

D A R K   G E N E S

b. b. brown

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FADE IN

INT HALLWAY OF CONGRESS DAY

COLONEL BLANK, 34, male, attended by two identical AIDES, strides quickly down an empty hallway. He enters a room secured by a DOUBLE GUARD.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM

Dour, impressive CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES sit at a long, impressive table. Col. Blank and his aides take seats opposite the fiery, female, sixty-six year old SENATOR RANT.

RANT

Colonel Blank, I hope this meeting rates the efforts taken to keep it quiet.

BLANK

I assure you it does, Senator Rant.

RANT

Why this armed incursion of an obscure Pacific island?

BLANK

An emergency mission. It involves, as you will note in the file, the research project sponsored by General Love.

RANT

General Love?

(looks in a file)

I remember now. Increasing food supply by enlarging the size of food stock.

BLANK

Events necessitated the initiation of reciprocal and substantial force to counterbalance hostilities.

RANT

You blew up the goddamned  
island. Well? Lay it out.

BLANK

Yes, Senator.

INT TRANSPORT TUNNEL            NIGHT

A shiny van marked with a crab logo rolls through a long, concrete tunnel. It carries MAJOR RONALD SAURE, 38, officer in charge, DOCTOR OSCAR W. GANN, 38, project supervisor, and several formidably armed MARINES.

BLANK (V.O.)

It was planned to have a limited culling of the experimental food stock.

Gann and the DRIVER wear blue coveralls embossed with the same crab logo.

SAURE

You say they're basically defensive?

GANN

Yes, Major Saure, rather like enormous cows.

SAURE

Cows don't have steel-hard protective shells, Doctor Gann.

GANN

True. You must penetrate the cardiac chamber from above, striking through the soft spot on the midline dorsal, which is marked by--

SAURE

(interrupting)

Marines!

MARINES

(chorus)

Sir! A blue rectangular stripe on the dorsal side, sir!

GANN

No one doubts your training,

Major. But we have managed to  
do the job until now.

SAURE

And I'd rather be at home  
sharing a beer with the wife.

Gann fingers his wedding band.

DRIVER

The Promontory, sir.

A ramp opens and the van slips into the night  
air.

EXT THE PROMONTORY

The Promontory serves as an observation hill.  
The van passes through the gate of a tall,  
reinforced electric fence to follow a road  
that runs like a corkscrew around the hill.

SOUND: ERRATIC, METALLIC CLICKING AND SCRAPES

EXT SUMMIT

They quietly disembark and move to a ledge  
that overlooks a ravine, where large whitish  
blobs creep about in the darkness. The men  
put on nightvision goggles.

MARINE

Frigging hell. Look at those  
brutes.

EXT NIGHTVISION P.O.V.

Several gigantic CRABS scuttle about using  
their great claws to rake the sides of the  
ravine.

2ND MARINE (O.S.)

Been drilling for two weeks.  
What'd you expect?

MARINE (O.S.)

Didn't seem real.

3RD MARINE (O.S.)

Wonder how they'd taste with  
butter?

EXT SUMMIT

Major Saure scans up and down the ravine.

SAURE  
They scratch out minerals  
here?

GANN  
Yes.

SAURE  
Let's do it. Confirm three  
with blue stripes, one  
without.

GANN  
Confirmed.

SAURE  
Alright, Marines, mark'em and  
drop'em.

EXT NIGHTVISION P.O.V.

There are three muffled shots. Two Crabs  
drop. One stumbles about, then drops. A  
fourth Crab scuttles among its dead  
companions. It tries to lift one but fails.

GANN (O.S.)  
(to himself)  
What is it doing?

With pincers out in challenge, the Crab  
hovers protectively.

EXT SUMMIT

Gann lowers his goggles in thought.

GANN  
(to himself)  
Is it guarding a female?

SAURE  
It's not retreating. What  
next, Doctor?

GANN  
I don't know, Major.

SAURE  
Then run it upstairs.



INT SHIPBOARD LOUNGE

RACHEL DANCE, 30, in a form-fitting business suit, paces the floor. PROFESSOR DOTTIE KING, 50, in blue coveralls, sits at a table juggling her eyeglasses in one hand. Both are irritable, but Dance manipulates people for a living, while King is an open book.

KING

It's not that I object.

DANCE

Of course not.

KING

This is a controlled study.  
Why pamper this man?

DANCE

General Love got this project rolling.

(with emphasis)

You owe him your job.

KING

I work for the Consortium. It funds this project. Not General Love.

DANCE

If he orders a gigantic crab feast for himself, his troops, his family, his neighbors, and his pet cat, you will cook it.

KING

The University wasn't this bad. No money, but at least the hierarchial back-stabbing was on a more personal level.

DANCE

King-of-the-hill is the way it's played.

(turns away)

For everyone.

Prof. King's portable phone rings, and she flips it open.



KING

King, report.

Dance stops moving and waits.

KING

(continuing; to Dance)

Retrieval will be delayed. An aberration in the culling.

DANCE

You scientists obsess over every tedious detail. Get it done.

KING

(into phone)

Shoot it. Get it done.

(lowers voice)

Record the details for evaluation.

EXT THE PROMONTORY

Saure and Gann sweep the ravine with nightvision goggles.

GANN

It must've returned to the nesting site.

SAURE

Then it's safe?

GANN

I would say so, yes.

SAURE

My Marines are not expendable. Is it safe for the Retrieval Team to advance?

GANN

My orders are to get it done.

SAURE

Can't argue with orders.

(to Marines)

You've had your treat.

Retrieval's up at bat.



EXT RAVINE

The crane's diesel roars as it hoists a dead Crab on a flatbed truck. A second flatbed exits with another dead Crab. A third flatbed waits to be loaded.

Workers in blue coveralls get the Crabs loaded. Marines patrol a perimeter or watch.

EXT DEAD CRAB

The crane lifts the remaining Crab to reveal a JUVENILE CRAB underneath. It's been crushed but feeble movements show that it isn't quite dead.

While the larger Crab's body is lifted slowly upward, MARINE PRIVATE SHREVE slips over to the Juvenile.

SHREVE

I want me a souvenir.

Ignoring its struggles, he hacks off a claw and hides it beneath his shirt.

SOUND: AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE AND SCREAMING

EXT RAVINE

Giant Crabs hit them like a wave. They attack in groups of three, slamming Marines to the side, or crushing them.

The Marines strafe the Crabs. Holes appear in their shells, but the beasts won't stop. Their legs click on the stone with each step as the Crabs press forward. Workers run desperately while the Marines try to cover their escape.

EXT CRANE

The OPERATOR swings the crane's great arm, smashing Crabs aside and buying time for Workers to pile on the flatbeds. One flatbed escapes with a load of Workers who cling to each other in order to stay on the wildly rocking truck.

EXT FLATBED

The other flatbed drags from under a  
partially loaded Crab. Marines and Workers  
scramble on.

EXT CRANE

The Crane Operator crushes off huge legs with the crane's treads.

EXT RAVINE

The last of the Marines climb on the flatbed as it roars away.

EXT CRANE

Crabs cling to the crane. Climbing over each other, they finally drag the crane to the ground.

INT SHIPBOARD LOUNGE

LIEUTENANT GENERAL LOVE, 55, aggressively masculine, inquires as to dinner.

LOVE

Where the hell's my crab feast?

DANCE

On its way, General.

LOVE

You waiting for it to die of old age? Would this project exist except for me? Am I asking too much for a single crab dinner?

KING

General Love, unexpected behavior--

LOVE

(interrupting)

You catch crabs, cook crabs, eat crabs. Sounds like some butts need to be kicked.

King's phone rings. She answers.

KING

What?

(more)



KING (cont'd)  
(pause)

No, no.  
(to Dance)  
There have been fatalities.

DANCE  
Crabs?

KING  
No, Workers. And Marines.

LOVE  
(shouting)  
HOW?

EXT DEAD CRAB

Some Crabs gather the bodies of dead Marines and Workers, while others Crabs drag away the culled adults.

A Crab gently lifts the juvenile. With two adults in escort, it disappears into the darkness.

SOUND: MONOTONOUS TAPPING

The Crabs become still.

EXT TUNNEL ENTRANCE

The tunnel entrance stands open. A Crab is beside it, reared back, tapping claws against its shell.

INT MEDICAL LAB

Dead, Shreve lies naked on an examination table. Under the glaring light, the skin of his torso, throat, and a part of the face gleam bright red. Doctor Gann stands nearby talking to several MEDICAL PERSONNEL, but immediately turns when Major Saure enters.

GANN  
Major.

SAURE  
What now?



GANN

We suspect this Marine may be the cause of the present destructive anomaly.

SAURE

Anomaly. Doctor, please use little words that will fit my diminutive military mind. And my patience.

GANN

This moron cut off the claw of a juvenile crab. Probably to impress his idiot girlfriend.

Gann holds up a claw wrapped in plastic.

GANN

(continuing)

He triggered a "hormonal alarm" in the adults. They're now scouring the island for the source of the alarm.

SAURE

(indicating Shreve)

A crab didn't kill him.

GANN

Not exactly.

Gann glances at the medical personnel, and they discreetly withdraw.

GANN

(continuing)

A problem with enlarging crabs is that the meat becomes poisonous. A hormonal deviation, totally unexpected. We can render the meat edible, but the process isn't ready for commercial exploitation.

SAURE

Right.

GANN

Poisonous secretions killed your man. They're also why, so to speak, the natives are revolting.

SAURE

They were never attractive.

(taking the claw)

If they penetrate the tunnel system, they'll be in the lab complex quicker than you can spit.

(decisively)

All civilian personnel will have to be evacuated.

GANN

But Major--

SAURE

(interrupting)

Prepare your people.

INT TRANSPORT TUNNEL

Crabs scuttle down the tunnel like a strange train with many boxcars. Meeting two vans loaded with Workers, the Crabs trap and engulf the first van, tearing it and the Workers to pieces.

The second van quickly turns and escapes back down the tunnel.

INT SHIPBOARD LOUNGE

Love enters in fine swagger.

LOVE

I've ordered Colonel Saure to advance. My boys'll soon knock those brutes back to their nests.

KING

But he's already lured them away from the lab. Now he's driving them out of the tunnel complex. This will only

agitate them again.

DANCE

I agree with Professor King,  
General. If we leave them  
alone, they'll go back to  
their nests.

LOVE

Neither of you understand the  
nature of this crisis.

DANCE

What do you mean?

LOVE

You've been pampering these  
brutes instead of training  
them. The result? I've lost  
men.

KING

But General Love--

LOVE

(interrupting)

Crabs, dogs, or men, you must  
teach them fear. There's no  
discipline without fear.

He turns to make a grand exit but stops.

LOVE

(continuing)

Where's my crab dinner?

EXT ROCKY AREA

SOUNDS: SPORADIC SHOOTING AND EXPLOSIONS IN  
THE DISTANCE

A squad of Marines pursues a Crab. It  
disappears around a cluster of boulders. They  
follow cautiously, vanishing into the  
darkness.

Screams and automatic gunfire erupt. The  
squad reappears pursued by a Crab. More Crabs  
enter from all sides. They engulf the Marines  
tear them to pieces.

INT SHIPBOARD LOUNGE

Love storms in.

LOVE

I warned you. No fear of man.

KING

(to herself)

Pack coordinated defense?

DANCE

I didn't think they had the intelligence for this, doctor?

KING

Can they be capable of planning?

LOVE

Who gives a damn? I've taken care of the problem.

DANCE

What do you mean, General?

LOVE

After my men are withdrawn, the island will be bombarded.

KING

No!

LOVE

When all else fails, the military steps in to set things right.

DANCE

You idiot! You'll destroy the records of a multi-billion dollar venture.

LOVE

Listen, you petty-ass witch, I've lost soldiers on this mission.

DANCE

Because of your own egotistical stupidity! The Consortium owns this project. You cannot destroy it.

