

MASTERS OF HORROR 2

"The Screwfly Solution"

Written by

Sam Hamm

A BLACK DOT on a field of white. As we TRACK IN, spiraling slightly, the dot resolves itself into the STILL IMAGE of what seems to be a common HOUSEFLY - filling the screen in full, grotesque detail. The colors are faded, the print scratchy, and the narration stentorian, in the style of a fifties instructional film:

NARRATOR [V.O.]

The screwfly. Tiny - seemingly innocuous - but a deadly menace to men and cattle alike.

STOCK SHOT of cattle in a pasture, tails swinging at pesky flies. AUDIBLE INSECT BUZZ in B.G.

NARRATOR [V.O.] (CONT'D)

This vicious pest lays its parasitic larvae in cuts and open wounds, often with fatal results. In the 1950's, screwflies killed over 200 million dollars' worth of livestock every single year.

HUNDREDS OF FLIES swarming behind a screen. Then a sudden FLASH bleaches the screen.

NARRATOR [V.O.] (CONT'D)

Then: scientists bred millions of male screwflies, exposed them to sterilizing x-rays, and released them into the wild to mate. The result? A shattered reproductive cycle - a dwindling population - and within a few generations, the near eradication of the species.

When the glare subsides, the scene has changed to a pasture, where two scientists in BEEKEEPER'S GEAR are opening crates, releasing swarms of insects.

NARRATOR [V.O.] (CONT'D)

Today, modern science continues to develop new techniques - new strategies - new solutions - all for the betterment of mankind.

Another STOCK SHOT of cows. This group seems more content, somehow; for one thing, there's no audible insect buzz.

FADE THROUGH TO:

2

EXT. RANCH HOUSES - DAY

2

TWO ADJACENT BACK YARDS in a Houston suburb, divided by a low hedge. On the far side of the hedge is JOE, early fifties, stocky, crewcut. On the near side is his neighbor, BETTY, fortyish, well-botoxed. SUPER TITLE:

**Houston, TX
JULY**

Joe is on his back patio, swinging a garden hose to and fro. Betty is on her knees weeding the flower bed. She stands up, wipes her brow.

BETTY

Morning, Joe. Gonna be a hot one.

JOE

Hot one already!

BETTY

That's the God's truth. Would you like a lemonade if I fix some?

JOE

Naw. That's awful sweet of you. But I'm just fine, thanks.

BETTY

It's no tr-

Betty stifles a GASP. She has only now moved close enough to see over the hedge. Joe is hosing down his patio because it's covered in BLOOD.

There's quite a bit of it. You would almost think he had gutted a deer. RIVULETS OF RED run into a grated drain, into the surrounding grass.

JOE

Thanks just the same. I'm fine.

He gives her a neighborly wave. Terrified, she turns and walks slowly, deliberately, toward her back door, resisting the urge to peek back over her shoulder.

3

INT. KITCHEN - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER - DAY

3

A MOP sits in a bucket of BLOODY WATER. On the floor nearby, red-soaked rags are piled atop open sections of newspaper. Joe is down on his knees with a dishcloth and a bottle of Formula 409, trying to scrub crusted blood off the oven door.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Problem is, it's stuck in the seams between the glass and the metal housing. With a sigh Joe gets up, trudges down the hall, and returns with a TOOTHBRUSH.

The toothbrush seems to work much better than the dishrag. Joe is making excellent progress, whistling happily to himself, when the DOORBELL RINGS.

4 **INT. JOE'S HOUSE - ENTRY - DAY**

4

Joe opens his front door. There are two police cars parked outside. Three armed STATE TROOPERS are standing on his front porch and a fourth is waiting out at the curb.

TROOPER I
Mr. Spriggs?

JOE
Officers! What can I do for you?

TROOPER I
Well, sir, we had a call that there was a ... would you mind if we took a quick look around?

JOE
(genuinely mystified)
Please do. I apologize for the mess.
I was just tidying up ...

5 **INT. MASTER BEDROOM - A MOMENT LATER - DAY**

5

The bed has been stripped. TROOPER II crouches beside a laundry hamper and uses a pencil to lift out a flowered sheet. It's sticky with blood.

6 **INT. BATHROOM - A MOMENT LATER - DAY**

6

TROOPER III has a discovery of his own. The shower curtain has been ripped off its rod. It's neatly folded up in the corner with a bloody bath mat and a bloody throw rug.

7 **INT. GARAGE - A MOMENT LATER - DAY**

7

At the rear of the garage a door bursts open, and Troopers II and III enter with guns drawn, ready to shoot. They work their way around opposite sides of a gigantic SUV and discover, in the spot where the second car would usually park, a large, makeshift WORK TABLE resting on sawhorses.

Atop the work table lie THREE BODIES wrapped in tarpaulins.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

The Troopers exchange a grim look and begin undoing the canvases. Within moments they've revealed the faces of an ELDERLY WOMAN, who is probably pushing seventy; a younger, MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, mid-to-late forties; and a long-haired TEENAGED GIRL, sixteen, maybe seventeen.

8 **EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY**

8

Joe's hands are cuffed behind his back as the troopers hustle him to a COP CAR waiting at the curb.

TROOPER I
... can and will be used against you.
Now HOW 'BOUT IT, JOE? What the hell
HAPPENED HERE??

JOE
I told you ... it was the Lord ...
the Lord came and spoke to me ...

Trooper I shoves Joe into the (caged) back seat.

TROOPER I
Spoke to you? What did he say?

JOE
He said, "Joe, clean up this place."

The troopers shake their heads. The door slams shut.

9 **EXT. ADJACENT RANCH HOUSE - THAT MOMENT - DAY**

9

Next door, on the front porch, Betty and her husband PHIL watch as the cop cars screech off.

PHIL
Poor old Joe.

Betty gives him a look of utter disgust and storms inside.

PHIL (CONT'D)
What?

DISSOLVE TO:

10 **EXT. WOMEN'S SHELTER - DAY**

10

A converted Victorian on a tree-lined street in a college town; the sign outside identifies it as "A SAFE PLACE -- Women's Center." SUPER TITLE:

**Ann Arbor, Michigan
AUGUST**

11 **INT. SHELTER - OFFICE - DAY**

11

At a desk sits ANNE ALSTEIN, a youthful 37, lanky, athletic and quite lovely, in a slightly androgynous way. Just at the moment, though, her face is pained. The shades are drawn behind her; just off-screen, someone is gently SOBBING.

ANNE

It's the third time, Brenda. This can't go on. You know it can't.

BRENDA [O.S.]

The kids need -

ANNE

The kids do not need to see their mother looking like this.

ANGLE WIDENS, and we get our first look at BRENDA: housewife, early forties, her face a swollen purple mass of bruises and abrasions.

BRENDA

I have no one. No one to turn to ... but you.

Anne takes her hand as she breaks down crying.

ANNE

And we'll always be here. But the shelter is a stopgap solution. You need to make a real change.

(beat)

Your sister. In Florida. Didn't she offer to let you --

BRENDA

I can't get ahold of her.

ANNE

What do you mean?

BRENDA

I call. Nick answers. He says, "She's out." I say, where? He says, "I don't know." I say, have her call me. And he says he will - but she never does.

ANNE

Does she have a cell?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Yes. She doesn't answer it. I've left a dozen messages. This has been going on for a week.

(beat)

The thing that scares me ... her daughter lives there in town ... I was worried, so I called her ...

ANNE

And?

BRENDA

And her husband answers. He says, "She's out." I say, where? He says, "I don't know."

Anne seems to find this story rather unnerving herself.

CUT TO:

12 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK**

12

TIGHT ON a small television mounted under a cabinet. It's tuned to a cable news station, which is showing footage of adorable toddling PENGUINS.

ANCHOR [V.O.]

... baby penguins, who are actually drowning as the ice floes around them melt. Scientists say that if global warming continues to accelerate, the penguins could be extinct within fifty years.

CUT TO a smiling ANCHORWOMAN at her news desk.

ANCHOR

In Saudi Arabia yesterday, 150 women were publicly executed for violations of so-called Sharia law. After a similar incident last week in Iran, the UN released -

ANGLE WIDENS, revealing a mismatched trio of women in the kitchen preparing dinner. In addition to Anne, there's daughter AMY ALSTEIN, 14 and precocious, and their friend DR. BELLA SARTIANO -- late fifties, naturally pugnacious.

BELLA

Figures. 150 women dead, and penguins get top billing.

(CONTINUED)

Amy is busy decorating a cake that says "Welcome Home, Daddy." She looks up at the screen and scowls.

AMY

I just wish we could nuke those
fucking rag heads.

ANNE

Don't say "fucking."

BELLA

Don't say "ragheads."

AMY (CONT'D)

I can't help it. Why do they have to
hate on women?

BELLA

They can't control their own urges,
Amy, so they try to control us
instead. It's hardwired. Women
nurture, men destroy.

ANNE

Bella, that is steaming sexist
bullshit. My husband just spent five
months in Colombia trying to -

BELLA

He's one of the rare good ones.

ANNE

It's a welcome-home party! Could we
please go two hours with no gender
wars?

BELLA

I love your husband! He's a much
better feminist than you are.

(winking at Amy)

Never surrender.

Anne rolls her eyes. Bella's attention returns to the TV screen, where a troupe of gaunt, black-suited LOONIES - all men - are waving protest signs:

ANCHOR

- over 100 members of a religious
group calling itself the "Sons of
Adam" rallied to support two men
accused of killing an exotic dancer.
Rev. Randy Cooney called the two men
"martyrs of conscience."

*

(CONTINUED)

BELLA

Good God. There's your "fucking rag heads."

Anne stares at the screen; a graphic identifies the site of the protest as "JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA."

ANNE

Jacksonville, Florida. That's weird. My client today was just saying -

She never finishes the sentence. Amy's heard a car pulling up outside. She runs to the window.

AMY

DADDY'S HOME!!

