAR paper being unwrapped.

INT. RV - FLASHBACK -- LATER

Rachel is sitting up in bed a little as Karin dips a spoon into a bowl of soup and meat, carefully tipping it into Rachel's mouth. She's trying to smile for Rachel, to let it seem like everything's all right, but tears are rolling down her face as she carefully portions out each spoon.

EXT. RV - FLASHBACK -- CONTINUOUS

Gerry is sitting on the cold ground, his back pressed to the RV...and the strangled sounds that come from him speak of horror and grief and pain and necessity, sounds no human throat should ever have to make...as now we're back in --

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - PRESENT -- EVENING

-- where Gerry looks on Rachel's sleeping face for a moment longer, then reaches off to one side of the bed --

-- and pulls out a long belt, like an airplane belt, with a clasp on one end. He reaches across the bed and pulls out a matching belt from the other side.

He slides one clasp into another. Click. Then another. With the familiarity of habit and long practice, he belts her into the bed. He fastens another one across the lower part of her body. She barely stirs.

As he leaves the room, allowing a sliver of light from the hallway to illuminate her face, we now understand what Karin meant by tucking her in.

And in his eyes we see a decision being made.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Dexter is coming out of a building in an unspecified location. He pulls his coat closer around him, the first touches of snow falling, as suddenly --

-- he's yanked into an adjoining alley by Gerry.

DEXTER

What the hell are you --

GERRY

I want Franklin Square, Dex. I want to know what happened.

DEXTER

Do you want to die? Is that it?

GERRY

I need to know.

DEXTER

Know what? What is it you so fucking much need to know?

GERRY

I need to know why!

Dex starts to pull away. Gerry pins him against the wall.

GERRY

I went north because there wasn't time to do anything else, because I waited too long, because I trusted. I could've applied to one of the Green Zones and gotten in, McEnroe did --

DEXTER

It was a lottery, there was no way to be sure --

GERRY

Bullshit! You know better and I know better! I didn't know it then, but I do now. And now I want to know why it happened, what went wrong at Philly, and why we had to go through all that. And you're going to tell me!

Dex finally manages to pull free, shoves Gerry back and pulls out a gun. Points it at him.

DEXTER

I'm giving you one chance, Ger. Walk away.

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

I can't do that! If I don't follow this through to the end I'm just as guilty as everyone else who let this happen!

(beat)

And so are you!

Gerry can see that Dex is hit hard by this. Nonetheless:

DEXTER

You and I are done, pal. You got that? You're out of your fucking mind. Stay away from me. Stay far fucking away.

And he heads back out into the street, leaving Gerry alone.

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gerry sits with Karin, eating in silence. Outside, the snow is falling.

KARIN

You okay?

He nods absently. She puts her hand on his, then moves off, leaving him alone with his thoughts. Finally we go to --

INT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Gerry emerges from the bedroom into the kitchen, lights a stove top burner with a match. Reaches for the coffee pot --

-- as suddenly the sat-phone RINGS with an incoming call. He checks the phone's display. It reads UNKNOWN CALLER.

He picks up the sat-phone, turns it to receive.

GERRY

Yes?

VOICE ON PHONE

A mutual friend said I should give you a call.

GERRY

Who is this?

VOICE ON PHONE

No names. I'll meet you in one hour. If you're not there on time, I'm gone.

GERRY

How do I know this is on the level?

(CONTINUED)

VOICE ON PHONE

You don't. Now write down this address.

Gerry reaches for a pen and paper.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE -- DAY

We're back where we started, but now it looks like a bombed out war zone. Apartment buildings facades cratered by blast, supermarkets devastated, the bridge cratered and torn by tank treads and explosions. We see a sign on the empty road that leads to the bridge: *FRANKLIN SQUARE*.

FAVOR a high-rise condo whose walls have been blown out, exposing the apartments within. Bed-sheets and clothes hang from exposed beams like weathered flags.