LOVE

I'm not sacrificing my reputation to the Consortium's profits. I started this program, I'll end it when I damn well please.

EXT THE ISLAND

The surface of the island disappears in a series of explosions reaching from one end to the other.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM DAY

Looking up from a file, Rant stares at an unmoving Col. Blank.

RANT

The records of this costly little venture?

BLANK

Destroyed.

RANT

And the sudden death of General Love?

BLANK

Tainted seafood.

RANT

Tut-tut. Let's review the next fiasco.

BLANK

It's an instance of an overly zealous independent contractor. It would seem that one Professor Seinstein had trouble obtaining volunteers.

INT SHINY ROOM DAY

The floor and ceiling are of metal, the circular walls of thick glass. Five COCKROACHES lie on the floor. One cockroach, ALFIE, yawns and looks around. The other cockroaches stir.

Seeing them, Alfie gasps. He stands on his  
rearmost legs.  
His other legs stick out in front.

ALFIE  
(shouting)  
Charlotte!

The CHARLOTTE cockroach turns sleepily and yawns.

ALFIE  
(continuing)  
Charlotte! I'm a cockroach.

CHARLOTTE  
You always were, Alfie.

ALFIE  
Cut the wisecracks, Charlotte.  
Look at yourself.

The others stand and look at themselves.

CHARLOTTE  
Dixie, look at me. That's you,  
isn't it, Dixie?

HAROLD  
No, it's me. Harold.

DIXIE  
Shutup, Harold. Don't worry,  
Charlotte, it's just a bad  
dream.

CHARLOTTE  
I hope so.

ALFIE  
Who's that? Is that you,  
Officer McGuillicutty?

OFFICER  
(Irish accent)  
It is. Though me sainted  
mother would never recognize  
me.

HAROLD  
One heck of a dream. I wonder  
if we can fly?

Harold runs around flapping his legs.



ALFIE

Would you stop that. We're in serious trouble here.

HAROLD

But if it's only a dream, what does it matter?

The amplified voice of PROFESSOR SEINSTEIN booms out.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

This isn't a dream. I've remade you in a new image.

Charlotte clings to Alfie (and he to her), while Dixie clings to Harold (and he to her). Officer McGuillicutty faints.

CHARLOTTE

Alfie! Is it...

ALFIE

G-G-God?

HAROLD

I hate to think of who it is if it isn't.

DIXIE

Are you God?

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

Perhaps. But my name is Professor Seinstein.

ALFIE

Seinstein? You promised us a steak dinner if we listened to a lecture about cockroaches.

HAROLD

Then he fed milk and cookies.

DIXIE

Your lecture put me to sleep.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

No, it was the milk and cookies.

HAROLD

Fat chance. I can hold my milk and cookies with the best of them.

DIXIE

Shut up, Harold. Why have you done this?

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

The cockroach is the preeminent survivor. Mankind, on the other hand, is going down the drain. I, with my miraculous method of transformation, will be the savior of the human race. You are The Chosen.

ALFIE

Yeah? How do we get un-chosen?

CHARLOTTE

Yeah, when can we be human again?

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

You are the first of a new species. The human cockroach.

HAROLD

I know plenty already.

DIXIE

I want to be human human.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

That life has gone. It is time to evolve, time to address the greatest question of all. Survival.

A gigantic pair of tweezers appear and grab Dixie.

DIXIE

Help me, Harold.

HAROLD

Dixie! Come back. Dixie! Help  
me, Alfie.

Alfie, Harold, and Charlotte grab Dixie but  
only succeed in pulling off one of her legs.  
She disappears screaming. Harold clutches the  
detached leg.

HAROLD

(continuing)

Don't leave me.

The Officer suddenly wakes and jumps to his  
feet.

OFFICER

What's this? What's going on?

ALFIE

That madman just snatched up  
Dixie with a pair of tweezers.

OFFICER

Saints in Heaven! Kidnapping.  
There'll be no more of that.

HAROLD

Dixie.

The gigantic tweezers appear again.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

I'm afraid we'll need another  
subject. The last one was  
damaged.

HAROLD

What'd you do to Dixie?

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

In the survival of the  
species, there's no room for  
imperfection.

CHARLOTTE

What do you mean?

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

I stepped on her. It was quick

and painless.

ALFIE  
Squashed by a giant shoe. What  
a way to go.

HAROLD  
(moaning)  
Dixie.

ALFIE  
I'm sorry, Harold. I really  
am.

The Officer steps between the tweezers and  
the others.

OFFICER  
There'll be no more squashing  
today.

The tweezers snatch him.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)  
A volunteer.

The Officer struggles helplessly as the  
tweezers carry him away.

HAROLD  
When will this nightmare end?

CHARLOTTE  
Poor Dixie. What'll we do,  
Alfie?

ALFIE  
I don't know, Charlotte. I  
don't know.

INT MAZE CORRIDOR

Charlotte and Harold scuttle along the  
corridor.

CHARLOTTE  
Come on, Alfie.

HAROLD  
Yeah, Alfie, put a little  
grease on those legs.

Alfie appears, alternately lifting all his legs on one side, and then the other.

ALFIE

Am I bushed.

CHARLOTTE

It'd be easier if you'd walk right.

HAROLD

You look like a pregnant woman trying to row half a dozen paddles all at one time.

ALFIE

What do you expect? I only just became a cockroach.

CHARLOTTE

Don't try so hard, Alfie.

HAROLD

Yeah, try not to think about anything.

ALFIE

I don't have as much practice as you, Harold.

HAROLD

That's the spirit, Alfie. Keep your chin up. Say, do we have chins?

ALFIE

Who cares whether we have chins or not? What is this place?

CHARLOTTE

It's like a gigantic maze.

HAROLD

There's something familiar about it.

CHARLOTTE

I'm scared. After Officer McGuillicutty disappeared, the professor said he'd have to try a different approach.

ALFIE

It'll be all right, honey.

HAROLD

I'm hungry.

ALFIE

You're always hungry.

HAROLD

But I can smell food.

Harold sniffs his way down the corridor.

ALFIE

Harold, don't wander off.

Harold exits.

ALFIE

(continuing)

That guy. It takes more than turning him into a cockroach to make him lose his appetite.

CHARLOTTE

I'm hungry, too, Alfie. And I'm horny.

ALFIE

Charlotte! Watch your language. What if Harold came back?

CHARLOTTE

Maybe he'll find that food. Can't you smell it?

ALFIE

All I can smell is garbage.

Harold reappears with a piece of rotten apple on his back. He drops it to the floor.

HAROLD

Look what I found.

CHARLOTTE

Food!

(falls to eating)

Thank you, Harold.

Harold joins her.

ALFIE

Charlotte, no, you'll get sick. That's nothing but a rotten apple.

CHARLOTTE

Don't be silly, Alfie. This is what cockroaches eat.

HAROLD

Yeah, Alfie. Tastes great.

Hesitantly, Alfie steps beside them.

ALFIE

I don't want to be a cockroach. I want to be a man.

He eats.

SEINSTEIN (O.S.)

Congratulations. You're developing the skills necessary for survival in the new reality. You'll soon begin the final stage.

INT HOLDING CAGE            NIGHT

Alfie paces. He now walks like a normal cockroach. Charlotte, fatter than she was, nibbles on a rotten orange. Where the walls meet the ceiling, a strip of wire screen encircles the cage. Harold crawls about looking through the screen.

ALFIE

Testing, testing, testing.  
When is he gonna stop?

He looks up.

ALFIE

(continuing)

Harold, would you stop messing around up there?

HAROLD

I think I found a way out.

CHARLOTTE

Really?

ALFIE

Where?

HAROLD

The door's got a simple hook-latch on it. If we can pull that latch up, we can get the door open.

ALFIE

Can you reach it?

HAROLD

No, it's too far away.

ALFIE

There must be something we can do.

Charlotte goes back to eating.

ALFIE

(continuing)

Charlotte, would you stop eating? If you get any fatter, you won't be able to fly.

CHARLOTTE

I am not fat. I'm pregnant.

ALFIE

WHAT?

CHARLOTTE

It's nothing to get excited about. Happens all the time.

ALFIE

How did it happen this time?

CHARLOTTE

Harold and I were comparing our new bodies and it just happened. I told you I was horny.

ALFIE

Shameless. This wouldn't have happened if you were still human.

CHARLOTTE

Now, Alfie.

ALFIE

Come down here, Harold.

HAROLD

I think I'll stay up here for now.

CHARLOTTE

It's nobody's fault. We aren't the same. We have to survive.

ALFIE

Harold, if you don't come down here, I'm going to come up and get you.

HAROLD

A man's got to do what man's got to do.

Alfie tries climbing the wall but can't get a grip.

ALFIE

He doesn't have to do it to my wife, you cockroach.

Charlotte goes to Alfie.

CHARLOTTE

Would you calm down.

ALFIE

I'll take care of you later, you--

CHARLOTTE  
(interrupting)  
Don't you dare say it, Alfie.

He gives her a light slap. She spins around and buffets him with her wings until he falls to the floor.

HAROLD

Take it easy there, Alfie. She ain't a lady no more, she's a Queen.

Alfie, lying on the floor, weeps quietly.

ALFIE

It's all wrong. Nothing makes sense.

CHARLOTTE

I'm sorry, Alfie.

Harold comes down to the floor.

ALFIE

Forgive me, Charlotte, I didn't mean to hurt you.

CHARLOTTE

You didn't, honey, you just made me mad. You know what a temper I got. Now, help us find a way out of here.

ALFIE

Why? We'll be the same out there as we are in here. Nasty, disgusting cockroaches.

CHARLOTTE

Well, I like that. I'm a cockroach.

ALFIE

You're a good, beautiful cockroach, Charlotte. You're a human cockroach.

HAROLD

What about me, Alfie?

ALFIE

If my feet were big enough, I'd step on you.

Alfie stands.

ALFIE

(continuing)

Escape? What we need is a rope. That orange has tough fibers, just like rope. We'll tie them together and use them to open the door.

CHARLOTTE

Alfie, that's brilliant.

HAROLD

Way to go, buddy.

CHARLOTTE

Alfie, I can't wait to show you how to breed, so we can start having our own little eggs.

ALFIE

You make me blush, Charlotte.

HAROLD

Don't worry, Alfie, breeding with Charlotte is as easy as pie.

ALFIE

You've got a big mouth, Harold.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM      DAY

Senator Rant raps the desk with a quick tattoo.

RANT

I assume taxpayer monies went into this experiment also.

BLANK

Yes, ma'am.

RANT

And what's happened to these "survivors"? Have they managed to spread themselves across the nation?

BLANK

Definitely not. They've been  
eradicated.

RANT

Then let's move on. We've had crabs and cockroaches. What, dare I ask, is next?

BLANK

Guinea pigs.

RANT

Guinea pigs.

BLANK

Yes, ma'am. One guinea pig in particular.

INT LABORATORY MORNING

DOCTOR S, male, 45, wakes on the floor of the lab amid shattered equipment and glass. When he stands, his upper body is not visible.

DOCTOR S (O.S.)

I don't remember a party.

His legs wobble.

DOCTOR S (O.S.)

(continuing)

God, my head is splitting. We must've had a party.

The bodies of other SCIENTISTS hang by their feet from the ceiling. He stumbles forward knocking some broken glass along the floor.

DOCTOR S (O.S.)

(continuing)

Nobody's cleaned up.

He walks by a group of animal cages. Dead GUINEA PIGS lie in the cages, each with a scalpel or other sharp instrument sticking out of it. All of them have a second head or its beginnings.

DOCTOR S (O.S.)

(continuing)

Even the guinea pigs are hungover.

INT MEN'S ROOM

The lights are off. When Doctor S enters, the silhouette of a 2-HEADED MAN fills the doorway.

DOCTOR S

"And darkness covered the face of the earth." My face, too.