13 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - ENTRY - NIGHT**

13

Amy races to the door and flings it open. DR. ALAN ALSTEIN, 39 and deeply tanned, takes her in an embrace so tight it nearly squeezes the breath out of her.

ALAN

Amy!! My God, you're almost as tall as your -

He looks up, sees Anne in the hallway behind his daughter. His face goes slack with joy.

ANNE

Oh, Alan.

ALAN

I can't believe how beautiful you are.

They fall into each others arms, and for a few blissful moments they don't even notice anyone else. Not Amy, not Bella - who's standing there with the cake in her hands - and not DR. BARNHARD BRAITHEWAITE, sixtyish and gay, who's stranded on the front porch, luggage piled all around him.

AMY

Hi, Uncle Barney! Welcome home.

As Barney gives Amy a hug and smooch, he makes eye contact with Bella - his natural adversary of many years' standing.

BARNEY

Woman! Fetch my pipe and slippers.

(CONTINUED)

BELLA

You pig. I haven't wanted to kill
you in five months.

Realizing that Anne and Alan have no immediate plans to
disentangle, the three of them head for the kitchen.

14 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

14

Dinner is over, and the entire group is wolfing down Alan's
welcome-home cake (with generous helpings of ice cream).

ALAN

... so keep the calendar clear.
We're all invited back in February.
The whole family.

ANNE

Why?

BARNEY

My God. You didn't tell them ... ?

ALAN

(slightly embarrassed)
Apparently we've been awarded some
sort of Presidential medal.

ANNE

Alan -- !

BARNEY

It's the highest honor they ever
bestow. On a civilian.

ALAN

Of foreign extraction.

BARNEY

On Tuesdays and Thursdays.
(to Amy)
Your brilliant father - and I - are
helping them eradicate a very nasty
pest called the canefly.

AMY

What does it do?

BARNEY

It flies in your ear, or up your
nose, and lays its eggs in your head.

(CONTINUED)

AMY

Like *Alien*!

BARNEY

Exactly like *Alien*. And when those little larvae hatch, they're very hungry. They start to eat ...

Amy's face screws up in disgust. Anne throws up her hands.

ANNE

Barney! Jesus! More dessert, anyone?

BELLA

So what's the gimmick this time?

ALAN

We cooked up a little enzyme that interferes with the, uh, male reproductive routine.

BELLA

Disseminated how?

ALAN

Crop dusters.

BELLA

With what effect on the other indigenous species?

BARNEY

It's not a pesticide, Bella. It's canefly-specific. It has no effect on other species.

BELLA

Really. Well, let's say I'm Mother Nature. Let's say I made the canefly for a purpose - to keep us humans out of the rain forest.

Barney rolls his eyes. Anne groans, anticipating fireworks.

(CONTINUED)

BELLA (CONT'D)

So now the canefly's gone. We start clear-cutting trees to make room for beef cattle - which also hate caneflies, by the way - and suddenly, thousands of species are dead, deprived of their natural habitat - and we've also lost our primary source of oxygen.

BARNEY

Bella, we're talking about an extremely lethal pest.

BELLA

Really. Well, if you're a polar bear, and your ice floe's melting, maybe we're the pest!

BARNEY

Speak for yourself, darling.

ANNE

Bella doesn't have children.

Bella sputters at this seeming non sequitur.

ANNE (CONT'D)

You're in a clinic, in Colombia, like Alan was, and there's a child, or a baby, in agony, screaming ... facing death, or paralysis, from these parasites.

(beat)

Do you look at her mother and say "It's okay, we're the pest"?

BELLA

Look. We mess with nature simply because we can. And it will catch up with us. And I do sometimes hope we wipe ourselves out before we destroy the entire planet.

(beat)

But to answer your question, yes, I would save the baby.

Bella's cell phone rings. When she sees the caller ID on the display, a troubled look crosses her face.

BELLA (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry, but I have to take this.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3)

14

She excuses herself from the table. Anne and Alan exchange a look of mild concern as Barney gathers dishes.

AMY

Wow. She's bugging tonight.

BARNEY

Good old Bella. The only epidemiologist who roots for the disease.

15 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - FIVE MINUTES LATER**

15

The Alsteins and Barney are in full cleanup mode when Bella returns.

BELLA

Afraid I have to do you the favor of cutting this delightful evening short. That was the National Institutes of Health. I'm on a plane tomorrow morning.

ALAN

What's going on?

BELLA

The bird flu has finally arrived. Whole town's going under quarantine.

There's something odd in her manner. Barney shoots her a skeptical look.

ALAN

What town?

Bella glances at Anne. She hesitates before answering.

BELLA

Jacksonville, Florida.

16 **EXT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - NIGHT**

16

Good-nights and thank-you's as Barney, suitcases in hand, walks down the front steps with Bella, who is fishing in a shoulder bag for her car keys. As soon as they're out of Alan and Anne's earshot ...

BARNEY

No more bullshit. What's really happening?

(CONTINUED)

BELLA

It's classified, Barney. If I tell you, I'm in deep, deep trouble.

BARNEY

In that case, I should certainly buy you a drink.

Barney throws his bags in Bella's trunk and the two of them climb into the car. Meanwhile, on the front porch ...

ANNE

Jacksonville, Florida. That's so bizarre. What are the odds of -

AMY

Mom! Dad! Look!

Amy points overhead at a BRIGHT LIGHT hurtling earthward, diagonally bisecting the black canvas of the sky.

ALAN

Falling star! Better make a wish.

She crosses her fingers, squints, and wishes.

ALAN (CONT'D)

What'd you wish for?

AMY

Can't tell you. It's - HEY!!

As they watch, the "falling star" levels off, makes a mid-course correction, and zips off to the north. Anne and Alan laugh. Amy groans in disappointment.

AMY (CONT'D)

I guess this means I don't get my wish.

ALAN

Depends entirely on what you wished for. C'mon, it's your bedtime.

As the three of them head inside, Anne discreetly slips a hand onto Alan's ass and gives it a squeeze.

ANNE

I already got my wish.

17 **INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

17

Amy in bed with her IPod, reading a paperback. When she pulls out her earbuds she hears RHYTHMIC MOANING from down the hall.

She immediately reaches for a cell phone on her night stand.

AMY

Hi, it's me. They're doing it.

18 **INT. ALAN AND ANNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

18

A noisy simultaneous orgasm - after which Anne, who's on top, collapses into Alan's arms, smiling. She makes a little animal noise, rubs her face against his chest hair, buries her nose in his armpit.

ALAN

What are you doing?

ANNE

I'm smelling you. I haven't smelled you in five months.

(beat)

God, I missed you. I'd go to the shelter, talk to the women there ... I could just feel myself turning into Bella.

ALAN

I got back just in time.

ANNE

Were you surrounded by native girls?

ALAN

Yeah. They were all nineteen. I had to teach 'em to wear shirts.

Smiling crookedly, she punches him in the chest.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Now Barney made out okay. He found a couple of big strapping research assistants who received many a lavish gift ...

(beat)

I kept hoping to meet a bony-assed blonde with a PhD. in romantic poetry. They're kinda scarce there.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

ANNE

We're so lucky, Alan. When I'm with you it's like the whole ugly world just goes away.

(beat)

I'm so selfish. I want you with us all the time.

19 **INT. BARNEY'S STUDY - NIGHT**

19

Barney sits at a desk littered with printouts and news clippings. On the screen of his laptop is a news story: "FOURTH MULTIPLE HOMICIDE IN HOUSTON."

Beside the laptop is an open map of the U.S. Barney makes a red "X" over Houston. There are five little x's in a neat row running from Florida to Texas.

DISSOLVE TO:

20 **EXT. ROAD - DAY**

20

A CONVOY OF VEHICLES cruises past a BILLBOARD which features a toothsome bikini model selling beer/suntan oil/mouthwash/whatever. Someone has sprayed a burqa of black paint over most of her body, from shoulders to knees. Over this, in red graffiti, is the legend "GENESIS 3:16."

SUPER TITLE:

**Jacksonville, FL
AUGUST**

21 **INT. CAR - THAT MOMENT - MOVING - DAY**

21

TWO UNIFORMED MILITARY MEN in the front. In the back, a couple of (male) SCIENTISTS - and Bella.

Bella is leafing through a dossier containing documents and photos. We see pictures of a young street preacher (labeled "RODNEY BEARDEN") and a grinning G.I. ("PFC. WILLIAM HOLICKY") - and beneath those two, grisly crime-scene photos of DEAD WOMEN on the floor of a bar. *

The car slows at a roadblock. The DRIVER rolls down the window and hands a sheaf of papers to an ARMED SENTRY. *

The Sentry examines the paperwork, then glances into the back seat and spots Bella. His eyes bug out. *

He signals for the driver to wait and vanishes with the sheaf of papers. A moment later, we hear LOUD CURSING O.S.: *

*

(CONTINUED)

MAJOR HEINZ (O.S.) *
Jesus. What in the holy hell are *
they thinking of? *

MAJOR HEINZ approaches the vehicle, growls at Bella. *

MAJOR HEINZ (CONT'D) *
Which one are you? Doctor what? *

BELLA *
Dr. Bella Sartiano. From the *
National Institutes of Health. *

MAJOR HEINZ *
Step outside, please. *

Bella climbs out of the car -- and realizes that the Sentry *
is already removing her bags from the trunk. Maj. Heinz *
slaps the roof of the car, waves it through the checkpoint. *

BELLA *
I'm here on orders from Washington, *
D.C. You have no authority to detain *
me here. *

MAJOR HEINZ *
Do you understand the situation here, *
ma'am? As of this afternoon we have *
eleven hundred homicides ... *

BELLA *
That's why I'm -- *

MAJOR HEINZ *
... all of them women. Like you. *

Before Bella has a chance to digest the news, Maj. Heinz *
turns away. The Sentry grips her elbow -- firmly -- and *
steers her toward a STAFF CAR idling nearby. *

BELLA *
Major? I'm an epidemiologist. I *
need to take blood samples. Air *
samples. Water samples. *

MAJOR HEINZ *
We're talking murders, ma'am, not *
diseases. *

BELLA *
The two are related. What do you *
think -- 1100 women all got a little *
too "mouthy"? *

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

Maj. Heinz gives her a look -- *don't tempt me* -- as he holds *
the door of the staff car open. *

MAJOR HEINZ *
We'll see that you're comfortable. *

BELLA *
You're very chivalrous. *

With a snort of resignation, Bella climbs in. As the Major *
slams the door and walks around to the opposite side, she *
opens her dossier and digs out the photo of PFC Holicky. *

BELLA (CONT'D) *
This soldier -- the one who killed *
the stripper -- is he still in your *
custody? *

22 **OMITTED**

22 *

23 **INT. CORRIDOR/CELL - NIGHT**

23 *

Bella is escorted down a long hallway by SGT. WILLARD MEWS. They pass two men headed in the opposite direction: MAYOR BLOUNT (mid-40's, portly) and a PASTOR clutching a bible.