Gerry approaches the condo. Wind whips through the concrete canyon. Nervous, not sure if this is a set-up, he hurries through the piles of debris. Turns at the SOUND of pebbles slipping down a ruined wall. Blown-out windows stare down like the eyes of the dead as he enters

INT. ABANDONED CONDO -- DAY

Gerry steps into an upper floor of the condo, alone, anxious. Wind whips through the blown-out building. Then:

GENERAL CASEY (O.S.)

You're sure you weren't followed?

Gerry turns to see a uniformed **GENERAL HANK CASEY** behind him.

GERRY

Positive. I ditched the car half a mile back, hoofed it in from there.

The general nods, grudgingly accepting the assurance.

GENERAL CASEY

I don't have a lot of time. Plane's standing by at JFK. More goddamned looting in Dallas. Every time we get the place put back together --

GERRY

Were you here, at Franklin Square, when it all went down?

(casey nods)

I want to know everything. The details of what happened, the planning, the mistakes --

GENERAL CASEY

You don't ask for a lot, do you?

(CONTINUED)

Casey looks out one of the holes in the condo, where a wall has been blown out, exposing the devastated street beyond.

GENERAL CASEY

Americans are an all-or-nothing people, Mr. Lane. We like the big win, the touchdown, the knockout in the first round. It's not just about winning, it's about winning in a way that is devastating and uncontested.

(beat)

As we approached that first winter with the plague still out of control, people were terrified that we wouldn't be able to contain it. There was panic in the streets, armed crowds shooting anything that moved, riots....

(beat)

The administration decided that the country needed one well-publicized stand-up battle with us as the winners.

CAMERA GLIDES OUT of the condo into --

EXT. ABANDONED CONDO -- CONTINUOUS

-- HOVERING IN MID-AIR over the street as the walls of the condo start to REBUILD THEMSELVES...debris falling upward, windows un-shattering...we're moving backward in time, going back to the moment he's describing.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

A smack-down like that would help people calm down so we could do what was necessary to win this thing. It was the right decision. It was also the last right decision they made.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE -- DAY

Five companies of soldiers and heavy equipment move into position in the area leading to the Benjamin Franklin bridge while others direct the crowd that surges around the emplacements as a stream flows around stones.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

We set up barricades to force the Z's onto the Benjamin Franklin Bridge and the Delaware Expy. Combined with the flood of refugees coming in over the bridge, this would lead the dead right into our main line of defense. It was a natural choke point. So that's where the brass said we'd make our stand.

(beat)

What the fuck were they thinking?

(CONTINUED)

INTERCUT WITH CASEY IN THE PRESENT, IN THE BLASTED OUT CONDO.

As he paces, growing increasingly agitated by the memory.

GENERAL CASEY

They should've put us on the roofs. There should've been snipers in every balcony, every window. Hell, we could've put a whole company right on top of the A&P and turned the goddamned bridge into a shooting gallery. Just airlift in ammo, guns, beer and porta-potties. But no. Where'd they put us? On the ground!

BACK TO SCENE

As soldiers in bulky anti-contamination suits and guns get into position, building up sandbags and getting behind tanks as the last of the civilians race past. We find Casey in the past, in the midst of all this, looking pissed.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

Right on the fucking ground, behind sandbags! Sandbags! You know what you call that position? Cover and concealment. You know when you use it? When the enemy is coming at you with small arms fire, artillery and air-dropped ordinance! That sound to you like the enemy we were fighting? Did you see any Z's calling in air strikes?

BACK WITH CASEY

Pacing, agitated.

GENERAL CASEY

If we had to be on the ground then they should've put five companies on the firing line with as many guns and ammo as we could've carried. Fire until your gun starts to melt then get out of the way for the next guy. Instead they took up half the goddamn road with big-ticket toys, 'cause they wanted to impress the folks watching back home.

BACK TO SCENE

Casey in the past looks up as media helicopters swarm overhead while military choppers hang back for the moment.

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

They brought in CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox! I heard they even brought in the Christian Network News 'cause they wanted a front seat just in case this really was the end of the world. I even heard ESPN had a chopper up there, and folks in Vegas taking bets on how fast we'd wipe out the Z's.

Heavy equipment is moved into place as soldiers bark orders.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

We had tanks, Bradleys, armored Humvees, mortars, we had a bridge laying system and I still don't know what the fuck they were planning to do with that.