He closes the door. From the darkness comes his voice.

DOCTOR S

(continuing)

"And God said, Let there be Science."

He turns on the lights. The mirror reflects a man with two heads. The 2ND HEAD sleeps. Doctor S gasps and looks away.

The eyes of the 2nd Head pop open and look around in surprise. Doctor S peeps back at the mirror.

DOCTOR S

(continuing)

What a pig. I need a haircut. And a shave.

The 2nd Head admires itself.

INT THE WONDER SHOP

SAM, the wonder barber, an elderly blind man, relaxes in his barber's chair. Other MEN of retirement age sit and gossip. Doctor S enters.

DOCTOR S

Howdy, Sam. Good day, gentlemen.

The men stop talking. Sam stands behind a chair.

SAM

Climb aboard, Doctor S. The train is ready to leave the

station.

DOCTOR S

(sitting)

Haircut and shave. Don't wake  
me till we hit Chicago.

Sam feels the hair on the 2ND HEAD. It obviously enjoys the sensation.

SAM  
Son, your head's a mess.

DOCTOR S  
I know.

SAM  
How do you want it styled?

DOCTOR S  
The usual.

Sam cuts hair and Doctor S sleeps. The 2nd Head sings.

2ND HEAD  
buzz buzz buzz I'm a bee  
And I'm buzzing for my sweet  
little hive.

The men in the shop immediately exit.

FIRST MAN  
See you, Sam.

SECOND MAN  
Take care.

SAM  
Don't rush off.

THIRD MAN  
Sam, did you know--

SAM  
What'd you say?

THIRD MAN  
Nothing, Sam.

SAM  
Empty chairs aplenty.

The Third Man exits. The 2nd Head sings again.

2ND HEAD

hum hum hum I'm an ant  
And I'm humming for my neat  
little nest.

SAM

That's right cute. Know any  
more?

EXT FRONT OF WONDER SHOP

Sam speaks as DOCTOR S exits. The haircut and  
shave consist of having the outer half of  
each head trimmed, while the inner half  
sticks out ragged.

SAM

I'm blind, Doctor S, not  
stupid. You're one mixed-up  
puppy.

DOCTOR S

I know.

SAM

But you do know some cute  
songs. Get yourself some help,  
son.

DOCTOR S

I've got a vacation coming up.

SAM

Gonna take more than a few  
days off to cure what ails  
you, boy.

As Doctor S exits, the 2nd Head sings.

2ND HEAD

Molasses, molasses,  
It's icky sticky goo.  
Molasses, molasses,  
It'll always stick to you!

INT BAR        NOON

Doctor S enters as several PATRONS exit. He  
politely holds the door for them. The 2nd  
Head still sings. The women giggle and the

men smile as they exit.

2ND HEAD

We knew a man named Fred,  
Who dearly loved to sleep.  
But by and by we found out  
why,  
We found out Fred was dead!

Doctor S sits at the bar. The BARTENDER  
considers him before speaking.

BARTENDER

Double scotch?

DOCTOR S

Double it.

BARTENDER

Been dedicating yourself to  
science, Doctor S?

DOCTOR S

We're all guinea pigs in the  
eyes of God.

BARTENDER

If you say so.

The 2nd Head begins reciting Poe's "THE  
RAVEN".

DOCTOR S

Do it again, my man.

BARTENDER

Careful, Doc, you're not used  
to it.

The Bartender pours out another.

DOCTOR S

People used to respect  
science.

(sips his drink)

They laughed at me.

BARTENDER

Yeah?

DOCTOR S

We search for truth and they

laugh.

Doctor S hits the bartop and hurts his hand.  
The 2nd Head reacts with pain and stops  
reciting.

BARTENDER  
You get what you pay for.

Doctor S leans forward.

DOCTOR S  
Someone's following me.

BARTENDER  
Is that so?

DOCTOR S  
I can't shake this strange  
feeling.

Doctor S suddenly gasps and leaps away from  
the bar stool. He frantically searches the  
floor.

BARTENDER  
Lose a contact?

DOCTOR S  
I lost my head!

A CUSTOMER several seats over stands and  
exits. Doctor S points.

DOCTOR S  
(continuing)  
Don't step there. I lost my  
head.

BARTENDER  
Don't bother the other  
customers, Doc.

DOCTOR S  
Where's my head?

BARTENDER  
It's on your shoulders, you  
loon.

Doctor S looks in the mirror. The 2nd Head  
admires itself.

DOCTOR S  
I look terrible.

He sniffs his underarms. The 2nd Head makes a face.

DOCTOR S  
(continuing)  
I smell bad, too.

BARTENDER  
Why don't you go home, Doc?  
Take a bath, put your feet up.

DOCTOR S  
(nodding)  
Bath my feet up home. Shhh.  
Project classified.

He walks toward the exit.

2ND HEAD  
"And my soul from out that  
shadow that lies floating on  
the floor Shall be lifted--  
nevermore!"

INT ELEVATOR

An ELDERLY WOMAN with bad eyesight and a SMALL DOG enters. Doctor S follows. The dog sniffs his leg, then relieves himself on it. Doctor S doesn't notice. The elderly woman speaks to the 2nd Head in a loud voice.

WOMAN  
Why do you go around with that  
guy?

2ND HEAD  
(singing)  
Two heads are better than one,  
Cause you got lots more  
brains!

WOMAN  
Yeah?  
(considers Dr. S)  
He's goddamned ugly.

2ND HEAD  
Sshhh. Classified.

WOMAN

Not if you keep dragging him  
around like that. Dammit to  
hell, when's this sombitch  
elevator gonna move?

She pushes all the buttons on the control  
panel, including the alarm, which sounds.

2ND HEAD

They're off at the races!

INT EXAMINING ROOM           AFTERNOON

The PHYSICIAN, male, 55, enters. He never  
looks at Doctor S, but washes his hands, or  
refers to a clipboard of test results, or  
looks at his watch.

Doctor S sits on an examination table and  
twitches. Throughout the discussion, the 2nd  
Head sings like Satchmo.

PHYSICIAN

How do you feel?

DOCTOR S

I don't know, Doc, it's been a  
strange day.

PHYSICIAN

Fine, glad you could make your  
appointment.

DOCTOR S

I was on my way home, and I  
remembered, "I've got a  
doctor's appointment."

PHYSICIAN

Fine, the test results came  
back one hundred percent,  
though you could stand to lose  
some of that ugly fat.

The 2nd Head stops singing long enough to  
give him an indignant look, then continues.

DOCTOR S

I've had this voice in my head

all day.

PHYSICIAN

That's the radio. We can't  
turn it down.

DOCTOR S

People have been laughing at  
me.

PHYSICIAN

Buck up. Nose to the  
grindstone. Never say die.

DOCTOR S

They'll stop laughing?

PHYSICIAN

No, but you'll be too busy to  
notice.

DOCTOR S

Busy is good.

PHYSICIAN

Nice to see you.  
(dialing a cell phone)  
Drop that fat.

DOCTOR S

Doctor, do you--do you know  
the meaning of life?

PHYSICIAN

(exiting)

Pay at the front desk as you  
leave.

INT LIBRARY

Doctor S walks through the front lobby.  
ADULTS ignore him, CHILDREN giggle behind  
their books. The 2nd Head stares in wonder at  
all the books.

INT RESERVE ROOM

The Reserved Materials Desk sits in an  
isolated corner.

DOCTOR S

Excuse me, but I was on my way

home, and I remembered that I  
have a book on reserve.

The LIBRARIAN looks up. She has glasses on a chain suspended from her neck, and her expression is withering.

LIBRARIAN

Is that a joke?

DOCTOR S

No, ma'am, I have a book on reserve. To be picked up.

LIBRARIAN

Thought you'd give the dottering, old librarian a scare.

DOCTOR S

I don't know what you mean, ma'am. I'm here to pick up a book.

LIBRARIAN

You're mocking me.

DOCTOR S

I'm not mocking you, ma'am. People are laughing at me.

LIBRARIAN

Is that a fact? Laughing at you and you're stupid fake head?

DOCTOR S

My what?

LIBRARIAN

That idiotic fake head strapped to your shoulder.

The Doctor S and the 2nd Head look at each other, then in opposite directions.

DOCTOR S

What head?

LIBRARIAN

Don't mock me, you post-adolescent delinquent.

She reaches out and twists Doctor S's nose.

LIBRARIAN  
(continuing)  
How about that?

The 2nd Head shivers in anticipation. The Librarian reaches out and gives its nose a twist.

LIBRARIAN  
(continuing)  
And that?

The 2nd Head emits an inhuman shriek. Doctor S's head slumps. Their hands grab the Librarian and strangle her with the glasses' chain.

EXT GATES TO LABORATORY      DUSK

A taxi stops and Doctor S gets out.

DOCTOR S  
Honey, I'm home.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM      DAY

BLANK  
All charges have been dismissed, and the scientist involved has begun therapy.

RANT  
Swell. Next?

BLANK  
This case concerns the genetic linkage of a human female with a male snake.

Senator Rant stiffens.

BLANK  
(continuing)  
They are presently performing in a New Orleans club.

RANT  
Very well, move on.

BLANK

As I remember, the Senator's daughter was involved in this experiment at one point.

RANT

Fine, no need to dwell on the past, let's move on. What's this about spiders that communicate?

BLANK

Tarantulas specifically. They were to serve as infiltration agents--scouts--returning with information about enemy location and strength.

INT WORKPLACE DAYCARE DAY

SUPER: SOMETHING IS WRONG SOMEWHERE

MUSIC: "LAUREL & HARDY" THEME

A half-dozen CHILDREN are playing. Their CARETAKER has cotton in her ears and fights not to go to sleep. Over the playroom antics, we hear angry adult voices.

KRANKLE (O.S.)

Absolutely useless. They jump around in random, agitated movement.

SNIKEL (O.S.)

And they don't follow orders.

BRANK (O.S.)

How do we justify the money we've spent? How do we show a profit on this muddle?

LORK (O.S.)

How do we keep our careers from sinking?

SNIKEL (O.S.)

If you weren't such a boozehound, screwing up the test results--



JACKSON (O.S.)  
(interrupting)  
Would you stop bitching? Why  
don't you suggest something  
positive for once?

LORK (O.S.)  
How's this? "Our cash cow has  
died."

BRANK (O.S.)  
How could such a beautiful  
experiment have gone so wrong?

The Caretaker nods off. A bored CHILD wanders  
out of the room.

INT CORRIDOR

The Child wanders down the corridor. Someone  
has left a cleaning cart blocking open a  
door. The Child slips through the doorway.

INT OBSERVATION ROOM

A floor-to-ceiling glass wall isolates an  
enormous hive with countless openings. Moving  
in and out of the hive, as well as across the  
floor, ceiling and walls, are hundreds of  
TARANTULAS.

The Child steps close to the glass. The  
Tarantulas turn toward the Child. Stepping  
closer, the Child taps the glass lightly. The  
Tarantulas move forward.

CHILD  
Puppets.

INT WORKPLACE DAYCARE

The Caretaker still sleeps. The Child peeks  
through the doorway.

INT OBSERVATION ROOM

The Children watch the Tarantulas.

INT WORKPLACE DAYCARE

JACKSON, female in a lab coat, 32, finds the empty room and sleeping Caretaker.

INT OBSERVATION ROOM

Smiling and happy, the children don't notice when Jackson appears in the doorway.

Behind the glass, like ecstatic dancers or playful children, the Tarantulas skip about, spring high in the air, turn cartwheels, or make rhythmic group patterns.

One of the children dances. Then, all of the children dance.

JACKSON

Of course.

INT CORRIDOR OUTSIDE OBSERVATION ROOM

Five lab-coated scientists stand by the door to the Observation Room: KRANKLE, 60s, distinguished with grey hair; SNIKEL, 20s, wears a neat business suit; BRANK, 50s, wears torn clothing and broken shoes; LORK, 40s, all in white, even his hair; and Jackson, who dresses sensibly.