SGT. MEWS
Mayor Blount. Father.

The two men DO A TAKE at the sight of Bella. They seem astonished - it's as if they've just discovered a live stegosaurus in the powder room.

At the end of the hallway is a holding cell, and in the cell, sprawled on his bunk, is PFC HOLICKY, looking rather less jolly than in his photo. His ribs are bandaged and his right arm is in a sling.

SGT. MEWS (CONT'D)
Private. This is Dr. Sartiano. You are to answer her questions and cooperate with her in any way she requires. Do you understand?

PFC HOLICKY
I don't owe her any explanations.

Sgt. Mews starts to go off on him, but Bella quiets him with a gesture. She unfolds a chair alongside the cell, pulls a notepad and micro recorder from her shoulder bag.

*

BELLA
You're the one that killed the dancer.

*

PFC HOLICKY
Well, ma'am, I can't say for certain who killed who. I did my bit.

BELLA
You regret it?

PFC HOLICKY
Regret being in here.

BELLA
Did you know this street preacher, this Rodney Bearden ... ?

*

PFC HOLICKY
Never seen him before that night. We sure noticed him, though. An oddball. Kinda stood out.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

BELLA

In what way?

PFC HOLICKY

Seemed unusual, that's all. Fella goes to a titty bar, and tries not to look at the girls ... ?

24 **EXT. BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

24

A STRIPPER in high heels and fishnets is gyrating on the bar. A couple of stools away, averting his eyes as he nurses a soda pop, is a young man in a cheap black suit: RODNEY BEARDEN, pale, gaunt, and damp. *

PFC HOLICKY [V.O.]

He kept fiddling with something in his hand. Clutching it. And he's bleeding all over his napkin.

(beat)

It was barbed wire.

Directly across the bar, watching Rodney, are PFC HOLICKY and two other G.I.'s. They chuckle as the stripper moves one pole closer to Rodney and demonstrates a series of highly athletic moves. *

PFC HOLICKY [V.O.] (CONT'D)

Well, anyhow, Fawna, she gets right up in his grille, and she's givin' him a pretty good show, you know, I think she took him as a challenge.

Unable to ignore Fawna any longer, Rodney drops his bloody barbed wire. He grabs his soda glass and SMASHES IT against the bar. Clambering onto his barstool, he LUNGES at the stripper, SLASHING WILDLY at her face and throat. *

Screaming, she stumbles backward and falls off the bar. The BARTENDER whips out a gun, SHOOTS Rodney in the gut. *

25 **BACK TO SCENE - ON BELLA AND PFC HOLICKY**

25

BELLA

"Fawna." You knew her name.

PFC HOLICKY

Yeah.

BELLA

You went there often. They said you were something of a regular.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

PFC HOLICKY

Yeah.

BELLA

Well, I understand about Rodney, and
why he did it. I don't understand
about you.

*

PFC HOLICKY

I didn't either. At the time. But I
know now ...

26 **EXT. BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

26

TIGHT ON PFC HOLICKY'S IMPASSIVE FACE as behind him, two
other STRIPPERS help the battered, bloody Fawna to her feet
and pull a robe around her. As they lead her to a dressing
room, PFC Holicky gets up off his stool and falls in behind
them. He discreetly removes a SWITCHBLADE from his pocket.

PFC HOLICKY [V.O.]

... that the spirit of God ...

Coming up behind the three strippers, he grabs one by the
hair and FLINGS HER roughly to the floor. As the second
turns to face him, he drops her with a rabbit punch to the
face. And that leaves Fawna, whom he pins to the wall with a
forearm, and STABS REPEATEDLY --

PFC HOLICKY [V.O.] (CONT'D)

... had entered me, and cleansed me
...

-- until his horrified fellow G.I.'s arrive to pull him off.
They wrestle him away from the dying Fawna, who slumps to the
floor. With the bartender's gun trained directly at his
forehead, PFC Holicky smiles, raises his hands and lets his
knife drop to the floor.

PFC HOLICKY [V.O.] (CONT'D)

... and at long last made me right.

They drag him to the exit, past gunshot Rodney, who lies
bleeding on the bar -- using his broken glass to GOUGE AT his
own crotch.

*

27 **BACK TO SCENE - ON BELLA AND PFC HOLICKY**

27

PFC HOLICKY

In the garden, see, man lived in a
state of innocence and bliss. Then
woman arrived -- the temptress -- and
wrecked God's plan.

(CONTINUED)

BELLA

But woman was part of God's plan.
It's in the Bible. "Male and female
created he them."

No reply. Bella is mildly unnerved to realize that PFC
Holicky's laser-like gaze is focused on her (middle-aged)
cleavage. She quickly buttons an extra button.

PFC HOLICKY

Even the devil quotes scripture.

BELLA

Before this happened, had you ever
been -

Without warning, PFC Holicky snakes a hand through the bars
and grabs at her. She RECOILS ABRUPTLY, almost falling out of
her chair. Notepad and recorder clatter to the floor.

She hesitates to pick them up. He might make another grab at
her. The two of them lock eyes for a moment; then PFC
Holicky backs away from the bars, wagging a finger at Bella
and LAUGHING eerily.

PFC HOLICKY

Oh, no. No. See, I understand why
they brought you here, and I'm not
falling for it. I know your kind.

(beat)

That's what you lure 'em with, isn't
it, those big old titties of yours.
Get 'em hard. Get 'em hard enough to
chop wood. And then you climb right
up on 'em with that big old sloppy -

BELLA

(crisply)

Guard?

DISSOLVE TO:

28 **INTERCUT: PRIVATE OFFICE/BARNEY'S LAB - NIGHT**

28

Bella has set up shop in an empty room down the hall from
Major Heinz's office. She hovers over a laptop as she talks,
via cell phone, to Barney back in Ann Arbor.

BELLA

Yeah. The first one's a standard
evangelical crank. Second one never
cracked a Bible in his life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BELLA (CONT'D)

It's like this psycho religion just jumped into his head.

A CARDBOARD BOX on the floor is full of RELIGIOUS TRACTS -- *Back to Eden* and others, such as *Man Listens to God* and *Get Thee Behind Me, Satan!* Bella has a few of them spread out on the desk before her as she talks. There are a dozen more boxes stacked up in the corner.

BARNEY

You said what, 1100 dead?

BELLA

In Jacksonville, Barney. The NIH is tracking a half-dozen outbreaks. Pensacola, Baton Rouge, Houston -

BARNEY

Let me guess. Austin ... El Paso ... Scottsdale ...

BELLA

Jesus, Barney, how'd you -

BARNEY

Tucson. San Diego.

BELLA

Nothing in Tucson or San Diego ...

Barney swivels in his chair. Conveniently, there's a Mercator-projection MAP OF THE WORLD on the wall nearby. The cities he's just named are marked by COLORED PUSH-PINS.

BARNEY

They'll be next. I'm looking at a map, Bella. It's a straight fucking line.

BELLA

What are you saying ... ?

BARNEY

Thirty degrees north. Due west of Sakakah, Saudi Arabia, and Shiraz, Iran.

ANGLE WIDENS so that we can see the entire map. TWO LINES OF PINS span multiple continents: thirty degrees north, thirty degrees south.

BELLA

The Horse Latitudes.

(CONTINUED)

BARNEY

The intertropical convergence zone.
Bella, what kind of religious mania
follows an airborne disease vector?

BELLA

I'll tell you this. Something's
fucking with their chemicals. And
whatever it is, it's triggered by
sexual arousal -- just like your
bugs.

29 **INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - HALLWAY**

29

Sgt. Mews is on sentry duty outside. He's reading a
religious tract, *Back to Eden*, when Mayor Blount takes a seat
on the bench beside him.

MAYOR

Reading the book, I see. What do you
think of it?

SGT. MEWS

It's interesting, sir. It's ...
deep.

The Mayor claps an avuncular hand on Sgt. Mews's knee.

MAYOR

Have you ever seen an angel,
Sergeant?

SGT. MEWS

No, sir, I haven't.

MAYOR

I'll tell you something ... they're
not at all what you'd expect.

30 **INT. PRIVATE OFFICE - TEN MINUTES LATER**

30

TIGHT ON THE SCREEN of Bella's laptop. She's just Googled up
a news dispatch from India, and she's reading it so raptly
she barely notices that Mayor Blount has entered.

MAYOR

Dr. Sartiano. Did you find what you
needed? *

BELLA

Yeah, thank you, Mr. Mayor ... have a
look at this ... *

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

The jovial Mayor strolls behind the desk, looks over Bella's shoulder at the screen.

BELLA (CONT'D)

New Delhi. A raft of corpses in the river, so many the boats couldn't pass ... all women.

(shaking her head)

It's not just here. It's global. Something's ... happened.

MAYOR

Something glorious has happened.