Massive trucks with satellite gear roll into position.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

We had electronic warfare vehicles crammed with radar and jamming equipment for Christ's sake. And when logic said we needed to move fast, what did they do? They stuck us in big, hot, bulky suits designed to protect against radiation and biochem weapons and if you were in one you couldn't run for shit. And what made those suits so heavy? A goddamned wireless networking system with GPS, downloadable maps, real time satellite recon, and the ability to hear and see what any other member of the unit was hearing and seeing.

BACK WITH CASEY IN THE PRESENT.

GENERAL CASEY

Think! You've seen these things! You're looking at the goddamned fucking walking dead! You're looking at the most horrifying sight you will ever see from cradle to grave!

BACK TO SCENE

Looking through an eyepiece that shows the zombies starting to emerge into the street. MULTIPLY the image to two, four, eight, sixteen different POINTS OF VIEW of the same scene.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

Now you're not just seeing the horror in front of you, you're seeing the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

horror times a thousand other eyes, a thousand other voices.

(beat)

You ever hear a thousand hardened jarheads at the same exact second take in a breath so hard, so sudden and shuddering that you could feel the fear in them? Feel that fear spread like wildfire as they recognized it in each other? I have. And every night I pray I never have to again.

BACK TO SCENE

As the zombies continue to pour into Franklin Square from the bridge and surrounding streets.

GENERAL CASEY

And then they came for us.

A soldier receives a transmission on his helmet radio, yells:

SOLDIER

Fire in the hole!

They hit the ground as a Comanche helicopter fires two ROCKETS which BURST into a hundred smaller bomblets that --

-- EXPLODE all over the street, blowing zombies apart and igniting the gas tanks of cars, causing SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS. Thick black smoke swallows the scene.

The troops CHEER. Media choppers SWING IN for a closer look.

The smoke CLEARS...and though many of the zombies have been destroyed, others have only been damaged. Limbs and organs hanging, they keep coming.

The cheers fade.

The Comanche FIRES again. Rockets and bomblets SLAM into the zombies, destroying many of them...but their numbers continue to grow as more joining their ranks from behind. Five, six, seven hundred...a thousand.

They keep coming.

The soldiers look nervously to each other. We SEE the carnage through eye-pieces networked to helmet cameras...grainy black-and-white video giving the scene a stark realism and horror.

ANOTHER SOLDIER

Fire!

Artillery cannons and chain-guns on tanks and Humvees BLAST out at the approaching tide, shredding the first rows and

(CONTINUED)

blowing up more buildings. The zombies' eyes never leave the soldiers in the distance...intense, intent, determined.

Hundreds of cannon, artillery and mortar rounds are fired. The road is transformed into a vision of hell: fire, smoke, explosions...a solid wall of absolute destruction.

Casey is hunkered down with his men as the firestorm continues.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

It was a fucking meat grinder, a wood chipper, we weren't even blowing them to bits anymore, they were evaporating into the air, blown into clouds of blood and organic material.

The firestorm seems to go on forever, a roar loud as the end of the world that grows and grows...and finally stops.

The smoke swirls and parts. The streets and buildings are covered in blood and body parts. Hundreds, maybe even a thousand bodies totally vaporized by the attack.

The next thousand keep coming. And the thousand after that.

The tanks, humvees and artillery FIRE, but in smaller numbers.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

Then it happened.

The soldiers look to the big vehicles, some of which have stopped firing.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)

The big guns, the tanks and humvees and Comanches...started running out of ammo.

SOLDIER

What the fuck...?

BACK WITH CASEY

In the present as he stalks the room.

GENERAL CASEY

They gave us all these toys...you'd think one of those freaking West Point jerkoffs would've made sure we had enough shit to shoot, wouldn't you?

(beat)

The Bradleys only carried a handful of ground-to-ground rockets, the kind that did us the most good. The rest of their racks could only handle ground-to-air rockets and heat-seekers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL CASEY (CONT'D)
They shot their wad of relevant
munitions in the first fifteen minutes.