KRANKLE

(imperious)

This is nonsense.

SNIKEL

(obsequious)

That's right, sir, nonsense.

BRANK

(almost whispers)

I don't understand what you want.

LORK

(sneering)

They're not doing anything different to what they always do.

JACKSON

Would you trying looking  
closer?

They all peep back through the doorway.

INT OBSERVATION ROOM

Both Tarantulas and Children still dance.

INT CORRIDOR OUTSIDE OBSERVATION ROOM

The scientists step back.

KRANKLE

Strange, idiosyncratic  
behavior.

SNIKEL

That's right, sir, very  
strange.

BRANK

I just don't understand.

LORK

Kids like to jump around. So  
what?

JACKSON

You fools, they're are  
dancing. The Tarantulas moving  
in patterns, idiosyncratic  
patterns.

LORK

So?

JACKSON

It's a spontaneous form of  
communication.

BRANK

But what do we do with 2,000  
dancing tarantulas?

JACKSON

Don't you watch television?

INT TV STUDIO SET #1

SUPER: "O JOY! THE OFFERS O'ERFLOW"

MUSIC: "BORN FREE"



HOST #1 and Jackson watch several Tarantulas in a large display box. As usual, they are dancing. Host #1 is afraid of the spiders. Jackson lets a tarantula play over her arms and legs as she talks.

HOST #1

Look at those little suckers go. I wish I could dance that well. How long will they do that?

JACKSON

(laughing)

Pretty much all the time. Some rest while others dance.

HOST #1

I never thought I'd say this about a spider, but they're kind of cute.

(inches closer)

Is it safe to touch them?

JACKSON

Just like puppies.

INT TV STUDIO SET #2

The imperious Krankle, except for his eyes, remains as unmoving as a stone. A tarantula sits unmoving on his shoulder. HOST #2 baits Krankle while circling the Tarantula display box.

HOST #2

So these little monsters were originally intended as battlefield killers.

KRANKLE

No.

HOST #2

Then you deny their intended military application.

KRANKLE

No.

HOST #2

Then what were they designed  
for?

KRANKLE

They were to serve as scouts  
in enemy territory.

HOST #2

Then they were intended for  
military use.

KRANKLE

Of course. But not as killers.

HOST #2

Now we come nearer the truth.

KRANKLE

I certainly hope so.

HOST #2

Something went wrong, didn't  
it?

KRANKLE

When we enhanced their  
intellectual capacity, we  
inadvertently enhanced their  
creative expressiveness.

HOST #2

So you and your associates  
wasted massive tax dollars to  
create dancing spiders.

KRANKLE

On a rather small budget, we  
created a new and benign  
species that loves to dance.  
What have you done?

INT TV STUDIO SET #3

Brank, dressed in out-dated clothes that  
don't fit, is meticulous and boring. HOST #3,  
a female, works hard to dig out something  
spicy. They occasionally glance at the  
Tarantulas in the box.

HOST #3

Are their sexual habits  
different from normal  
tarantulas?



BRANK

There are some variations.

HOST #3

Like what? Do they have weird rituals or trials of torment in choosing mates?

BRANK

Oh, no.

HOST #3

They don't eat each other like black widows?

BRANK

No, no, of course not.

HOST #3

What do they do?

BRANK

Well, they dance.

HOST #3

And the best dancer wins a mate?

BRANK

Not exactly.

HOST #3

Then, what happens?

BRANK

They seem to find a complementary mate through dancing.

(searches for words)

Not necessarily the best dancer, but one that best fits their particular requirements.

HOST #3

Whose requirements?

BRANK

The female's.

HOST #3

Then they have a female-dominated society.

BRANK

Yes, it's rather different to normal tarantulas. You know, their "queen", like the queen bee, is fed a special food which prompts her to grow far larger than the average tarantula.

HOST #3

And all the males try to make it with her?

BRANK

She's the center of the nest. She's the president, so to speak.

HOST #3

Now that's what I call an intelligent society.

INT TV STUDIO SET #4

HOST #4 is young, female, and irrepressibly bubbly. White-haired Lork detests her but knows he's being watched, so he tries hard not to say something nasty.

HOST #4

These are great. Can I have one?

LORK

We'll see.

HOST #4

Look at them jump. You made them to be spies?

LORK

Yes. In effect, they're entry-escape artists with good memories.

HOST #4

How are they different from  
normal tarantulas?

LORK

Well, they have better eyesight. And they only eat fruit. In fact, they love watermelon.

HOST #4

Watermelon. Me, too. You say they dance with anyone?

LORK

Children in particular. But I think they'd like you.

HOST #4

Do you think they'd mind?

LORK

Go right ahead.

Host #4 jumps up and dances. The Tarantulas run to the side of the box and dance with her. Lork forces a sickly smile.

INT TV STUDIO SET #5

Snikel plasters a smile across his face like a mask, but his feet tap anxiously. A tarantula hops from his arm to his crotch, then climbs up his tie. HOST #3 ignores the Tarantulas and smirks at the camera.

HOST #5

It's been alleged that the government produces nothing but scandal, incompetence, and taxes. But now we can see that, completely by accident, it occasionally manages something creative.

SNIKEL

Yes.

HOST #5

Dancing spiders. Of course, the actual worth of these organisms's "creative expression" seems at best doubtful.

We have-- SNIKEL

The tarantula interrupts by tickling his ear with its forelegs.

HOST #5

I mean, the spontaneous hopping about of mindless arachnids can hardly be compared to art such as Balanchine's.

SNIKEL

Of course. However--

HOST #5

(interrupting)

However?

SNIKEL

There is a utilitarian aspect.

HOST #5

Oh? And so?

SNIKEL

Communication. A development of communication.

The tarantula plays in his hair like a kitten, scooting and hopping about from side to side.

HOST #5

You mean like the redoubtable Doctor Doolittle?

SNIKEL

Actually, dance--

HOST #5

(interrupting)

Certainly, dance is a form of communication. But it depends on how you define communication, doesn't it?

SNIKEL

Yes.

HOST #5

(interrupting)

Which reminds me of an issue that I explore in my latest book, MY MIND IS BIGGER THAN YOURS, which is available at your local bookstore.

The tarantula is sitting on his nose.

SNIKEL

Wonderful.

HOST #5

Of course.

INT MOVIE SOUND STAGE

SUPER: "BUGS GO ON STRIKE"

MUSIC: "THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS"

The MOVIE DIRECTOR stands in the midst of his cameras and lights. He shouts at the ERRAND BOY who has delivered a note.

DIRECTOR

Strike? What do you mean they're on strike?

INT HOLDING AREA

The Director stamps into the room with the Tarantulas' holding pen. He stops in disbelief.

The Tarantulas are all quietly lined up, row after row of happy spiders, facing a television. They're watching THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW.

DIRECTOR

Who said they could watch TV?

SPIDER WRANGLER

It keeps them quiet. The younger ones escape and get into mischief. Several almost got killed.



DIRECTOR  
But Andy Griffith?

SPIDER WRANGLER  
They love it.

DIRECTOR  
Wait. I've got it.  
Retrovision!

INT MINIATURE SET

One Tarantula wears a top hat. Another wears a flowing silk cape trimmed with white feathers. Astaire-Rogers dance music plays.

The Tarantulas sit immobile. The Director pokes his head into the shot.

DIRECTOR  
What the hell's wrong now?

INT DIRECTOR'S LIVING ROOM

The Director relaxes on a couch. Awards are conspicuously lined up behind him.

DIRECTOR  
Yes, the concept was very Truffaut. I was combining the various genres of cinema into one work--horror, musical, drama, mystery--all into one great panorama of life.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
And how would you describe the work of your leading lady?

DIRECTOR  
She was marvelous, really beautiful. Of course, she's afraid of spiders.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
Really? Were there any problems?

DIRECTOR  
Humorous little things. The

juvenile  
(more)

DIRECTOR (cont'd)  
tarantulas liked to play  
tricks on her. Hide-n-seek in  
her shoes. Pounce on her feet  
when she's barefooted.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
What about the tarantulas  
themselves? Any problems?

DIRECTOR  
Oh, no. No problems at all.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
Did they like moviemaking?

DIRECTOR  
Doesn't everyone?

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
I believe they like to watch  
television.

DIRECTOR  
That was my idea. It helped  
keep them calm between takes.  
Except for horror movies. They  
go frenetic when a giant  
spider or bug eats someone.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
They don't like other spiders,  
or just giant ones?

DIRECTOR  
Well, they don't like working  
with animatronic tarantulas.  
They don't like pretending to  
hurt people. And they don't  
like costumes.

NARRATOR (O.S.)  
But you'd work with them again  
if it were the right project?

DIRECTOR  
If the price is right.

INT TARANTULA HIVE            NIGHT

SUPER:    "THE GREAT TARANTULA ESCAPE"

MUSIC:    THEME FROM "THE GREAT ESCAPE"

The Tarantulas have massed themselves along either side of a path leading from the hive to the exit door. JUVENILE Tarantulas pop up and down in excitement, but ADULTS put out a comforting leg or two to calm them.

The huge QUEEN enters and promenades along the path. She pauses at intervals to tap her legs in a formal pattern, then continues forward.

As she advances, the Tarantulas on either side raise themselves on their rear legs, with their forelegs splayed in the air, as a show of deference. Some Juveniles lose their balance and fall.

At the exit, Tarantulas hop on each other's backs until the top one can reach the door to unlock it with a probing foreleg.

Pushed by a troupe of spiders on the floor, the door swings open. The Queen continues her stately passage down a hallway. The rest follow.

INT SIDE PASSAGE

Some Juveniles leave the parade and run to a doorway.

INT SECURITY OFFICE

The Juveniles enter and find a GUARD sleeping in a chair. An unfinished lunch, including a slice of watermelon, lies on a desk.

The Juveniles pop up and down in excitement, then scamper up the Guard and on the table.

INT HALLWAY

A JANITOR mops one side of the hallway. Without hesita-tion, the Queen walks along

the floor behind him. The Janitor yawns and continues mopping.

The Queen taps a wall several times, then continues along the floor. The other Tarantulas climb the wall at the point where the Queen indicated.

INT SIDE PASSAGE

The Juveniles lie about on the floor looking stuffed. The watermelon has been eaten down to the rind. An Adult appears and taps a foreleg firmly. The Juveniles quickly climb down the Guard and exit at a run.

INT HALLWAY

The Janitor mops the side of the hall where the Tarantulas were. Several hundred spiders walk along the ceiling over his head.

The Adult and errant Juveniles appear. The Adult walks up the wall behind the Janitor to the ceiling. The Juveniles, however, find that the wet floor makes a great sliding surface. They slide along doing tricks, until an adult taps.

The tapping attracts the Janitor and he looks around. The Tarantulas, having just turned the corner, are out of sight. Seeing nothing, the Janitor returns to mopping. He sings to himself.

JANITOR

She'll be comin' round the  
mountain,  
She'll be comin' round the  
mountain,  
She'll be comin' round the  
mountain,  
When she comes.

EXT CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND           AFTERNOON

SUPER: "CAUTION! ADULTS AT WORK"

MUSIC: "JAWS" THEME

A WOMAN NEWSREPORTER with microphone in hand speaks to a TV camera. The playground behind her has been charred to a cinder.

NEWSREPORTER

After escaping from their  
laboratory (more)

NEWSREPORTER

(cont'd)

nest three weeks ago, the Dancing Tarantulas met their end today on a school playground. It seems they've been coming here two or three at a time, dancing for the children, but appeared in mass for the first time today, frightening teachers and students. The authorities were summoned as a precaution, and the result can be seen.

INT SCHOOL CLASSROOM

A bored CHILD idly turns his head and gasps in surprise.