Bella turns, suddenly alert, and stares up apprehensively at the beatific under lit face of the Mayor.

31 **INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OFFICE - NIGHT**

31

Sgt. Mews hears MUSIC coming from outdoors. He gets up to open a window.

Just off the parking lot, under a tree, there's a whole group of men - cops, soldiers, guardsmen - SINGING in eerie, beautiful harmony. They're led by the pastor we saw earlier in the hallway, who is strumming his guitar under the big elm.

Sgt. Mews seems absolutely transported. A look of blissful calm spreads across his face as he HUMS ALONG. He hears a CRASH, a piercing SCREAM, and the sound of a scuffle in the office behind him - but his only reaction is irritation. The noise is drowning out his beautiful melody.

Eventually the Mayor emerges from the office behind him.

MAYOR

I took care of that for you.

The Mayor's face is covered with scratch marks. His zipper is open. His crotch and his hands are covered with blood. He gestures for Sgt. Mews to follow him into the office.

32 **INT. PRIVATE OFFICE - A MOMENT LATER - NIGHT**

32

Neither man shows any trace of emotion as the Mayor gestures toward his handiwork on the floor.

MAYOR

She was one of those crypto-females.

That's the worst kind.

(beat)

You'll need to dispose of her.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

SGT. MEWS

Yes sir.

33 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - NIGHT**

33

The doorbell is ringing frantically. A groggy Alan stumbles down the stairs in boxers, pulling a bathrobe around him. He opens the door and finds TWO FEDERAL MEN holding up ID badges for his inspection.

FED

Agent Keane. FBI

*

ALAN

What's this about?

*

FED

Sir, there's a flight leaving in one hour. We very much need you to be on it.

*

ALAN

What's this about?

FED

Dr. Bella Sartiano told us you had information that could be of vital importance -

ALAN

Bella? When was this?

FED

About ten minutes before she died.

Anne stumbles down just in time to catch the tail end of the conversation. She and Alan exchange a look of shock.

The Feds march down to a town car idling at the curb. Barney waves to Alan from the back seat.

DISSOLVE TO:

34 **INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY**

34 *

On a large projection screen, INSECTS swarm in profuse numbers. A series of progressively larger magnifications bring us closer to the bugs, until a single pair of SPRUCE BUDWORM MOTHS fills the screen - male and female locked in what is obviously a MATING DANCE.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN [O.S.]

This is the normal mating behavior of the spruce budworm moth. Now watch what happens when we expose them to the enzyme we developed.

The onscreen video CUTS TO another pair of moths. Instead of moving behind the female, as in the previous shot, the male budworm remains in front of her - and attempts to MATE WITH HER HEAD.

ALAN [O.S.] (CONT'D)

The male connects with the female, as before, but the turning instinct is now artificially blocked. He's forgotten how to do it; he attempts to mate with ... her head.

(beat)

Needless to say, the moth pregnancy rate goes drastically down.

Now Alan steps in front of the screen. He signals to Barney, who's manning a laptop/projector combo at the back of the room, and the lights come up. The two of them are giving a presentation to an roomful of openly impatient SCIENTISTS, MILITARY BRASS, and POLITICIANS. SUPER TITLE:

**Washington, D.C.
SEPTEMBER**

*

SENATOR

Well, gentlemen, I enjoyed the show, but I have to wonder what this bug pornography has to do with our current predicament.

MILD CHUCKLES from the group. Alan forces a smile.

ALAN

We believe, sir, that the recent incidents in Jacksonville, Pensacola, Orlando, Shreveport, El Paso, Scottsdale, and elsewhere ... may be the result of a deliberate effort to tamper with the human reproductive cycle.

A HUBBUB in the room. This appears to be a new idea.

GENERAL

So you're suggesting that this enzyme of yours has somehow escaped into the human population?

(CONTINUED)

BARNEY

No. It's tailored to one species. To work on us, someone would have to design a human-specific version.

ALAN

In human, in most mammals, the male sexual urge has always been closely linked to aggression. Somehow has apparently figured out how to erase the distinction.

GENERAL

If this is true, you're talking about a deliberate attack. Bioterror. But who?

SCIENTIST

That religious cult. The "Sons of Adam."

ALAN

No religious cult has the technical know-how to do this.

BARNEY

The religion, gentlemen, is not a cause - it's a symptom. This phenomenon is spreading along a standard disease vector and it is quite contagious.

GENERAL

The idea of attacking women ... that sounds to me like Islamic fundamentalists.

ALAN

Obviously we haven't been clear. We don't think this is rooted in hostility to women. We think it's a concerted effort to ... exterminate ...the human race.

*
*

SCIENTIST

You're not making sense! Whoever's behind this would have to be suicidal!

*

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

It's happening, sir. And until we figure out a cause, and a cure, we need to undertake the immediate evacuation of the female population.

GENERAL

Meaning what?

*

ALAN

There's no nice way to say this. If they're south of the 35th parallel, they're in danger. We need to put them in camps.

A general UPROAR among the onlookers.

BARNEY

And we should be in immediate mass production on two drugs - Depo-lupron and Depo-provera ...

Only one man in the audience recognizes those brand names:

SCIENTIST

Wait a minute - you're talking about -

*

BARNEY

Chemical castration.

(beat)

Mandatory for military, rescue workers, law enforcement ... highly recommended for everyone else.

Which causes a roomful of wide eyes and shocked murmuring.

ALAN

I'll put this bluntly, sir. I'm a married man. I have a daughter. And I'm a potential murderer. So are you. So is everyone else in this room.

GENERAL

I won't ask our brave young men to line up for some ... shot that takes away their manhood. There must be some alternative.

BARNEY

There is. Actual castration.

35 **CLOSEUP - MAP** 35

SLOW TRACK along a Mercator map of the world, with red lights blinking on all along the horse latitudes: 30 degrees north, 30 degrees south.

36 **INT. WOMEN'S SHELTER - DAY** 36

The entry of the shelter is jammed with women - a couple dozen at least. Most of them have a couple of hastily-packed suitcases; they wear loose, shapeless clothing (hooded sweat gear, etc.) that downplays any hint of sex.

Trying to work her way through this mass of humanity is Anne. She's on her cell phone, shouting over the din.

ANNE

We can't take another busload! We don't have enough beds now.

(beat)

Have you tried Lansing? How about Flint? ... Fine, then. We'll do what we can, all right?

Anne's client Brenda comes down the stairs and scans the group: black eyes, bruised faces, an arm in a cast.

BRENDA

Where's this batch from?

ANNE

Alabama, I think. Know where we can rustle up a couple of hundred spare blankets?

BRENDA

(chuckling)

You know, Anne, all those months, I thought you were normal, and I was odd. But now you see, don't you: I'm the normal one. I was the normal one all along.

37 **EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - ANN ARBOR - DAY** 37

FEMALE REFUGEES in their hooded-sweatshirt burqas wander the sidewalks in tight packs, avoiding eye contact with the locals. A SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION CREW eyes them appreciatively as they pass.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Ma'am? Show us your tits, ma'am?

(CONTINUED)

He hoists his own shirt, exposing not just tits but a huge, hairy pot belly - cracking up his cronies as the cluster of women scurries off.

At this very moment Anne and Amy exit a nearby store, carrying shopping bags full of bed linens, towels, etc.

AMY

Mom! Not my room -

ANNE

Honey, they're been through terrible things down there. And we're up north. We're safe. We have to help.

AMY

I know. But why can't they just stay in the guest room?

As they pass, the CONSTRUCTION WORKERS start a fresh round of whistles, catcalls, crotch-hefting, etc. Anne instinctively grabs Amy by the arm and quickens her pace.

ANNE

Amy, we need to have a talk about the ... the way you dress.

AMY

Oh, they're just creeps.

Amy, in a perverse frame of mind, pauses just long enough to WIGGLE HER ASS at the construction workers. Then, without looking back, she flips them the bird.

ANNE

Amy, Jesus Christ!

Anne glances back and sees that a HARDHAT has peeled off from the group to follow them down the sidewalk. She breaks into a trot, dragging Amy behind her.

As the two of them climb into their yellow VW beetle, the Hardhat tips his helmet, flashes a gracious smile, and FLAPS HIS TONGUE lewdly.

Anne pulls out of the parking space, so rattled she barely notices the CONVERTIBLE speeding past -- nearly sideswiping her. The chortling FRAT BOYS in the back seat chuck a half-empty beer can onto the hood of Anne's VW.

38 CONTINUED:

38

FRAT BOY
LEARN TO DRIVE, BITCH!

Anne hits the brakes; the ragtop cuts in front of her. Three or four REFUGEES are in the crosswalk up ahead, but the convertible shows no sign of slowing even though the light has just turned red. In fact ... it ACCELERATES.

SCREAMS from the intersection. Anne and Amy watch in disbelief as the convertible screeches off, taking the corner at full speed. PEDESTRIANS are already clustering around two refugee women lying motionless in the crosswalk. *

AMY
Mom! Oh, God! Did you SEE THAT?

Unable to take her eyes off the intersection, Anne hugs Amy tightly. She has a sudden sinking feeling ...

39 **INT. CDC LABS - DAY**

39

A ROW OF VOLUNTEERS, all crewcut military types, strapped into telemetric chairs separated by cardboard dividers. Each volunteer has his own individual TV, and the images we see as we track past include:

· Cinemax-style soft-porn, with glistening bodies and lots of dry-humping;

· Two female boxers duking it out in the ring; *

· A beer commercial, with a group of giggling bikini babes playing volleyball as two nebbishy men look on;

· A Renaissance painting of Adam, Eve, and the serpent;

· Footage of a basketball game (for control purposes);

· An L-Word excerpt of two women deep-kissing romantically;

· B&D porn, in which a leather-clad dominatrix rides a masked sub like a pony, smacking his ass with a riding crop.

The volunteers wear huge helmets, like hair dryers; their noses and mouths are covered with scuba-style breathing apparatuses. WIRES trail from sensors attached to their temples, throats, chests, wrists, palms, and crotches.