BACK TO SCENE

As a tank FIRES a silver object that STREAKS past CAMERA.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)
You know what an armor-piercing
depleted-uranium dart does to a horde
of walking zombies?

FOLLOW the dart as it penetrates a hundred zombies, crashing
through chests and legs and stomachs and hearts, until it
comes out the other end, embedding itself into a wall.

The zombies who were holed by the dart keep coming, heedless
of the gaping wounds in their bodies.

GENERAL CASEY (V.O.)
Absolutely nothing.

The zombies are now uncomfortably close to the first line of
soldiers, too close now for heavy munitions fire. Fingers
tighten on triggers as the word comes --

ANOTHER SOLDIER
Open fire! Fire at will!

The soldiers OPEN FIRE on the zombies, who gain speed and
momentum now that they are within feeding range. Some are
struck in the head and fall but the rest keep coming, walking
right over the bodies of those who were destroyed.

Soldiers get to their feet from behind sandbags, firing.

SOLDIER
Die, motherfuckers! Die!

In an instant the zombies are all over them. The defense
line breaks, transforming into a series of desperate fights.
Zombies swarm through their ranks. Blood and screams. Gunfire
and snarls. Soldiers struggle hand to hand.

We SEE the battle magnified a hundred times over in the
soldiers' helmet cameras...one after another going to STATIC
as they are pulled down and killed.

A Humvee, swarmed by zombies, GUNS the engine in reverse,
trying to get the hell out of there...and SLAMS into a tank,
the accident cutting off escape for other vehicles.

An armored personnel carrier, also swarmed, BLASTS away with
its chaingun, striking another vehicle that EXPLODES, pouring
molten metal and fuel across the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

Zombies ablaze in burning fuel take down soldiers trying to retreat as more vehicles burst into flame.

It's a scene of utter, absolute carnage...an inferno...a rout.

In this we FIND General Casey, fighting for his life, surrounded by zombies, FIRING for all he's worth.

GENERAL CASEY
Retreat! Fall back! Get the hell
out of there!

He yanks a soldier away from a zombie only to find another coming right at him. He shoots it then turns to find --

-- a swarm of others coming at him. He raises his gun, knowing this is it when a HAND reaches out of a armored personnel carrier and YANKS him inside as somebody yells --

SOLDIER
Hang on!

-- and the APC ROARS over the edge of the bridge. It falls and BOUNCES hard, but keeps going.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - FRANKLIN SQUARE -- DAY

HELICOPTER SHOT looking down at the carnage, with other media choppers SOARING PAST beneath us...then we slowly --

-- PULL BACK and UP, higher and higher, until we can SEE the roads leading to the bridge, all of them choked with zombies drawn to the struggle...ten thousand, a hundred thousand...half a million of them. They look like a river surging toward the battle zone. With one last view of the sheer scope of it we go back to --

INT. ABANDONED CONDO - PRESENT -- AFTERNOON

-- where General Casey looks out at the wreckage from that day.

GENERAL CASEY
Three battalions, two armored
divisions, another fifteen hundred
infantry, two companies of Marines...
over five thousand men in all.

(beat)
One hundred and fifteen survivors.

GERRY
(quietly)
The news said three hundred.

GENERAL CASEY
The rest were infected.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL CASEY (CONT'D)
They flipped within three days and
had to be destroyed.

GERRY
I've heard it said that every army
fights the next war with the strategies
and tactics of the last one. Was
this the case with --

GENERAL CASEY
No. The problem was magical thinking.
The politicians, the brass, they saw
what was coming and refused to believe
it. We told them their strategies
wouldn't work and they refused to
accept it. The facts don't matter.
Global warming. Katrina. AIDs.
Evolution. You've got people deciding
something's not a threat because they
don't believe in it, because it's
inconvenient, because it's against
policy. That's magical thinking.
And when you enter the realm of magical
thinking, anything can happen.
(beat, softly)
Including zombies.

He turns back to Gerry, almost as though having momentarily
forgotten that he was there. Checks his watch.

GENERAL CASEY
I have to go. Plane's waiting.

He starts to move off when the scene suddenly takes a sharp
left turn as Gerry moves toward Casey.