EXT PLAYGROUND

Hundreds of Tarantulas move toward the center of the playground. TEACHERS and CHILDREN peer from the windows of the school. The Tarantulas arrange themselves into one large shape, then begin to dance. It's like a gigantic Busby Berkeley routine.

INT SCHOOL CLASSROOM

Children jump up and down in joy.

CHILD

They told me they'd come back and dance for us and they did.

EXT SCHOOL PARKING LOT

Military vehicles roll up and SOLDIERS with incendiary units jump out. As the children and their teachers evacuate from the opposite side of the school, the Soldiers move in and encircle the dancing spiders. When in position, they burn the Tarantulas alive.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM          DAY

Senator Rank shudders.

RANK

Well rid of the ugly buggers.

(throws the file

aside)

What next?

BLANK

Moles and squirrels.

RANK

Is this the last one?

BLANK

No, Senator. It's an environmental approach to dealing with hostile forces.

RANK

Well, get on with it.

EXT COUNTRYSIDE P.O.V. HELICOPTER DAWN

The earth rushes upward ever faster, coming ever closer.

BLANK (O.S)

The scientist in charge acquired test subjects for his research in a controversial manner.

EXT OPEN FIELD

A helicopter sweeps in and hovers, while six SOLDIERS in battle gear jump to the ground.

The helicopter pulls into the sky, shrinking away until it vanishes.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER MORNING

TECHNICIANS work at monitors which display different locations.

One monitor shows mutated lifeforms creeping through foliage. A second monitor shows mutants fighting.

A third monitor shows the Soldiers--distant enough to seem the size of insects--as they traverse a narrow dirt road.

A short, balding man, MULLER, 39, and an extremely thin female observer, MCEVEDY, 70, stand at a central point behind the monitors. Muller sputters like a child.



MULLER

Misfits, rejects, and low-grade material.

MCEVEDY

You expect John Wayne and the Green Berets?

MULLER

(fiercely)

This project has tremendous potential.

MCEVEDY

Unfortunately, Dr. Muller, not everyone at the Pentagon or with the Corporation shares your enthusiasm.

MULLER

There's always a jealous snake in the grass. Correct, Dr. McEvedy?

MCEVEDY

Why, Doctor, how colorful you are today.

EXT DIRT ROAD            NOON

The sun angles straight down. The Soldiers sweat profusely. The LIEUTENANT, female, 28, marches without effort staying in front and remaining keenly alert.

One male Soldier, LEE, 29, moves back to the side of the only other female, SHERIDAN, 19.

LEE

Sheridan, did I hear right?

SHERIDAN

What?

LEE

You got caught humping three officers at once. And not all of them male.

SHERIDAN

That's a lie. It was four  
officers. And not one of them  
a good fuck.

LEE

How about sharing? We could do five-on-one.

SHERIDAN

Go pump yourself, you wheezing geek.

LEE

You're doing some wheezing of your own.

SHERIDAN

I can fuck all day. I just can't march.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

The Soldiers appear on a different monitor. A light flashes.

TECHNICIAN

Approaching mole hive, sir.

MULLER

(wiping his bald head)

About time.

EXT DIRT ROAD

The road ahead crosses flat country and slips into woods. Lee indicates the Lieutenant.

LEE

You and me, I know, but why's her ass in a crack?

SHERIDAN

Superior officer started feeling her up, so she busted his balls with her knee.

LEE

No, shit.

SHERIDAN

Had emergency surgery to cut one out. Snip snip.

Lee winces.



SHERIDAN

We're all gettin' our butts  
booted out.

LEE

Shit, I just realized.

SHERIDAN

What?

LEE

We're all criminal types.  
We're on a mission to nowhere.  
And we stink. We're the Dirty  
Half-Dozen.

SHERIDAN

Lee, get the fuck away from  
me.

EXT SHADE TREE

The Lieutenant motions. They move from the  
road to the shade of a large tree.

LIEUTENANT

Five minutes.

While the others stretch out on the grass,  
she stares into the horizon.

LIEUTENANT

(to herself)

Why are we here?

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

Muller waves his arms in frustration. McEvedy  
tries to keep from laughing.

MULLER

(shouting)

What in hell are they waiting  
for? A bunch of baboons  
scratching in the shade.

EXT DIRT PIT

The Lieutenant and SOMERSET, male, 23,  
examine a twelve-foot circle of flat, loose

dirt. The shade tree stands

between the dirt pit and the road. The Lieutenant circles the pit.

SOMERSET

It ain't natural, Lieutenant.  
I's raised in the country.  
Tramped through woods and  
fields and pasturelands. Never  
seen anything like this afore.

The others approach. Fisher squats beside the pit and stares at the dirt as if to see through it.

SOMERSET

(continuing)

See how clean? Right smack  
under the limbs of a tree, and  
there's no sticks or grass or  
leaves on that dirt. It ain't  
natural.

(points)

Then there's that thing.  
What's it for?

At a distance stands a white "pole" that reaches head height. It has what looks like a round, dark piece of glass in one side.

LIEUTENANT

With me, Somerset. The rest of  
you keep sharp.

The Lieutenant and Somerset exit toward the white pole. Fisher ignores them and glares at the dirt.

FISHER

Something's in there.

GILRAY, male, 18, looks from Fisher to the dirt, then chews a lip quietly. Sheridan scans the surrounding landscape uneasily.

Lee creeps behind Sheridan, stoops, and grabs between her legs. Grunting with pain, she spins. Her elbow slams into Lee's face. He hits the ground, and she stumbles into the dirt pit.

SHERIDAN

(angry)

You stupid sombitch, that  
hurt!

LEE

Damn, you got a hard elbow.

Small mounds of dirt appear and quickly push their way toward Sheridan.

GILRAY

(shouting)

Move it, soldier.

One of her boots sinks into the ground and throws her off-balance. She falls to her hands and knees in the middle of the circle. Her rifle is out of reach.

The dirt pulsates beneath her. Sheridan screams and jerks back her hands. They're ripped and bloody from countless small bites.

Gilray reaches out, but her back is to him.

Jerking viciously with her arms and legs, Sheridan fights for the leverage to pull herself out. Anywhere her body touches dirt becomes bloody.

EXT WHITE POLE

Somerset and the Lieutenant study the white pole.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

A monitor shows the Lieutenant's face and fingers as she taps the glass.

MULLER

Poking around like a bunch of apes.

MCEVEDY

Curiosity can be an unquantifiable bitch. Can't it, Doctor Muller?

EXT WHITE POLE

SOUNDS: SCREAMING AND AUTOMATIC FIRE FROM THE PIT

The Lieutenant spins about.

LIEUTENANT  
Holy Mother!

She exits at a run.

EXT DIRT PIT

Sheridan has sunk passed her knees into the dirt. One arm up to the elbow is trapped. She screams. Clenching a grenade, she tries to get the pin between her teeth.

EXT SHADE TREE

Lee has run away. He climbs the shade tree to get off the ground.

EXT DIRT PIT

Gilray holds the butt of his rifle out to Sheridan, but she writhes violently and screams. Fisher shoots into the dirt on his side of the pit.

The Lieutenant enters at a run as Sheridan jerks her trapped arm out of the dirt. The bones of the forearm protrude, the hand is gone.

EXT SHADE TREE

Lee, out of sight amid the tree limbs, shouts and fires wildly.

EXT DIRT PIT

Gilray catches a bullet and folds. The others drop. Sheridan has pulled the pin on the grenade. But her fist clenches the safety lever and she can't let go.

EXT SHADE TREE

The firing from Lee stops. His weapon falls from the tree.

EXT DIRT PIT

Sheridan has been sucked into the dirt past her hips. Partially conscious, she can only

moan.

The Lieutenant takes aim and shoots Sheridan in the head. Her body quickly disappears. The grenade goes with her. Somerset and Fisher stare at the Lieutenant.

EXT SHADE TREE

Lee falls to the ground.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

MULLER

Report.

The Technicians check their various monitors.

TECHNICIAN

Sir, mole hive took down subject, one minute 25 seconds.

MULLER

Adequate.

MCEVEDY

The one who scampered up the tree?

TECHNICIAN

Squirrels responded within ten seconds of initial contact, sir. Intruder expelled within thirty seconds.

MCEVEDY

A double-header.

Muller angrily turns to speak but an explosion on one of the monitors interrupts.

MULLER

What was that?

TECHNICIAN

An explosion in the mole hive, sir.

MULLER

Who gave them permission to issue explosives to my test

subjects?

MCEVEDY

Congress.

EXT DIRT PIT

A short rain of body parts, blood, and dirt falls. The Lieutenant picks up a SMALL, FURRY BODY.

LIEUTENANT

What in hell are these?

SOMERSET

They look sorta like moles.

A blast hole has punctured the dirt pit. Creatures resembling a cross between moles and piranhas lie scattered over the ground. A few still slowly snap their jaws.

SOMERSET

(continuing)

But moles burrow and eat insects. They don't eat people.

LIEUTENANT

Who was firing?

FISHER

Lee. He climbed a tree.

LIEUTENANT

(to Somerset)

Check Gilray.

The Lieutenant exits to Lee as Somerset exits to Gilray. Fisher, looking down at the hole in the dirt, rubs a hand up and down his weapon.

FISHER

Rest in pieces, babe.

EXT SHADE TREE

Stunned, Lee lies with eyes wide open and face twitching. Around him are bodies of MUTANT SQUIRRELS.

The Lieutenant picks up one of the squirrels by the tail. They look ordinary except for enlarged mouthparts.

LEE

Help me, Lieutenant.

She tosses the squirrel away and looks at Lee.

LIEUTENANT

Seems these critters didn't like you invading their territory.

Stooping, she turns him back and forth roughly, giving his wounds a glance. Fisher enters behind her.

LIEUTENANT

(continuing)

Nothing to help. A little rubbing alcohol on these scratches and you'll be good as new. Which wasn't much to begin with.

FISHER

A bullet in the head worked for Sheridan.

She confronts Fisher.

LIEUTENANT

Sheridan earned it.

Somerset enters.

SOMERSET

Gilray's bad. I think he's got bleedin' inside.

The Lieutenant turns to Lee, who's still lying on the ground. She kicks him.

LIEUTENANT

Get up, you sack of shit. If I hear any more whining out of you, I swear to the Virgin, I'll gut you like a fish.

She exits to the white pole.

EXT THE WHITE POLE

Pulling the pins on two grenades, the Lieutenant pitches them and runs. A dual explosion tears the pole apart. Standing, she sees the remains of an electronic camera on a rotating pedestal.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

MULLER

Look at what they've done!

MCEVEDY

It was more realistic than usual.

MULLER

They wantonly destroyed the mole hive and a camera plant.

(to TECHNICIAN)

Blow the siren. Let the pack take them.

MCEVEDY

Not yet.

MULLER

I'm in charge here.

MCEVEDY

(threatening)

I represent the investors who built your joyland. These test subjects will finish the gauntlet.

Muller looks as though he might also explode but recovers himself.

MULLER

Very well, then. Let'em destroy the whole goddamn project.

MCEVEDY

(ignoring him)

How interesting that was. She couldn't fight, and she couldn't flight. So she went

out with a bang.

EXT FOREST PATH           AFTERNOON

Lee and Fisher carry Gilray on an improvised stretcher. Somerset is on point. The Lieutenant sees that Lee, pale and stumbling, can barely walk. She motions to Somerset.

LIEUTENANT

Okay, take a break.

With great effort, Lee eases the stretcher down gently, then collapses to his knees. Somerset returns.

SOMERSET

(spooked)

It's not right, Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT

Yeah. It's like a freak zoo.

SOMERSET

Where are we?

LIEUTENANT

In a cage, I think.

Lee stands and walks. He begins circling the stretcher.

LEE

She was my momma. Oh sweet little baby Jesus I don't mean to hurt nobody.

The Lieutenant grips one of his arms. At her touch, he clutches her arm convulsively.