40 **INT. CDC LABS - ADJACENT ROOM - DAY**

40

Watching the volunteers through a glass panel is Barney, surrounded by monitors, printers, telemetric readouts. He makes a note on his clipboard and nudges a LAB ASSISTANT:

(CONTINUED)

BARNEY

Switch number three to pheromone two
six niner alpha.

(wiggling his pinky)

Number six gets a little trouser
twinge every time the basketball
players come on. We'd better keep an
eye on that one, huh?

The assistant smiles noncommittally. Barney glances at Alan,
who is just on the phone at his corner desk.

ALAN

... as soon as I can, honey. If
there's any reason at all for you to
be scared, we'll let you know ...
yeah, I love you too. Kiss her,
okay?

Alan hangs up, rubs his bleary eyes. His last good night's
sleep was several weeks ago. Barney strolls over:

BARNEY

Anne?

ALAN

She's scared. Every time some guy
looks at her funny, she ...

BARNEY

What'd you tell her?

ALAN

I told her don't be paranoid - yet.
I mean, we haven't had any incidents
north of St. Louis ...

Barney shoots him a grim look. Alan turns to the wall map
and sees a half-dozen brand new RED LIGHTS flashing well to
the north of Latitude 30.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Indianapolis?

BARNEY

Just came in. Indianapolis is
likely. Cincinnati is confirmed.

Alan's face falls. If he puts his thumb on Cincinnati, he
can touch Ann Arbor with his index finger.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Alan. They need you too. Go home.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

Just for a while, maybe ...

BARNEY

You can work out of the Ann Arbor lab. We'll shoot you the test results the moment we have them.

(long pause)

Do you want the shot?

ALAN

No, I'll be fine. I've been popping Prolactin every day ...

BARNEY

How's that working?

ALAN

I haven't jumped the cleaning ladies yet.

(beat)

Did you take the shot?

BARNEY

The young men I'm attracted to can usually beat the hell out of me as it is. - But yes, I took the shot.

ALAN

I think we'd know if we started to show symptoms. I mean, if anyone knows what to look for ...

Barney shrugs. Bleary-eyed Alan stares thoughtfully at the images on the multiple TV screens, and the twitchy volunteers who are staring at them. He picks up the phone.

41 **INT. AIRPORT - TICKET COUNTER - DAY**

41

Alan sprints through the terminal, passing a table where two SONS OF ADAM are handing out religious tracts.

SON OF ADAM

Sir, do you know the way back to the garden?

Ignoring them, Alan presents his ticket to a FEMALE AGENT.

FEMALE AGENT

I'm sorry, sir. The 7:40 is full. It's already closed out.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

I need to be on that flight.

FEMALE AGENT

You're late. We might be able to squeeze you on a nine AM tomorrow -

Alan fumbles in his briefcase for a CDC ID badge.

ALAN

Please. I'm with the Centers for Disease Control. We're trying to keep this fucking thing from spreading and I need to be on that flight, all right?

FEMALE AGENT

Sir -

ALAN

WHAT DON'T YOU FUCKING UNDERSTAND?

FEMALE AGENT

I'll get my supervisor.

The agent is obviously rattled - afraid of Alan in some deep way - and the other women in line at the desk are all staring at him with apprehension. He stares sheepishly at the floor and eavesdrops on the conversation one desk over:

AGENT II

We have the seats, ma'am, but it is a mixed flight. The next all-female flight is tomorrow.

WOMAN PASSENGER

(staring directly at Alan)

Then we'll wait.

WOMAN IN LINE

WE'LL TAKE IT! WE'LL TAKE IT!

The SUPERVISOR - 6'4" and burly - arrives to help Alan.

SUPERVISOR

CDC?

Alan nods yes, shows his badge again. The supervisor examines it, taps on a keyboard, and prints out a fresh boarding pass, which Alan pockets.

As he turns toward the gates, two AIRPORT SECURITY GUARDS pass, with an EXTREMELY LARGE WOMAN struggles in their grip:

*
*

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

*

LARGE WOMAN

That plane is full of men. You want my gun, you're gonna have to take it from me, bitch!

42 **INT. AIRPLANE - DUSK**

42

Alan, settling into a seat in the back, phones home as other PASSENGERS file into the cabin.

ALAN

We get in at 9:12, so I should make it home by ten. Can't wait to see you two. I love you ...

He snaps the cell phone shut. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT - part of the all-male crew - brings him a Coke and two little bottles of rum, both of which he empties into the cup.

DISSOLVE TO:

43 **EXT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - NIGHT (MOS)**

43

Something is just a little off - the moonlight too intense, the colors a bit oversaturated, idealized - as a taxi pulls up soundlessly in front of Alan's house and stops. He pays the driver, sets his suitcases down on the sidewalk, stands for a moment silently regarding the house.

Then the front door bursts open, and his daughter Amy comes sprinting down the front walk toward him, shouting a word we can't hear: "Daddy. Daddy."

She races into his arms. He clutches her close to his chest, beaming, overcome with rapture and relief.

A moment later, Anne appears in the door. She stifles a gasp of joy and runs to him, tears streaming down her face.

Arm in arm, the three of them start up the walk to the front steps of the house.

44 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - AMY'S ROOM - NIGHT (MOS)**

44

Alan and Anne tucking Amy in for the night. Anne gives her a quick peck on the cheek. Then Alan sits on the edge of the bed and hugs her tightly. She gets him in a headlock and plants smooches all over his face, refusing to let go. Before long all three of them are giggling.

45 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT (MOS)**

45

The grownups emerge from Amy's room and pull the door shut behind them. Alan starts to say something, but Anne shushes him. With one finger she pushes him back against a wall, kisses him deeply, nuzzles his throat, his chest hair, luxuriating in his scent.

Their legs intertwine. She opens her shirt, exposing one breast, then clasps his head in both hands and forces his mouth to her nipple.

46 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT (MOS)**

46

Not much foreplay tonight. Anne topples backward onto the bed, still only half-undressed, and Alan comes hopscotching after her, one leg still in his trousers, boxers down around his shins. A moment or two of frantic kissing and he's inside her.

For an instant time seems to freeze. All the frenzy dissolves. The awfulness of the last few weeks is forgotten. Everything is back to normal. Anne shudders. A tear rolls down her cheek.

Alan wipes it away. Smiles tenderly at her. She meets his gaze and chuckles slightly, surprised at the depth of her own emotion.

He begins to thrust rhythmically. Anne lets out what is obviously a loud moan (although we can't hear it), and - with a quick glance toward Amy's room - Alan shushes her.

But she's off in another world now. She moans again, and Alan, with an indulgent grin, lays one hand gently across her mouth. She bites the heel of his hand. Not too hard at first - but after a few seconds, her teeth are really sinking in.

Alan winces. Yanks his hand away. Keeps thrusting.

The next time Anne moans, his hand closes around her throat.

Her eyes open suddenly. She gazes up, more in confusion than alarm, at his weirdly impassive face. She tries to speak, but his hand is jammed too tightly under her chin.

Alan thrusts away. With his free hand he fishes around in the bedclothes and finds - God knows how it got there - an enormous CLASP KNIFE. He flicks it open, holds it up so that Anne can see its enormous glinting blade.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

Her arms and legs flail, but she's pinned underneath him,
helpless

VOICE [O.S.]

Oh, shit!

SHOCK CUT TO:

47 **INT. AIRPLANE - DAY**

47

ALAN AWAKENS SUDDENLY. Still in his seat, still in the
airplane, but utterly disoriented. Just a nightmare. Just a
nightmare.

He glances down, realizes he's clutching a soda can. In fact
he's crushed it in his fist - just as easily as if it were a
woman's throat.

With a gasp he opens his hand and lets the can drop to the
floor of the plane. His face grows pale, and sweat begins to
bead on his forehead. He wants to cry.

He's infected.

VOICE [O.S.]

Shit! Gimme a hand back here!

Now he notices the MALE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS hurrying past his
seat. There appears to be some sort of commotion in the rear
of the cabin. He leans out of his seat, cranes his head, and
sees -

A MALE PASSENGER, who is apparently having some trouble
entering the aft lavatory. Mainly because the previous
occupant is sprawled half in the aisle, half in the john,
blocking the door.

A WOMAN. Obviously dead. Obviously murdered.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

What happened? Did you see -

MALE PASSENGER

Not my problem, man. I'm just trying
to take a fucking piss.

The male passenger steps over the dead woman and locks
himself in the lavatory. By now most of the people on the
plane are staring at the two attendants as they drag the
corpse to the rear of the aisle. Several have gotten out of
their seats.

(CONTINUED)

A WOMAN near the front of the plane begins screaming hysterically. Then another. Then another.

One of the flight attendants grabs a P.A. mike:

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
CLEAR THE AISLES. Everyone. Please.
STAY IN YOUR SEATS with your SEAT
BELTS FASTENED. We're about to start
our descent and we need everyone to
REMAIN CALM.

This advice only serves to agitate the screaming woman in the front. The man in the aisle seat directly across from her is covering his ears with both hands.

AISLE PASSENGER
Shut up, will you? SHUT UP.

He leans over and rabbit-punches her in the face. If you thought the screaming was bad before

A third FLIGHT ATTENDANT leans over the sobbing woman and tries to calm her.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT #3
Ma'am. Please. I need you to
control yourself. You're alarming
the other passengers.

She screams again and starts batting at his face. Losing patience, he grabs her head between both hands and TWISTS IT VICIOUSLY, snapping her neck.

She slumps forward in her seat, silent at last. The flight attendant wipes his hands on the vest of his uniform.

AISLE PASSENGER
Thank you.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT #3
Christ!

As he strides toward the rear of the craft he spots another WOMAN PASSENGER a couple of rows back, standing up, staring at him in abject horror. He points a finger at her -

FLIGHT ATTENDANT #3 (CONT'D)
BUCKLE THE FUCK UP!