GERRY
General...thank you. I needed two
last details for my report. One of
them was why the Battle of Franklin
Square went wrong. The other --
(beat)
-- you left out.

GENERAL CASEY
No, sir, I don't think so.

GERRY
I do. It was after Philadelphia fell
that the President implemented the
Radeker plan, wasn't it?

GENERAL CASEY
How do you know about --

GERRY
Was it or was it not?

GENERAL CASEY
Yes, it was. Once he received the plan he immediately gave the evacuation orders. I don't see what this has to do with --

GERRY
It has to do with the truth, General. The truth nobody's known until right now, because nobody had the information to put it all together.
(beat)
The battle of Franklin Square was in October. But you'd had the Radeker plan since August.

INT. DARK ROOM - FLASHBACK

Right where we left Radeker at the end of his scene with Rolihlahla...but we're seeing it from the OTHER END OF THE ROOM, from inside the shadows...where we find the President and General Casey.

ROLIHLAHLA
This man will save our people.
(beat)
This man will save all our people.
God help us. God help you.

PRESIDENT
This is insane.

He storms out into --

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

-- with Casey and other members of his inner circle.

PRESIDENT
We can't go along with this. A plan cooked up by the main strategist of a racist government? It's political suicide. Congress, the American people, they'd eat us alive before the zombies even got close.

He stops, wheeling on Casey.

PRESIDENT
General, the last I heard we're the last remaining superpower. We can blow up the whole goddamned planet twenty times over.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Now I want a simple answer to a simple question, and if I can't get it from you I'll get it from somebody else: are you or are you not capable of stopping these goddamned things using the tools and the strategies we've got right now?

All eyes are on Casey, who sees his job, his reputation, his prestige and his competence on the line...and nods.

GENERAL CASEY

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT

Then see to it.

The President and the others head off as Casey lingers.

GERRY (V.O.)

A German official told me, "Death is the stepchild of delay." I didn't now what he meant then, but I do now.

BACK TO SCENE

With General Casey and Gerry.

GERRY

You had the Radeker plan in hand for three months...and you sat on it! How many people died during those three months who didn't need to? How many more died in the panic that followed Philly and the months we lost afterward because the Radeker plan was politically inconvenient?

GENERAL CASEY

It wasn't my choice, the system --

GERRY

The system? General, you were the system, don't show up now after the fact trying to say "it wasn't my fault." Like everybody else you had a choice to make at the time and you made it. Big fish, small fish, "I'm just one guy, it doesn't matter, you can't fight the system," it's all bullshit because once you pile all those choices together they become the system, and the name of that system is cowardice and convenience and enlightened self-interest.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

(beat)

You talk about magical thinking, but magical thinking only works if those who know better go along with it.

(beat)

And you did.

With that, Gerry exits, leaving Casey alone with the truth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY -- EVENING

The shadows lengthen, the lights on in some buildings.

INT. UN BUILDING - GERRY'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Gerry's at the keyboard, typing his report as one of the interviews from earlier plays in BG. There's a sizable stack of printed manuscript beside the computer. We get the sense that this is going to be a very lengthy report.

INT. UN BUILDING - COPY ROOM -- DAY

Gerry is running off copies of his report. From the size of the stack it's at least five hundred pages.

We see a typed cover page: *UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMISSION REPORT ON THE ZOMBIE WAR, Prepared by Gerald Lane.*

INT. UN BUILDING - GERRY'S OFFICE -- DAY

It's several weeks later. Gerry is working as an interoffice packet lands at his desk. The packet is marked United Nations Printing Office. He unties the string and opens the packet.

A slender booklet slides onto his desk. The cover page reads *UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMISSION REPORT ON THE ZOMBIE WAR, Prepared by Gerald Lane.*

He picks it up...looks inside the packet in case there's more to it. Picks it up again. It's barely a hundred pages, if that. He takes it and marches out of the office.

INT. UN BUILDING - MCENROE'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Gerry is pacing, pissed, as McEnroe sits behind his desk, doing his best to be reasonable and placating.