LEE

(continuing)

Momma said, "Gonna to get somebody hurt." Sheridan's dead, Lieutenant. That hole ate her alive. Momma done said it.

Dazed, he resumes circling the stretcher.

LEE

(continuing)

I was grab-assing around and  
she

(more)

LEE (cont'd)  
stepped on that dirt.  
(his knees give way)  
Holy Jesus, the blood. So much  
blood.

He collapses to the ground like a leaking  
balloon. His voice is faint.

LEE  
(continuing)  
Reporting for duty,  
Lieutenant. No more running.

He curls into a fetal position.

LEE  
(continuing)  
No more.

He stops breathing. The Lieutenant checks his  
pulse. Her lips move in a silent prayer.

SOMERSET  
What was it, Lieutenant?

LIEUTENANT  
Poison. It must've been  
poison.

FISHER  
Squirrels like snakes.

EXT GRASSY COUNTRYSIDE

Fisher and the Lieutenant carry Gilray.  
Somerset is on point again. Dense brush grows  
to one side. On the other side, a steep  
ravine cuts its way through the earth. They  
keep close to the brush.

Somerset motions. The Lieutenant puts down  
the stretcher and catches up to him.

LIEUTENANT  
Yeah?

SOMERSET  
Something's moving.  
(more)



SOMERSET (cont'd)  
(points to the brush)

There.

LIEUTENANT  
I'll check it.

SOMERSET  
I'm on point, Lieutenant. I'll  
do it.

LIEUTENANT  
Alright, soldier.

EXT BRUSHLINE

Somerset walks along the brushline. A MUTANT DEER, startled while feeding, bounds out only a few feet away from him. Startled, Somerset impulsively leaps for cover in the brush. The deer disappears into tall grass.

SOUNDS: TINY SHRIEKS COME FROM THE BRUSH

A cloud of small fluttering objects hurtles itself from the brush. MUTATED SPARROWS by the score smash themselves against Somerset, or use razor claws to rip his clothes and face. Fully enveloped, Somerset runs wildly trying to escape through the grass.

EXT GRASSY COUNTRYSIDE

The Lieutenant waves her arms.

LIEUTENANT  
(shouting)  
Move it, Somerset. This way.

She fires in the air, but Somerset flees without direction. She starts running toward him.

LIEUTENANT  
(continuing; shouting)  
Somerset. Watch out for the  
ravine.

EXT RAVINE

He reaches the ravine and slips over the edge. The cloud follows him down. In a few moments, the cloud rises and

moves back to the brush. The Lieutenant enters to the ravine edge and looks down.

LIEUTENANT  
Merciful Mary.

EXT GRASSY COUNTRYSIDE

The Lieutenant returns to Fisher.

LIEUTENANT  
Cracked his head open when he hit bottom.

FISHER  
Must've disturbed the nest.

He has his weapon at the ready and surveys the surrounding grass.

FISHER  
(continuing)  
Gilray's dead.

He checks Gilray's pulse.

LIEUTENANT  
Just me and you.

FISHER  
More'n that skulking here.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

A Technician checks his readouts.

MULLER  
Well?

TECHNICIAN  
The sparrows took 22 seconds from point of contact, sir.

MCEVEDY  
A clean kill. Excellent. You should be a proud papa.

MULLER

Shutup. What's the position of  
the target group now?

The Technician checks.

TECHNICIAN

Sir?

MULLER

What is it?

TECHNICIAN

The target group has moved  
away from the gauntlet.  
Heading south, out of range.

MULLER

(banging monitor with  
fists)  
They are dis-o-bey-ing or-  
ders.

MCEVEDY

It's called survival.

MULLER

I'm sick of your half-wit  
jokes.

MCEVEDY

So what?

EXT FOOT OF HILLSIDE

The Soldiers advance up a progressively  
steeper and rockier hillside. They disappear  
amid boulders.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

The Technician checks a device, then turns.

TECHNICIAN

I can't find them, sir. The  
instrumentation outside of the  
gauntlet is ineffective.

MCEVEDY

Finish this farce. Release the

pack.

MULLER  
Yes, release the pack.

MCEVEDY  
At last we agree.

MULLER  
Low grade material.

EXT ROCKY HILLSIDE

The Lieutenant and Fisher stop. A wavering siren resonates over the countryside. She looks around curiously, while he shrinks down.

FISHER  
Lieu--

She signals for silence. They disappear amid the rock.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

Muller and McEvedy stand face to face.

MULLER  
You cannot close my project down.

MCEVEDY  
Hah! It's a bust. Wasted resources.

MULLER  
But you, you---

MCEVEDY  
(interrupting)  
You can't deal with the unpredictable.

MULLER  
This is my life's work.

MCEVEDY  
So?

MULLER  
It's not fair.



TECHNICIAN

The pack has come within  
killing range.

INT ROCKY HILLSIDE

The Soldiers crouch by a boulder to survey  
the grassy area below them. They listen as a  
strange sound echoes up to them.

SOUND: MIX OF A DOG'S BARK AND A HYENA'S  
LAUGH

LIEUTENANT

A dog pack?

FISHER

No dog I ever heard.

EXT GRASSY COUNTRYSIDE

An unseen force bends the grass in a sweeping  
movement. It sweeps in the direction of the  
Soldiers.

A mutant deer is flushed. It bounds through  
the grass. The sweeping movement changes  
direction to follow the deer.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

MULLER

Where the hell are those mutts  
headed?

TECHNICIAN

They've flushed a deer. Sir.

EXT GRASSY COUNTRYSIDE

The movement engulfs the deer and it drops  
from sight. The bark-laugh stops. Suddenly,  
the deer leaps clear of the grass shimmering  
red in the afternoon sun, blood coating its  
thighs, sides, and legs.

The deer sprints to a clearing. A pack of  
small animals shoot from the grass after it.  
They quickly encircle the deer and take it  
down, ripping it apart, snarling and fighting

with one another over pieces.

INT ROCKY HILLSIDE

FISHER

Hellfire, Lieutenant, what the hell was that?

The Lieutenant studies them through binoculars.

LIEUTENANT

Chihuahuas. A pack of huge, mean chihuahuas.

FISHER

I petted a chihuahua once.

LIEUTENANT

This is perverse.

FISHER

They'll be after us.

The Soldiers climb the hill.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

MCEVEDY

You see? The unpredictable.

MULLER

Get that goddamn pack moving.

INT CAVE ENTRANCE

Fisher waits just inside. The Lieutenant sprinkles a dark powder on the ground leading to the entrance. She has her back to him.

FISHER

What's that?

LIEUTENANT

Chili powder and pepper. Once had a pack of dogs from a nearby farm chase me down. Climbed a tree like poor Lee or I'd be dead. A little pepper can be handy in a lot of situations.

She puts away the container.

LIEUTENANT

(continuing)

What'd you find in back?

FISHER

A door.

INT CAVE

They move through the cave. Electric lights have been installed for illumination. They come to a metal door with an electronic lock-box.

LIEUTENANT

A fire exit.

FISHER

Can you open it?

LIEUTENANT

Yes.

EXT CAVE ENTRANCE

The pack of large, malformed chihuahuas follows a scent trail. They abruptly go into sneezing fits.

INT CAVE

The electronic box lies open with its guts hanging out. The Lieutenant has her back to Fisher as she sorts and twists the wiring.

LIEUTENANT

How'd you get into this duck shoot, Fisher?

FISHER

I killed a drunk sailor in a bar.

She looks at him.

LIEUTENANT

Why'd you kill that sailor?

FISHER

He spit on me. It's not my way  
to be vengeful, but nobody  
does me without I do them back  
hard.

She touches leads together, there's a slight  
spark, and the door slides open.

LIEUTENANT

I've got a plan.

Fisher hits her with a tremendous blow across  
her helmet. She falls to the ground.

FISHER

I got my own plans.

He eases through the doorway.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

A Technician watches a group of blips on a  
screen.

TECHNICIAN

The pack seems to be stopped  
by some type of obstruction.

A SECOND TECHNICIAN notices a LIGHT.

SECOND TECHNICIAN

Entry alarm on fire door #3.

MULLER

Alert the goddamn security.  
What else could possibly go  
wrong?

SOUNDS: MUFFLED AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE

MCEVEDY

What is that?

INT HALLWAY

Fisher shoots anyone he sees. Dead SECURITY  
PEOPLE and LAB-COATED TECHS already lie on  
the floor. He advances down the hallway  
firing.



INT CAVE

The Lieutenant groans as she pushes herself to her knees.

SOUNDS: GUNFIRE ECHOES INTO THE CAVE

She drags herself through the doorway.

INT CORRIDOR TO OBSERVATION LABORATORY

The doors and walls of the laboratory are glass. Fisher can see the monitors flicker. The techs scramble for cover behind equipment as he strafes the room.

INT CORRIDOR

The Lieutenant finds a door labelled "MASTER CONTROL", shoots the lock off, and kicks it open.

LIEUTENANT

(entering)

Do unto others.

INT DOORWAY TO OBSERVATION LABORATORY

Broken glass shards ring the door frame. As Fisher steps through the frame, Security People appear behind him and fire. When he tries to turn towards them, his uniform catches on the glass shards. The Security People cut him in half.

INT LABORATORY OBSERVATION CENTER

Muller, McEvedy, and the various Technicians climb from behind the equipment and shake off glass slivers. Muller and McEvedy look at one another.

MULLER

Don't even say it.

TECHNICIAN

Someone has opened the outer doors.

MULLER

Shut them.

The Technician tries.

TECHNICIAN  
They won't close.

MULLER  
Worry about it later.

TECHNICIAN  
Sir!

MULLER  
What?

TECHNICIAN  
The Pack siren.

They listen.

SOUND: PACK SIREN ECHOES THROUGH THE FACILITY

Muller begins to complain but stops.

SOUND: BARK-LAUGH ECHOES APPROACH

INT CAVE

The Lieutenant pulls herself through the doorway, then stops to listen.

SOUND: JUMBLED SCREAMS AND SNARLS FROM THE FACILITY

She shuts the door.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM

Blank closes a file.

RANT  
(angrily)  
Are these so-called volunteers known about beyond this room?

BLANK  
No, Senator, nondisclosure agreements with the survivors have been signed. The attorneys assure us that full legal protection, and deniability, is in place.

RANT

Thank God the veterans groups  
haven't gotten wind of it.

She snatches another file and opens it.

RANT

I can't make heads nor tails  
of this.

(slams down the file)

Spinach?

BLANK

The researchers tried to  
develop a single, edible  
substance that could sustain  
human life indefinitely.

RANT

And?

BLANK

They were nominally  
successful.

RANT

And?

BLANK

Unfortunately, it was  
carnivorous.

RANT

And?

BLANK

The decision was made to feed  
useless social types to this  
new plant species. Criminals,  
streetpeople, nonvoters. This  
would produce profound  
nutritional benefits for the  
better part of humanity, while  
eliminating some of the worst.

RANT

Was this...

(her eyes narrow)

your modest proposal?

BLANK

I don't have that authority,  
Senator.

RANT

I wonder. What about this  
superveggie?

BLANK

Alcoholics were unknowingly  
included in the food supply.  
The test veggie...the test  
specimen became alcohol-  
dependent, and several of the  
researchers fell victim. I  
afraid that the entire project  
had to be shut down.

RANT

Garbage in, garbage out.  
(holds up a file)  
Is this...

BLANK

Yes, Senator, the last one. It  
concerns the development of  
communal wolverines.

RANT

The rational?

BLANK

Like people, wolverines are  
loners. Changing them  
genetically into communal  
animals might lead to  
developing human beings who  
are...more sociable.

RANT

A genetic technique to turn  
people into sheep.

BLANK

If you like.

RANT

Dare I ask what happened?

EXT COUNTRYSIDE DUSK

The autumn sky glows faintly behind a hill  
that overlooks woods and muddy fields.