The woman passenger - who does, after all, want to survive the flight - sits meekly and does as she's told. The flight attendant proceeds down the aisle ...

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

... passing ALAN, who's frozen in his seat, sweaty, glassy-eyed, clutching the armrests with white-knuckled hands: the last semi-rational man in an airborne insane asylum.

48 **INT. ALSTEIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING**

48

Amy is smearing icing on a freshly-baked welcome-home cake; Anne is fixing dinner when the phone rings. Her heart leaps. She's almost afraid to pick it up.

ANNE

Hello?

ALAN [O.S., FILTER]

Honey ... ?

She lets out an audible sigh of relief.

ANNE

Oh, baby. Oh God.

(covering the mouthpiece)

Amy. It's Daddy!

(into phone)

Where are you?

The remainder of the conversation is INTERCUT WITH:

49 **INT. AIRPORT - TERMINAL - EVENING**

49

Alan, clutching his cell, stumbles forlornly away from the other deplaning passengers.

ALAN

I'm at the airport.

ANNE

Are you all right?

ALAN

It was a ... strange flight.

ANNE

Honey, I'm so happy to hear your voice. Amy's here. Let me put her on

-

ALAN

No. Anne. Listen to me.

(beat)

I'm not coming home yet. I'm going to the lab.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Well ... how long will you be? I'm fixing dinner. Amy made a -

ALAN

I'm not coming home.

Anne clutches the phone, ashen-faced, fully aware that something has gone very, very wrong. Amy grabs for the receiver -

AMY

I want to talk to him!

-- but Anne pushes her brusquely away.

ALAN

Two things. I want you and Amy to pack your bags, get in the car, and go as far north as you can.

ANNE

But -

ALAN

I mean now, honey. And the other thing. I want you to get a gun.

ANNE

Alan, I don't know how to -

ALAN

If you see me - if I come to the house before you leave - if I try to follow you - I want you to shoot me. Understand?

As Alan watches, an AIRPORT SECURITY TEAM hurries past, carrying a pair of covered stretchers.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Do you understand??

ANNE

So it's here? It's here already?

ALAN

I love you, Anne. I've always loved you. But the next time I see you I won't be me.

A long silence. Both of them are crying now. They realize this may be the last conversation they ever have.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN (CONT'D)

Let me say goodbye to Amy.

Shell shocked, Anne hands the phone over ...

AMY

Daddy, Mom's crying. What is it?
What's wrong?

(beat)

When are you coming home?

ALAN

Hello, baby.

DISSOLVE TO:

50 **EXT. FIELD - DAY**

50

An array of SODA CANS and BEER BOTTLES lined up along a fence rail. THREE GUNSHOTS miss their targets altogether before number 4 causes a Heineken bottle to explode. SUPER TITLE:

**Ontario, Canada
OCTOBER**

Amy is standing twenty paces away, next to her mom - who is clutching a .38 in both hands, squinting down the sight at a Diet Sprite can. She pulls the trigger, hits nothing but air.

AMY

One out of five. That's an improvement.

ANNE

Your turn.

Amy rolls her eyes in exasperation as Anne reloads the gun and hands it over.

AMY

This is so stupid. I'm not going to go out and hunt down some little animal.

ANNE

I'm not worried about little animals.

Amy's first shot goes wide. The kickback surprises her.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Don't pull on the trigger. Squeeze it. Really gently.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

Shot #2 sends a soda can flying.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Good ...

Shot #3 shatters a beer bottle.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Good!

51 **INT. CAR - DAY - MOVING**

51

A snaky mountain road. Anne in the passenger seat; Amy driving, clutching the wheel unsteadily in both hands.

ANNE
Don't ride the brake, honey. Left foot stays on the floor, okay?

AMY
That's what I'm doing.

ANNE
Gas and brake, same foot. That way you don't -

AMY
How about this? You drive. *

ANNE
You have to learn. Six months ago you couldn't wait to start - *

AMY
All you do is criticize. My God! You keep saying I have to grow up and you treat me like an infant. *

Amy takes a turn a little too sharply; the car skids toward the shoulder, but she rights the wheel just in time.

AMY (CONT'D)
Sorry.

Anne's foot is jammed against the imaginary passenger brake. She exhales sharply, but somehow manages to keep her mouth shut.

AMY (CONT'D)
We're not gonna go home, are we.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

I don't know, honey.

AMY

You know, everything is normal there.
I mean, Linda and Beth message me
every night. The homecoming dance is
in two weeks.

Anne says nothing.

AMY (CONT'D)

Well, if we're going back, I have to
get a dress.

(no reply)

God! Will you at least just say it?
You want me to be a grownup. Treat
me like one!

ANNE

(coolly)

We're not going home. - Here's the
turn.

A glum AMY turns the car onto a steeply angled dirt road,
barely wider than a footpath, that leads to a small cabin up
in the woods. Anne's mood darkens visibly at the sight of
it.

SMOKE is pluming from the chimney.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Stop the car, Amy.

AMY

What is it?

ANNE

I think there's someone in Uncle
Barney's cabin.

The little yellow Volks is still forty or fifty yards below
the cabin when Amy and Anne climb out. Anne starts uphill,
gesturing for Amy to stay behind. But Amy is the first to
spot the car parked at the top of the hill ...

AMY

IT'S DADDY!!

And with that, she's SPRINTING at top speed toward the cabin.
Anne is, of course, horrified:

ANNE
AMY! WAIT!!

She starts to chase Amy, then hesitates - runs instead to the back of the car, pops the trunk, and pulls out the GUN.

A breathless Anne bursts into the cabin and sees her daughter standing before the fireplace - arms wrapped tightly around Alan.

AMY
Oh, Daddy, we've missed you so much.

Anne tenses, holding the gun behind her back, out of sight. She can't shoot with Amy in the way. Alan catches her eye, raises a hand as if to say: stay calm.

ANNE
Amy ...

AMY
It's okay, mom. Everything's going to be okay. We can go home.

ANNE
Alan?

ALAN
We've had a little breakthrough, honey. Barney and I. We think we can get it under control.

ANNE
Is that true? -- Why haven't we heard that from Barney?

ALAN
I don't know. I'd thought he would've called you.

ANNE
He told you we were here?

ALAN
Why wouldn't he?

Anne swings the gun around into full view. With her free hand she pulls a cell phone from her pocket.

ANNE
Amy, step away from your dad.

AMY

NO!! What are you DOING? Are you
crazy, or -

Anne speed dials Barney, holds the phone to her ear.

ANNE

Barney, it's -

PHONE MESSAGE [FILTER]

Dr. Braithwaite here. I can't answer
the phone now. Please leave a
message.

ANNE

Barney. Anne. Please phone me
immediately. Alan's here.

(closing the phone)

Why didn't you call us?

ALAN

I wanted to see you. In person. I
haven't seen you for ... weeks.

(beat)

Anne, I've just come to take you
home. That's all.

AMY

I'm going with Daddy. You can't stop
me.

ALAN

Sweetheart ...

She wraps herself even more tightly about Alan. Anne stares
at HIS HAND as he runs it down his daughter's back. There's
something distinctly unfatherly about the caress. Not to
mention the weird cast of his eyes - the sudden shortness of
his breath ...

ANNE

Let go of her, Alan.

AMY

Let's go, Daddy. Let's just leave.

ANNE

Alan ... listen to me. It's your
daughter. It's Amy. It's your own
daughter.

After a moment Alan's face contorts horribly. In a sudden
fit of contrition he FLINGS AMY to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN
OH CHRIST.

Anne's hands tremble. She wants to pull the trigger and can't.

ALAN (CONT'D)
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR??

He charges toward her in a hideous rage. She drops the gun slightly and shoots him in the leg.

He crumples to the floor, with Amy shrieking uncontrollably in b.g. Writhing in pain, he takes a vicious swipe at her; she sidesteps it and shoots him in the other leg.

ANNE
There's a first aid kit under the sink.

AMY
Daddy ... !

Amy rushes to her father's aid. Anne literally KICKS HER AWAY. She grabs her squealing daughter by the shirt, lifts her off the floor, and backhands her across the face.

ANNE
Get in the car. I mean it. GET IN THE CAR.

She shoves Amy out the door as Alan drags himself to the kitchen, trailing blood across the floor.

54 **INT. VOLKSWAGEN - MOVING - EVENING**

54

The little yellow bug careening through the mountains. Anne is paying no attention to the posted speed limit.

AMY
How could you DO IT? ... He didn't do anything wrong. He was just trying to ... communicate.
(beat)
Thanks to you he's probably bleeding to death on the floor right now.
JESUS!

ANNE
Amy, you do not comprehend what's going on.

(CONTINUED)

AMY

I don't comprehend?? He said they had a cure! A cure! If you'd just listened to him. Now it's probably lost forever!

ANNE

There's no cure, Amy. He was ...

AMY

What?

ANNE

Amy. Understand something. A long time ago your daddy told me what might happen to him. He told me what I'd have to do if it did.

(beat)

The man I shot was not Daddy. The man who pushed you out of the way so I could do it -- that was Daddy. He did that because he loved you. And I did what I did because I ...

AMY

Oh, thank you, mommy. Is that what you want me to say?

54A **INT. VOLKSWAGEN - MOVING - NIGHT**

54A *

A deserted stretch of highway. Anne's been driving for a long stretch with no break. She slows the car, pulls over onto the shoulder of the road, and stops.

Amy is huddled in her seat, legs clutched to her chest, seemingly asleep. Anne gives her a little shove, but the inert lump in the passenger seat doesn't stir.

She reaches into the back seat for a BOX OF TISSUES and quietly opens the car door. Before she steps out onto the deserted road it occurs to her that it might be wise to take the gun. She silently opens the glove compartment and slips her .38 into a jacket pocket.