MCENROE

You have to understand, Gerry, we appreciate your work and we kept all of your recommendations, all the core facts and figures --

(CONTINUED)

GERRY

You gutted it! You took out Radeker, Franklin Square, you took out everything that meant anything!

MCENROE

There's great concern from higher up the food chain that you took the mandate of finding out where improvements can be made for the future and turned it into a blame game.

GERRY

You can't do this --

MCENROE

It's already been done. The report's printed, it's going out this afternoon. Gerry, as we continue the difficult work of rebuilding, we're going to have to work together. While most of what you gave us will help in that effort, other parts of it are... problematic.

GERRY

Meaning politically embarrassing.

MCENROE

The depth of your report, the detail, it was amazing, Gerry, it really was, but it was just too...intimate.

GERRY

What the hell does that mean?

MCENROE

Too many opinions, too many feelings. That's not what this report was supposed to be about. We were looking for clear facts and figures, unclouded by the human factor.

GERRY

But the human factor's the whole point, Mac. If you cut that out you're creating the same sort of personal detachment that caused this in the first place! You're not preventing this from happening again, you're practically guaranteeing it! This happened because we let it happen, because we didn't listen to the voice of our own humanity.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GERRY (CONT'D)

(beat)

And at the end of the day, the end of the week, the end of history, isn't the human factor the only thing that separates us from those creatures? Take that away and what's left? Take that away, and we're them, they're us, and what's the point of anything anymore?

(beat)

I won't just roll over on this, Mac. I'll fight it.

MCENROE

And you'll lose. I don't understand why you're taking this so personally.

Gerry hesitates, it's the question he hasn't answered, the secret he's been carrying. He stalks away, doesn't look at McEnroe. Agonizes. Finally:

GERRY

During the war, we did things...we all did things to survive, that in another place and time we could never have done. Awful things. Terrible things. For the most part we did them with our eyes open.

(beat)

We did what was necessary. But Rachel --

INT. RV - FLASHBACK -- DAY

Rachel, in the RV, is looking a little better, though still weak. Holding an empty bowl, she manages to move toward the front of the RV.

GERRY (V.O.)

...but Rachel....

RACHEL

Mom...? Dad...?

She looks around, doesn't see them. Steadying herself, she moves to the kitchen. A large pot of soup is steaming on the stove. She puts the bowl down beside it. Looks around.

She sees Karin and Gerry outside, talking by the trees, outside earshot. Deciding she's still hungry, she reaches in to ladle out some more of the food. She digs the ladle down deep --

GERRY (V.O.)

She didn't know, she didn't know, she didn't --

(CONTINUED)

-- and comes up with the skeletal remains of a human hand, boiling in the broth to pull out every bit of nutrition.

She SCREAMS. A scream as big as the world, a scream that ECHOES ACROSS THE CUT TO --

INT. UN BUILDING - MCENROE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

-- where Gerry is pacing, distraught.

GERRY.

When she found out what we'd done... see, we hadn't had a chance to prepare her, or even lie to her, and it was too much for her.

(beat)

She knew what kind of things fed on human flesh, and when she realized what she'd done, something inside her just...broke. Part of her decided that if she ate the same thing they ate then she must be one of them.

(beat)

The technical term for it is a psychotic break.

He sits heavily across from McEnroe, covering his face.

GERRY

For days she didn't talk, as if she wasn't there anymore, inside her own body. After a while we were able to get her to respond, and the thing of it is, Mac...the goddamned thing of it is...sometimes it's her, just as she always was, but other times --

(beat)

We can't leave her alone.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Rachel is walking alongside Karin, who holds her hand tightly. Nearby we see several other children playing, their parents looking on or chatting. Like everyone else, they're armed.

GERRY (V.O.)

We try to go be with her when she goes outside, whenever she's with other people, because sometimes....

Rachel looks off to the other children, and suddenly her face darkens.

GERRY (V.O.)

...sometimes....

(CONTINUED)

Before Karin can react Rachel YANKS free and LUNGES for the other children, SNARLING and biting.

The other parents react instantly. Some reach for their weapons as Karin RUNS desperately to Rachel.