BLANK (O.S.)  
The genetically engineered  
wolverines proved to be  
unexpectedly resourceful.

EXT FRONT YARD

In the dim light, a man, BERTRAM, 32,  
stumbles from the direction of the hill  
across a gravel roadway and into a small,  
neatly trimmed front yard.

KAKI (O.S.)  
Momma, who's the kinda freaky  
guy comin' towards the house?

Bertram wears a tie, lab coat, and mud-caked  
running shoes. His clothes are splattered  
with mud.

AUNT BEA (O.S.)  
Look where you're going, or  
you'll smack something  
painful.

Bertram slams his shin against an old plow  
attachment that decorates a flower bed. He  
clutches his leg and hops around the flower  
bed.

BERTRAM  
(whining)  
Ouch.

AUNT BEA (O.S.)  
See what I mean, baby.

EXT FRONT PORCH EARLY EVENING

A light pops on to reveal the front porch of  
a two-story, brick farmhouse. On the porch  
waits AUNT BEA, 28, wearing a nurse's  
traditional white uniform with a shotgun  
tucked under one arm. Bea weighs over 300  
pounds.

TEENA, DARLEEN, and DOLLY, as well as their  
children, MICHAEL, ALLY, LONNY, KAKI, and  
WYATT, ages 5 to 9, peek through the front  
windows of the house.

Michael, 5, wearing a cute sailor's cap, stands on his toes trying to see until his mother, Darleen, 37, picks him up. She is all in gray with slacks and a shirt with its sleeves rolled back, and also wears a gray ball cap.

BERTRAM

I need to use your phone. To  
call the sheriff.

AUNT BEA

We called as soon as we saw  
you headed our way, kid.

BERTRAM

Thank God.

He collapses onto wet grass.

BERTRAM

(continuing)

I'll wait here.

AUNT BEA

If you like, honey.

Aunt Bea cradles the shotgun and sits on the  
steps. The door opens behind her and Kaki, 8,  
wearing her father's much-too-big sweatshirt,  
appears. Bea speaks without turning.

AUNT BEA

Kaki! Get your butt back in  
the house.

KAKI

(whining)

Aunt Bea.

AUNT BEA

Get.

Kaki disappears, and the door shuts.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Had an accident over there?

She motions northward toward the hill. The  
sun has disappeared, and artificial light  
from the hill's crown shines against the  
night sky.

BERTRAM

They slipped out but it wasn't  
my fault.

AUNT BEA

It wasn't? What slipped out?

He chews his thumb.

BERTRAM

The test animals. The  
wolverines.

AUNT BEA

We don't have wolverines in  
this part of the country.

BERTRAM

You do now. Special ones.

EXT BACKYARD

The backyard is circumscribed by woods on the west, pasture to the south, and soggy fields to the east. A barn stands at the far back of the yard. A telephone pole with a large floodlight stands between the barn and the house shedding dim light over the entire backyard.

Kaki and WYATT, 9, who wears dress clothes with worn, red athletic shoes, slip out the back door and run giggling to an old, tin-roofed, flat-topped smokehouse that sits by the woods.

EXT FRONT PORCH

A bright, full moon climbs the sky.

AUNT BEA

Are we in danger?

BERTRAM

(disdainfully)

No, of course not.

AUNT BEA

Don't you have a cell phone?

Bertram chews his thumb.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Why didn't you use one at the Facility?

BERTRAM

I just thought I'd come over here.

AUNT BEA

Yeah, baby.

EXT FACILITY

WOLVERINES, with short, heavy legs and shaggy coats, large feet with curved, bear-like claws and jaws like the proverbial steel traps, scuttle over the facility grounds.

They prefer the shadows. But they sometimes slip through the pools of artificial light scattered about the parking lots, drives, and connecting grounds. These scavenger wolverines drag large objects shaped like human bodies from the facility grounds through the night into the lightless woods.

EXT WOODS NEAR FACILITY

Digger wolverines burrow large, roughly rectangular pits in the clear ground among the trees. The pits are deep.

EXT FRONT PORCH

Bertram rattles like an excited child.

BERTRAM

We made them communal. For study. They have division of labor. They even have a simple form of communication in which they dance, kind of like honeybees.

AUNT BEA

Yeah, babe?

BERTRAM

They have a leader. We call

him "Il duce". Historical  
reference. He's marked with  
white stripes across his back.

AUNT BEA

White stripes.

BERTRAM

They can be ferocious  
carnivores, of course, but  
mostly they're scavengers.

(counts his fingers)

They're tenacious,  
territorial, elusive,  
unpredictable, and always  
hungry. That's why they dig  
such huge storage bins for  
winter.

AUNT BEA

Storage bins. You mean  
larders?

BERTRAM

That's right. Larders.

AUNT BEA

Do they have much stored up in  
their larders?

BERTRAM

No, they've been on a minimal  
diet. Only enough to keep them  
healthy. According to the  
older sources, you know,  
another name for wolverine is  
glutton. Sounds kind of  
biblical, doesn't it?

EXT WOODS NEAR FACILITY

Scavenger wolverines drag human bodies into  
the various pits and scrape dirt over them.

EXT FRONT PORCH

BERTRAM

Their tenacity is awesome. If  
they come to a mountain, they  
don't go around, they go over  
it. They never give up.

He stares at the surrounding darkness.

BERTRAM

(continuing)

What'll they do about  
reestablishing their  
territory? That's the  
question.

AUNT BEA  
Territory?

BERTRAM  
A single wolverine's territory  
can  
encompass twelve hundred miles  
in the wild.  
(to himself)  
But how will a community of  
wolverines adapt itself?

AUNT BEA  
Are we safe?

BERTRAM  
(irritably)  
Of course we're safe.

He looks at the distant light of the  
Facility.

BERTRAM  
(continuing)  
Everyone's quite safe.

Car headlights splash over them.

EXT FRONT YARD

A sheriff's car pulls into the driveway and  
stops. Two deputies get out, JACKSON,  
meticulous, clothes carefully pressed, and  
POLLACK, a chainsmoker with a perpetual butt  
hanging from his lips. Bertram tries to stand  
but can't.

BERTRAM  
Damn, my legs've cramped. I  
feel so weak.

Leaning the shotgun against the porch, Bea  
stoops, puts an arm around him, and hefts him  
to his feet. The officers grin.

BERTRAM  
(continuing; whining)  
I can do it. Let me go.

With his legs threatening to fold, she walks

him to the car.

POLLACK

Has that bad boy tried to take  
advantage of you, Bea?

AUNT BEA

Too scrawny. Have to throw him  
back.

EXT PASTURE

The shadows of three or four wolverine scouts  
glide across the pasture, then pause. COWS  
huddle restlessly on the other side of the  
pasture. The shadows slide away.

EXT BACKYARD

Wolverine shadows slip around the barn and  
rush in the direction of the farmhouse.

Between the barn and farmhouse, the  
antiquated smokehouse (made of wood blackened  
by the curing of meat) sits near the treeline  
of the woods. From inside comes the sound of  
giggling children. The shadows slither toward  
the laughter.

INT SMOKEHOUSE

There's no direct light within the  
smokehouse. The glowing ends of cigarettes  
light the faces of Wyatt and Kaki. They  
giggle. Suddenly one gasps in a frightened  
whisper.

WYATT

What's that smell?

KAKI

What's wrong, Wyatt, smoking  
make you sick?

WYATT

It's not the smoke. Something  
smells rotten.

(sniffs)

It stinks.

SOUND: CLAWS SCRATCHING LIGHTLY ON WOOD

KAKI  
I heard something.

WYATT

Is it Momma?

KAKI

No.

WYATT

What was it?

KAKI

A booger-bear!

They giggle again.

KAKI

(continuing)

We're smoking in the  
smokehouse!

EXT FRONT YARD

Bertram sits in the rear of the sheriff's car with eyes closed and head resting on the seat. The door is shut. Bea, Jackson, and Pollack stand a few paces away.

POLLACK

Do tell? Something's wrong at  
the Facility?

(spits)

Like the government can't take  
care of its own problems or  
somethin'.

AUNT BEA

Test animals got loose, he  
said. Wolverines. I think he  
must have run off when it  
first happened.

POLLACK

That guy's acting weird, all  
right. Bet he's doped up real  
good.

JACKSON

We'd better check the Facility  
before we take him in.

Pollack makes a face, spits, and gets in on

the driver's side.

AUNT BEA

He's disoriented, but I don't think it's drugs.

JACKSON

(getting in the car)

We'll check it out, Bea.

They drive away.

AUNT BEA

Territory.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Lonny, 8, a fat, good-natured boy, and Ally, 7, a reader with thick bifocals, watch television. Near the television sits a locked gun cabinet. Half a dozen hunting rifles and shotguns fill it.

TEENA

Fishing, hell. With a cooler full of beer? My ol' honey bun'll roll in well-soaked and horny.

Teena, 26, small and slim in a full athletic outfit, and Bea, still in her nurse's uniform, sip diet drinks. The four women sit at the dining table, from which they can watch the children. Dolly, 32, wearing a bright, flowery blouse, and Darleen, who gently cuddles Michael on her lap, are smoking.

DARLEEN

(quietly)

They'll probably pick up a mess of bass and crappie at the fish store, then brag about how hard it was to catch them.

TEENA

You mean our hubbies would lie to us?

DARLEEN

Like dogs.

They laugh.

DOLLY

(loud by nature)

First, they'll have to stop  
and throw back a few to  
celebrate their good fishing.

(shakes her head)

Like a bunch of damn kids.

(searching her large  
purse)

Where the hell's my  
cigarettes?

She continues searching while the others  
exchange glances.

DOLLY

(continuing)

And my lighter?

DARLEEN

You want to borrow mine?

DOLLY

No, I want my goddamn  
cigarettes and my goddamn  
lighter.

The others laugh.

TEENA

Didn't the doctor tell you to  
quit?

DOLLY

I've been smoking since I was  
twelve, Miss Jog-All-Over-The-  
County-In-Her-Short-Shorts.  
The doctor isn't going to tell  
me a thing.

AUNT BEA

Has anyone seen Kaki lately?  
Or Wyatt?

DARLEEN

No.

TEENA

Looks like Miss Kaki's been at  
it again.



DOLLY

Smoking's one thing, but  
stealing is altogether  
different. I'll smoke her butt  
good.

The others laugh and nod knowingly to each  
other.

TEENA

Sure you will. Like you always  
do.

DOLLY

You watch.

EXT FACILITY PARKING LOT

The parking lot is half-full with vehicles.  
Pulling across parking lanes, the sheriff's  
car stops near the walkway to the facility  
entrance.

A cigarette drooping from his lip, Pollack  
exits the driver's door and looks around. He  
stoops to peek in at Jackson who's still in  
the car.

POLLACK

You waitin' for an invitation,  
Jackson?

Shadows move silently around and between the  
parked cars.

JACKSON

I don't like it.

POLLACK

What's not to like?

JACKSON

They have a minimal staff on  
weekends. Why all the cars?  
And if there's been an  
emergency, why hasn't security  
met us? It doesn't feel right.

Pollack scowls and opens the rear door for  
Bertram to get out. Bertram slams the door

shut.

POLLACK

What the hell?

He opens the door again, and Bertram slams  
it.

POLLACK

You're pissing me off, boy.

Shadows rush toward the patrol car.

JACKSON

Pollock! What's that?

POLLACK

(turning)

What?

Pollack vanishes beneath two hunter wolverines. They rip his throat out before he can scream. A third hunter vaults through the open door onto Jackson.

Jackson reflexively throws out an arm, which the wolverine snaps and holds like a vise. The animal's weight shoves against the officer, turning him and jamming his back against the door. The beast shakes his arm and blood splatters the car freely. Jackson screams in pain.

Bertram, still in the back, hides on the floor and pretends to be invisible.