Anne closes the car door gently. Amy doesn't move -- but her eyes pop open. She hasn't been asleep after all. She stares at the CAR KEYS dangling from the ignition ...

55 **OMITTED**

55 *

56 **OMITTED**

56 *

56A **EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT**

56A *

Tissue box in hand, Anne steps over a barrier into the trees at the side of the road. She finds a secluded spot behind a couple of tall bushes -- but STARTS at the sound of something RUSTLING nearby. She pulls out her gun. An owl hoots. *

It's nothing. Just woodsy noises -- branches in the wind, etc. But before she has a chance to relax, Anne hears something much scarier ... *

... the sound of a CAR ENGINE turning over. She stumbles out of the bushes, tissues in one hand, gun in the other -- just in time to see the taillights of the yellow Volks as it vanishes in the distance. *

ANNE
Amy. AMY -- !! *

57 **OMITTED**

57 *

57A **INT. VOLKSWAGEN - MOVING - NIGHT**

57A *

Amy clutching the wheel stiffly, not looking back. *

DISSOLVE TO: *

58 **EXT. DIRT ROAD/CABIN - DAWN**

58 *

Anne -- sweaty, exhausted, frantic -- races up the hill as fast as she can. The yellow Volks is parked on the dirt road that leads to Barney's cabin. *

ANNE
Amy! Honey!! *

HOLD ON THE EXTERIOR of the cabin as Anne enters. A FULL TEN SECONDS PASS before we hear her first awful SHRIEK, and the agonized, hopeless WAILING that follows in its wake. *

FADE THROUGH TO: *

*

59 **CLOSEUP - ANNE'S FACE**

59

Darkness. Then a bare bulb clicks on, and HARSH LIGHT from a bedside lamp angles across Anne's sleeping face, half-buried in a white pillow. Her bleary, drugged eyes open slowly - just as TWO MALE HANDS enter frame to pull a KNIT WATCH CAP onto her head.

Startled, she raises a hand to defend herself.

BARNEY'S VOICE
Shh. Shhhhh. It's all right.

She tries to speak but her mouth is parched. All that comes out is a croak. Barney's hand reaches for a paper cup on the night stand, brings it to her lips.

BARNEY'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I brought you some ice. Now hold still.

He stuffs as much of her hair as he can under the knit cap, and snips off the excess with a pair of scissors.

ANNE
I was having a dream.

BARNEY'S VOICE
That's right.

ANNE
Where am I, Barney?

BARNEY'S VOICE
Hospital.

Anne's head jerks at the sound of a SCREAM from down the hall, followed by a chorus of distant WAILING.

ANGLE WIDENS, placing us in -

60 **INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT**

60

Barney is sitting on the edge of the bed, scissors in hand. The sound of screaming and crying brings memories flooding back into Anne's head; she sits up, gasps, begins to cry.

ANNE
Amy. He was there -- he --

Barney wraps his arms around her, pats her back.

(CONTINUED)

BARNEY

Shhhhh. That's all over now. We have to get you out of here.

ANNE

How did I get here? I don't -

BARNEY

I brought you here. Three days ago. I'm afraid things have deteriorated.

He adjusts the knit cap. Then he reaches into his pocket, pulls out a handful of dirt, and begins dabbing it around her cheeks and chin.

ANNE

What is that?

BARNEY

Five o'clock shadow. Young man.

He tips her chin back a little so he can inspect his handiwork in the light from the lamp. In dim light, if you didn't look too closely, she could almost pass for a man.

BARNEY (CONT'D)

Close enough for government work. Can you pull on some pants?

She swings her legs over the side of the bed and makes a groggy attempt to stand - almost yanking over the IV DRIP tethered to her arm. Barney grips her arm, gently removes the tape and the needle. Then he throws her a pair of coveralls from a gym bag.

As she pulls them on we notice, for the first time, the BANDAGES wrapped about her wrists.

61 **INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

61

Barney leads the unsteady Anne, now dressed in coveralls, flannel shirt, watch cap, and a long, heavy topcoat, into the hallway. Just outside the door to her room is an abandoned gurney, the sheets soaked with blood. A red trail runs along the linoleum floor to a point eight or nine yards away, where a FEMALE PATIENT lies motionless.

Just across the hall, a dead NUN lies slumped in the doorway of a patient's room. Anne GASPS.

BARNEY

Close your eyes. Just follow me.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

She closes her eyes. Barney keeps one hand on her arm and another about her waist to guide her. Random SCREAMS and WAILING in B.G. as they proceed shakily down the hall.

They almost collide with a PRIEST, who emerges from a nearby room carrying a bible and a bloody scalpel, MUTTERING last rites. The Priest stops in his tracks - gives Anne the quick once-over ...

Nodding politely, Barney and Anne move on. The Priest lets them pass - and enters a nearby room, where a woman is CRYING softly. A moment later the crying abruptly stops.

ANNE
Barney. I can't -

BARNEY
Shut up. Keep moving.

Barney leads Anne to the end of the corridor, and they turn a corner, passing what appears to be the observation room of a maternity ward. There are no babies on display, but there are bloody handprints on the inside of the glass.

CUT TO:

62 **INSERT - TELEVISION SCREEN**

62

An NFL game is in progress. It is, after all, Sunday afternoon, and even at the end of the world certain rituals must be observed. A linebacker makes an especially vicious hit, and ONLOOKERS WHOOP APPRECIATIVELY. SUPER TITLE:

Stewart, British Columbia
OCTOBER

*

The onlookers - all male - are watching the game in:

63 **INT. RED DEER GENERAL STORE - DAY**

63

A cracker-barrel establishment: groceries, dry goods, hunting/fishing gear, etc. A geezer (NED) applauds the TV:

*

NED
You see that hit? Damn, you could practically hear the bones crunching on that one!

*

TWO HUNTERS enter with a 14-year-old, BILLY, in tow. Greetings all around as the newcomers grab beers from the cooler and settle in to watch the game.

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER II

Y'all hear the news? Skagway is now
a liberated zone!

This brings high-fives and shouts of "Praise the Lord."

HUNTER I

And that's nothing. Billy here saw
an angel of the Lord.

BILLY

Two of 'em! Followed a deer down to
the creek by Humpback Rock and there
they were.

ONLOOKER

What'd they look like, Billy?

BILLY

They got a glow to 'em. They don't
look anything like their pictures!

Listening to this conversation with some interest is a quiet,
lanky CUSTOMER who has been gathering up provisions in B.G.
throughout - salt, flour, kerosene, and a wide array of
medicines including aspirin, cough medicine, cold remedies.
In fact the stranger seems to be scooping up as much medicine
as he can carry to the counter.

But he's not a "he." He's Anne, in a shapeless down parka,
hair tucked under a wool cap, face covered with grime - a
slightly refined version of her hospital disguise.

OWNER

One to a customer, sir.

Anne replies in a breathy rasp, attempting to sound like a
man with laryngitis.

ANNE

Look, I need the ... I'll pay.

He points to a sign on the register: "One to a Customer."

OWNER

Smart people stock up for winter
before winter.

He glowers at her. She theatrically shoves the excess
medication to one side of the counter. The owner rings up
what's left - a grand total, for one bag, of \$329.40.

64

INT. TENT - EVENING

64

An 8x8 frame tent illuminated by a lantern. Anne enters with her newly purchased provisions. She kneels to light a tiny kerosene camp stove and sets a teakettle on it.

Barney stares up at her weakly. He's on his back in a mummy bag, shivering, sweating, COUGHING violently.

ANNE

I got what I could. They wouldn't sell me much ...

BARNEY

Did they catch on?

ANNE

I tucked my head and tried not to say much. Here, drink this.

Leaning on one elbow, he downs a plastic capful of Nyquil. Then he flops on his back, out of breath, wheezing. With a towel she mops his feverish brow.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I'm going to build a fire.

BARNEY

No. It'll draw the hunters.

ANNE

Barney, we can't go like this all winter. In December it gets down to thirty below.

BARNEY

I won't make December, Anne.

ANNE

Barney -

BARNEY

Gotta face facts, Anne. You have to keep going. As long as you're alive the human race has a chance.

ANNE

I need you, Barney. I can't do it alone.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

BARNEY

It's all right, honey. I'm an old man. I'm ready. Only wish I knew who did this to us ...

ANNE

You really believe that? You think it was deliberate?

BARNEY

Oh, yes ... someone watched us, saw the worst in us ... decided the world would be a nicer place without us. Maybe it will be.

(smiling weakly)

Like Bella said. The earth is a garden, and we're the pest. Well, somebody finally called in the exterminator.

65 **EXT. FOREST - DAY**

65

Anne in the woods, near a stream, placing a few last rocks on a large MOUND of stones - Barney's final resting place. She gets to her feet and mouths a few words that we cannot hear.
SUPER TITLE:

**Stewart, British Columbia
NOVEMBER**

*

66 **INT. RED DEER GENERAL STORE - DUSK**

66 *

Anne, nondescript in her cap-and-parka drag, wanders past bare shelves, finding nothing on her shopping list. In B.G. NED THE GEEZER is hovering over the TV set, adjusting the rabbit ears, trying to find a watchable image:

*

OWNER

Dammit, Ned. You wanna watch TV? Sit down and watch it. That's all the picture you're gonna get!

TWO HUNTERS enter - both of them familiar from the previous scene in the store.

OWNER (CONT'D)

Howdy, boys. Where's Billy?

Hunter I, looking mildly stricken, pretends not to have heard the question. Hunter II shoots the owner a look which lets him know he has committed a grave faux pas.

(CONTINUED)

Naturally the owner decides to take it out on the stranger. He glowers at Anne as he shakes loose tobacco from a pouch into a cigarette paper:

OWNER (CONT'D)
You looking for something?

ANNE
(in her usual rasp)
Ammo?

OWNER
Gone.

ANNE
Fishhooks?

OWNER
I'll see what I got in back.