KARIN

No! No, don't!

She grabs Rachel, holding her tight as Rachel struggles to get loose. Karin reaches into her coat to pull out a hand-lettered sign on a looped length of string...a sign written in a mother's careful handwriting...a sign that says *Not Dead*. She forces it around Rachel's neck, crying out to the adults:

KARIN

She's not dead...she's not dead...
she's not dead!

With one last lunge, Rachel goes limp in Karin's arms, her eyes vacant. Karin, crying, rocks Rachel in her arms.

KARIN

She's not dead...not dead...not dead.

INT. UN BUILDING - MCENROE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

The room is very quiet for a BEAT, then:

GERRY

I need to be able to look Rachel in the eye, to look right down into her soul, wherever it's hiding in her, and tell her it's not going to happen again...that the common coin of our humanity is something deeper and more profound than personal convenience and enlightened self-interest...and more than that --

(beat)

-- I need her to understand, to believe that we're not them, and they're not us, and she's not one of them. I need to tell her that, Mac, and for both of us to know I'm telling the truth. Maybe it'll help her...maybe it'll do some good.

(beat)

Maybe it'll....

His voice fades away, and he realizes that he's crying. He looks away. Silence returns for a long BEAT. Finally, McEnroe clears his throat.

(CONTINUED)

MCENROE

Gerry, it occurs to me...we never signed a contract for the work you did for us, did we?

GERRY

No...no, there's nothing to compel you to use what I gave you, or --

MCENROE

If we don't have a contract with you, then anything you developed beyond what we use in our version of this report is by all rights your property. You can do with it as you wish.

GERRY

What're you --

MCENROE

I'm saying that legally you can do whatever you want with the sections we chose to delete. Put it online, in an article, a series of articles, a book...it's your material, Gerry, your research. We can't stop you.
(beat)

I imagine that when your version comes out I will be very cross with our legal department. Harsh words will be spoken, your credibility and reputation smeared, but in the end there's nothing we can do to stop you.

He hands the complete manuscript across to Gerry.

MCENROE

Take it. Go home. Kiss your children. Make love to your wife. And come back tomorrow. We have work to do.

Gerry takes the manuscript, moves to the door. Glances back.

GERRY

Thank you.

MCENROE

For what?

Meaning: we never had this conversation. Gerry nods and exits.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Gerry holds a thick envelope containing his manuscript. He looks up at the skyscraper that towers over him. He sees *Remember Philly!* spray-painted on the wall...and the look on his face says that this now has new meaning for him. He then enters the building as we TILT UP to REVEAL the name on the side of the skyscraper: COWAN & CLEAVES PUBLISHING, INC.

EXT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- AFTERNOON

Gerry gets out of a car, heading toward the front steps.

INT. PUBLISHING HOUSE - PRINTING FACILITIES -- AFTERNOON

Pages are ejected from a printing press, collated, dropped into stacks.

EXT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Gerry looks up the street and sees Karin sitting with Rachel on the front steps of the apartment...as his sat-phone rings. He answers it.

Yeah? GERRY

DEXTER (on phone)
How many assholes does it take turn the political infrastructure of the whole goddamned planet upside-down?

GERRY
I don't know, Dex...how many?

DEXTER (on phone)
Turns out...just one.
(beat)
Good luck, Ger. Stay out of the line of fire.

GERRY
You too, Dex.

He hangs up and continues up the walk to his apartment.

INT. PUBLISHING HOUSE - PRINTING FACILITIES -- CONTINUOUS

Bound editions come off the press bearing the title *WORLD WAR Z, An Oral History of the Zombie War*.

EXT. GERRY'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Gerry reaches the steps and pauses beside Rachel, who looks up at him and smiles. She is wearing the sign that says *Not Dead*. He touches her face, smoothes the hair out of her eyes, and continues into the apartment as --

(CONTINUED)

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-- we stay with Rachel, the sign across her chest swaying
gently as she plays. Not Dead.

Not Dead.

Not Dead.

FADE TO BLACK:

ROLL CREDITS under Paul McCartney's "Hope of Deliverance" and

FADE OUT:

End