He steps through a door. Anne, meanwhile, eavesdrops on the conversation of the two hunters, who have just pulled a couple of beers from a cooler. One of them - Billy's dad - seems to be almost on the verge of tears:

HUNTER I
It's a bitter thing, Carl. I can't grasp it. I mean, Janet ... I understood the need for that, but -

HUNTER II
Don't blame yourself. Remember Abraham and Isaac. It's the Lord's will.

By now Anne just wants to leave. She glances down at the counter, and notices the owner's tobacco pouch.

There's a nipple on it.

Suppressing a gasp, Anne looks up - and realizes that the owner has returned with her fishhooks. In fact, he's been staring at her as she's been staring at the pouch. She glances over her shoulder, realizes that the hunters are now giving her the stinkeye as well.

She almost jumps at the DING! of the cash register ...

OWNER
Forty.

67 **INT. VOLKSWAGEN - MOVING - NIGHT** 67 *

As she drives away from the Red Deer General Store, Anne happens to glance into the rearview. She sees a RED PICKUP TRUCK pulling out of the store lot behind her.

It doesn't bother her at first, but when she checks the mirror again she realizes the truck is speeding toward her, pulling closer. And when she squints to get a better look, she realizes that the fellow in the passenger seat is watching her ... with binoculars.

68 **INT. RED PICKUP - MOVING - NIGHT** 68 *

The HUNTERS from the store, with a pair of panting BEAGLES on the seat of the cab between them. HUNTER I, riding shotgun, lowers his binoculars:

HUNTER I
Oh, she seen us, all right.

In response to which, HUNTER I steps on the gas.

69 **EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT** 69 *

The road is narrow, lined on either side with tall trees. Volks and pickup are both speeding now, skidding on the turns, kicking up gravel.

70 **INT. VOLKSWAGEN - NIGHT** 70 *

It's almost dark. Anne sees the headlights of the pickup bearing down on her in the mirror. Terrified, she reaches over and turns her own headlights OFF - which makes the road ahead almost invisible, impossible to navigate.

71 **EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT** 71 *

The VW comes around a sharp turn, which puts it out of the Hunters' sight for a few seconds. There's a GRAVEL TURNOFF just this side of the dogleg. Anne jerks the wheel hard right and takes the turnoff at full speed.

The Volks skids off the gravel path into the brush, but miraculously avoids crashing into a tree.

72 **INT. VOLKSWAGER - THAT MOMENT - NIGHT** 72

Still clutching the wheel, Anne stares back over her shoulder. On the main road, the headlights of the pickup streak past. Her head sags and she sighs in relief.

Then she hears brakes squealing in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

Within seconds the lights reappear. The truck is backing up slowly. She knows the skid marks won't be hard to spot.

She flings the door open, sprints off into the woods.

73 **EXT. GRAVEL TURNOFF - NIGHT**

73

The pickup truck bounces along the turnoff and comes to a stop, its headlights trained directly on the rear of the abandoned Volks. The Hunters climb out with their dogs and their guns to scope out the scene.

HUNTER II

MISS? CAN WE HELP YOU? Do you need
some automotive assistance?

74 **EXT. FOREST - ON ANNE - NIGHT**

74

As she runs her foot catches on a root; she pitches forward to the ground, and finds herself face to face with a DEER.

Just the head, actually. And the legs. The rest has been carved off and carried away by a poacher. Before she can catch herself, Anne lets out a little yelp of shock.

75 **EXT. FOREST - ON HUNTERS - NIGHT**

75

Their heads jerk at the sound. They turn in Anne's direction.

HUNTER II

MISSY! Don't be a tease, now. We
ain't gonna hurt you!

76 **EXT. FOREST - ON ANNE - NIGHT**

76

Anne is frantically clawing her way through the underbrush when a BLINDING LIGHT sweeps through the woods. It seems to be coming from a CLEARING up ahead.

A BLAST OF AIR stirs up dead leaves, sends them flying all around her. Anne gets to her feet, shields her eyes, and changes direction - turning away from the clearing, toward a STEEP, ROCKY INCLINE.

77 **EXT. FOREST - ON HUNTERS - NIGHT**

77

They're maybe forty yards back.

HUNTER II

Missy! WHERE YOU AT, MISSY?
(to HUNTER II)
Cut the dogs loose.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

Hunter II is crouching to unhook the leashes when the strange, cold LIGHT sweeps past them. The beagles let out a low growl as two men stare off at the clearing in obvious befuddlement, their quarry briefly forgotten.

78 **EXT. ROCKY SLOPE - THAT MOMENT**

78

Anne frantically crawls up the escarpment, trying to reach a shallow plateau that overlooks the clearing. The sharp rocks tear her clothes, cut her hands, but she keeps going, refusing to cry out.

She's almost reached the ledge when the searchlight stops raking the woods, and fades to a luminous steady GLOW that fills the clearing. The rocks, however, hide her view, and she can't see around them to the source of the light.

79 **EXT. CLEARING - THAT MOMENT**

79

The hunters step out into the open and freeze in their tracks, staring in disbelief at:

80 **A PAIR OF ALIEN CREATURES**

80

-- who are setting up some sort of SCIENTIFIC GEAR in the middle of the clearing. The creatures are tall, gaunt, with sectioned limbs. Their insectoid faces are topped, incongruously, by long, flowing HAIR, so pale as to be almost luminous.

They have huge, multifaceted eyes - and no mouths.

On their backs, protruding from slits in their shiny tunics, are vestigial WINGS. Although too small for flight, they vibrate rapidly, like the wings of a hummingbird, producing an eerie melodic DRONE that rises and falls rapidly in pitch. This, it seems, is how the creatures communicate.

They turn and stare, calmly, curiously, at the hunters.

81 **EXT. CLEARING - ON THE HUNTERS**

81

Hunter I brings up his gun. Before he can fire, an ENERGY PULSE strikes him and knocks him onto his back.

GEYSERS OF STEAM rise from his mouth, nostrils, ears, and eyes; it's as if his innards have been boiled on the spot. SWEAT SIZZLES on the surface of his beet-red face.

82 **EXT. ROCKY SLOPE - ON ANNE - THAT MOMENT**

82

Clinging to the rocks, scarcely daring to breathe, she gazes in disbelief at the spectacle unfolding below.

83 **EXT. CLEARING - THAT MOMENT - NIGHT**

83

Hunter II drops his gun. Enraptured, weeping, he falls to his knees, bows his head and PRAYS HUMBL Y to the Angels of the Lord.

HUNTER II

His throne like flames of fire: the
wheels of it like a burning fire. A
swift stream of fire issued forth
from before Him -

On cue, Alien I fires an ENERGY PULSE at Hunter II, with the same results as before. The Aliens HUM harmonically at one another, then Alien I picks up a metal case and carries it to where the two stiffs lie.

The Alien pets a waggy-tailed beagles- aliens and dogs seem to get along just fine - then he removes a cylindrical device from his case and holds it to the forehead of Hunter I. The device seems to work like a motorized apple corer: it routs a neat hole in Hunter I's forehead and scoops out a sample of his grey matter. *

84 **EXT. ROCKY SLOPE - ON ANNE - THAT MOMENT**

84

Fear gets the better of her. She can't stay put any longer. She starts climbing up the slope again -

- but her foot dislodges a rock, which goes bouncing noisily downhill. She freezes, clinging to the steeply-angled cliff, trying to remain motionless in the shadows.

85 **EXT. CLEARING - THAT MOMENT - NIGHT**

85

Alien II is down on one bulbous knee, scooping up soil samples to feed into his chemical-analysis gear. His head cocks slightly at the sound of the falling rock, but he thinks nothing of it.

Alien I ambles over with two cylindrical brain-scoopers and screws them into the appropriate sockets of the sample analyzer. Meanwhile, Alien II scuttles over to a nearby creek so he can test the water supply.

86 **CLOSEUP - ANNE**

86

Still clinging to the rocks, face streaked with grime, sweat, blood. She's right on the edge of madness.

87 **EXT. PLATEAU - TEN MINUTES LATER - NIGHT** 87

Exhausted, Anne pulls herself onto the shallow ledge above the clearing. She flips over on her back and lies there gasping for breath.

After a few seconds she crawls to the edge of the cliff and peeks down into the clearing.

88 **EXT. CLEARING - ANNE'S POV - NIGHT** 88

The scientific contraptions are humming happily away, analyzing the soil, the air, the water, the brains of the indigenous fauna. The aliens are sitting on alien camp stools, ingesting some sort of alien snack through needle-like appendages on their forearms. Occasionally they throw scraps to the beagles, who are romping about happily at their feet.

It looks like they're having a fucking picnic.

FADE THROUGH TO:

89 **INT. CAVE MOUTH - NIGHT** 89

ANNE sitting crosslegged near the entrance to a cave. She's in a heavy parka, wrapped in blankets to ward off the cold. If not for the shotgun and the rifle at her side, she'd look like something from the Paleolithic era.

A gust of wind blows out the tiny fire she's built for herself. She fumbles for a match to reignite the tinder. There are three matches left in the box.

She manages to get the fire going again, which gives us just enough light to see her harrowed face as she recalls a VOICE from that distant era when humanity ruled the roost:

 BARNEY [V.O.]
 *Like Bella said. The earth is a
 garden, and we're the pest. Well,
 somebody finally called in the
 exterminator.*

Anne's reverie is suddenly interrupted by ...

90 **EXT. CAVE - NIGHT SKY** 90

... the sight of a SHOOTING STAR outside. It's just like the one she saw long ago with Alan and Amy, except for the fact that it's moving in reverse - rising upward from the ground. It gathers speed before suddenly leveling off, making a sharp lateral turn to the north, and hurtling off into the heavens.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

A TEAR glides down Anne's crusty, scabbed cheek as she mutters bitterly to herself:

ANNE
Make a wish ...

FADE TO:

91 **BLACK SCREEN**

91

SUPER TITLE:

**Earth
DECEMBER**

FADE OUT.