Jackson gets his automatic free of its holster and jams it against the wolverine. He can hear the bones in his arm breaking. He empties the weapon into the beast.

Two more wolverines latch onto Jackson's ankles, dragging him and the dead wolverine out of the car. He beats at them frantically with the empty automatic, but they rip out his throat.

SOUND: TEARING FLESH AND LAPPING

Bertram huddles on the floor. Blood runs down between the front seat cushions and drips on him unnoticed.

EXT BACKYARD

Bea and Dolly stand at the back door looking out. Floodlights mounted at each corner of the house are on. The women stand in the back

doorway holding open a reinforced storm door.

AUNT BEA

I heard something.

DOLLY

Probably those two squirts.

(shouting)

Kaki. Wyatt. You get your butts up here right now. You hear me?

KAKI (O.S.)

We can't, Mommy.

DOLLY

Don't give me that. Where are you?

KAKI (O.S.)

In the smokehouse. Something's outside.

Bea scans the darkness around the smokehouse. Eyes reflect light from several places. Pulling Dolly back, Bea quickly shuts and latches the door.

DOLLY

What's going on?

AUNT BEA

Kaki, this is Aunt Bea. Are you safe, honey? Can any of those critters get in the smokehouse?

KAKI (O.S.)

No. But they're chewing on the wood.

WYATT (O.S.)

They're going to be in here right quick and no fooling about that.

AUNT BEA

You know that old step-ladder leaning up against the wall in there?

KAKI (O.S.)

Yeah.

AUNT BEA

There's a hatch that leads to  
the roof.

WYATT (O.S.)

I see it, Aunt Bea.

AUNT BEA

I want both of you to use that ladder to get on top o' that roof. Can't nothing hurt you up there. Do it right now, you understand?

KAKI & WYATT (O.S.)

Okay, Aunt Bea.

DOLLY

Bea, are you nuts? Climb up on the roof?

The hatch lid opens and the children clatter on the roof.

AUNT BEA

Now kick that ladder over.

Wyatt pushes the step-ladder over. Dolly shouts.

DOLLY

(continuing)

That's real good, children.

(to Bea)

Though it was just plain crazy.

AUNT BEA

Look out there, Dolly.

Several shapes can be seen prowling near the smokehouse.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Those are wolverines.

DOLLY

Bea?

AUNT BEA

They're stalking us.

SOUND: COWS BELLOWING IN THE PASTURE

Dolly stares into the darkness.

KAKI (O.S.)

Mommy?

DOLLY

Don't you two worry yourselves  
about those old cows. Probably  
a stray dog chasing after  
their tails.

AUNT BEA

Go upstairs and talk to them  
from the bedroom window,  
Dolly. Keep them still and  
quiet.

Bea exits. Dolly turns to go, but pauses.

DOLLY

Kaki, did you get my  
cigarettes?

INT FARMHOUSE

Lonny and Ally divide their time between the  
television and watching the adults. Michael  
plays quietly on the carpet with his toys.

Bea, facing Teena over the dining table, has  
her back to the children and speaks in low  
tones. Darleen stands to one side speaking  
into a portable telephone.

AUNT BEA

They fill their larders with  
whatever meat they can find or  
catch.

Darleen cuts off the phone.

DARLEEN

They said they'll send a car  
as soon as one becomes  
available.

TEENA

What about the car that was  
here before?

DARLEEN

They haven't heard from it

since it left here.

AUNT BEA

We're in trouble, girls. There are scores of those things on the loose and probably dozens of them right out there. Even if a patrol car did come, what could they do?

TEENA

They're armed.

AUNT BEA

So were the others.

DARLEEN

How long do you think Kaki and Wyatt will be safe sitting out there?

AUNT BEA

Not long.

DOLLY (O.S.)

Then how do we get those kids?

They turn to see Dolly standing at the foot of the stairway with her arms crossed and her chin stuck out.

AUNT BEA

I have an idea, but we have to be quick. Who's game?

EXT WOODS BORDERING BACK YARD

IL DUCE, a large wolverine with four white stripes across his back, crouches in a chestnut tree. From his vantage point, he watches through a window as Bea, in her white uniform, gives the other women "orders".

EXT WOODS BESIDE PASTURE

Digger wolverines excavate more pits in the woods near the farm. Scavenger wolverines haul meat, both fresh and rotting, to the pits. One carries a possum. Another drags a large dog. Two more wolverines slowly haul a deer carcass.

And, progressing more quickly than one would expect, a half-dozen or so wolverines tug and pull a fat cow through the trees.

INT UPSTAIRS ROOM

The upstairs bedroom windows sit side by side with a one-foot strip of wall space running between them. Through the windows, the various floodlights illuminate the backyard proper and the roof of the smokehouse.

Darleen enters the bedroom carrying two rifles and ammunition. Dolly follows with a shotgun and the type of flashlight used to spot raccoons in trees.

They lean the weapons against the wall space between the twin windows and neatly place the ammunition on the floor beside them. One rifle is a .30-.30 bolt action deer rifle, and the other is a .22 semi-automatic.

DOLLY

Kaki, Wyatt, I want you to move away from those rear walls and over to the corner closest to the house.

KAKI

Why, Momma?

DOLLY

Because I'm going to do some butt-burning if you don't. Now get over there and sit down. Right now!

Dolly turns to Darleen with a nervous laugh.

DOLLY

(continuing)

"Why?" she says.

Dimming the lights as low as possible, Darleen sits in a chair in front of the windowsill with the ammunition and rifles ready to hand. She peers unwaveringly into the night.

Reaching over to a table next to her without looking, she clicks on a radio. Soft, romantic music plays.

DOLLY

You're gonna listen to the  
radio?

DARLEEN

Yes, Dolly. Don't you do any shooting unless I tell you to. You can't hit a barn and you know it. We're not taking a chance on hurting the children. Right?

DOLLY

What do I do? Sit on my thumbs?

DARLEEN

You're an extra set of eyes, an extra pair of hands. And you keep the children out of the line of fire.

DOLLY

How do you stay so calm, girl?

DARLEEN

I'm not calm, I'm focused.  
(faces Dolly)  
No one, no thing is going to get my baby.  
(checks a rifle)  
Or anybody else's baby if I can help it.

Dolly pauses for a moment, then turns to the window.

DOLLY

Kids, we're going to practice lying down.

KAKI

Lying down?

DOLLY

Shutup, honey, and do what I say.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Bea and Teena finish moving heavy furniture to blockade the windows and exterior doors.

AUNT BEA

They don't seem to jump very well.

TEENA

They'd have been on top that  
smokehouse by now if they  
could.

The women ease open a window. Suddenly, a  
wolverine slams full length against the side  
of the house under the window. They hear  
claws rake and jaws snap.

AUNT BEA

Sneaky bastards.

TEENA

Look.

EXT BACKYARD           TEENA & BEA'S P.O.V.

In the yard, Il Duce studies first the  
smokehouse, then the house.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

TEENA

It's got four white stripes  
across its back. Is that the  
one you were talking about?

AUNT BEA

Il Duce, the big boss.

TEENA

What's he doing?

AUNT BEA

Looks to me like he's deciding  
where to attack first.

EXT BACKYARD           TEENA & BEA'S P.O.V.

Abruptly, Il Duce runs in a circle, and then  
quickly slips into the darkness surrounding  
the smokehouse.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

AUNT BEA

Dance for communication.

EXT SMOKEHOUSE ROOF

Kaki and Wyatt sit on the roof corner that is nearest the house.

INT UPSTAIRS ROOM

Darleen sits unmoving. Dolly cradles the spotlight.

DOLLY

I need a damn cigarette.

KAKI (O.S.)

Momma!

EXT SMOKEHOUSE ROOF

A flashlight beam instantly sweeps over the trees. One of the smaller trees shakes back and forth.

DOLLY (O.S.)

Lie down, you two, lie down.

The children lie down and huddle as close to the roof edge as they can.

INT UPSTAIRS ROOM

Dolly and Darleen watch as a small tree slowly falls on a back edge of the roof.

DARLEEN

Light the tree where it touches the roof.

Dolly shines the beam as a pair of eyes climb out the shadows of the tree. There's a deafening blast as Darleen uses the .30-.30 in the small room. The eyes vanish.

DOLLY

Hot damn! Do it, girl!

More eyes appear. Darleen systematically picks off each wolverine before it can touch the roof with all four paws. But even more appear. Dolly reloads the .30-.30. Darleen uses the .22. Neither speaks.



Luck intervenes when the tree gives way under the combined weight of falling and climbing wolverines. The tree slides out of sight.

Teena appears in the doorway.

TEENA  
Everyone okay?

DOLLY  
Are you kids alright?

KAKI  
Yes.

WYATT  
I wish I could shoot like that.

KAKI  
Momma says all you have to do is practice.

WYATT  
Miss Know-It-All.

DOLLY  
(to Teena)  
We're okay.

Darleen closes her eyes and whispers to herself.

DARLEEN  
Thank you, God. Thank you  
thank you thank you thank you.

SOUND: POLICE SIREN APPROACHES

TEENA  
Finally.

DOLLY  
I wonder if they brought some donuts?

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Bea stares out the window into the backyard.

AUNT BEA  
So they don't like sirens.

EXT BACKYARD BEA'S P.O.V.

The wolverines scamper heedlessly through both the Shadows and the light in an effort to escape the approaching siren.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Bea can see the patrol car as it cuts the siren and pulls in the drive.

AUNT BEA  
My God.  
(roaring)  
TEENA.

Bea rushes from the room.

EXT FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY

The sheriff's car pulls down the driveway and stops beside the house.

INT BEDROOM

Aunt Bea struggles to open a window on the same side as the sheriff's car. Teena and Dolly stop in the doorway, puzzled by her actions.

AUNT BEA  
(desperately)  
The wolverines aren't gone!

She heaves at the obstinate window one last time, then snatches up a coat and a lamp. Wrapping her arm with the coat, she uses the lamp to smash a pane of glass. She shouts into the darkness.

AUNT BEA  
(continuing)  
Go back. The wolverines aren't gone. Get back in the GOD-DAMN-CAR.

EXT FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY

Two deputies, a RED-HAIRED woman and a POTBELLIED man, are already out of the car with flashlights and weapons in hand. Alert but surprised, they look around them.

REDHEAD

(low voice)

What the hell's a wolverine?

POTBELLY

Haven't the slightest.

Out of the darkness, the wolverines simultaneously hit them from all sides. Engulfed, the deputies go down without firing a shot.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Bea reenters. Teena and Dolly follow. The children, Lonny and Ally, approach the adults.

ALLY

Mommy? What's happening? Was that a police siren?

LONNY

What's all the shootin'?

TEENA

I'm sorry, honey, it was nothing. Just a mistake. You two go back to watching TV. Get.

Michael still sits on the floor and plays with his toys. There's a shout from upstairs.

DARLEEN (O.S.)

Get back up here, Dolly. The Smokehouse.

Dolly exits up the stairs. Bea and Teena look out the window.

AUNT BEA

They're cutting a bigger tree.

We've got to get those kids.

EXT WOODS NEAR FARMHOUSE

A wolverine drags the red-headed deputy into a pit and covers her with dirt.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

At the dining table, Bea and Teena work on loading a toy cannon. Lonny and Ally are not in the room. Michael has stopped playing and looks at the adults.

MICHAEL

Aunt Bea.

They look at the child.

MICHAEL

I hear chewing.

AUNT BEA

Chewing? Where from, dear?

MICHAEL

The floor.

Bea walks quietly across the room, kneels, and puts an ear to the floor.

SOUND: TEETH CHEWING WOOD

AUNT BEA

The wily critters are under the house.

MICHAEL

Like Wile E. Coyote?

AUNT BEA

Yes, dear. If you hear anything else, you let us know right away, okay?

MICHAEL

Okay.

INT UPSTAIRS ROOM

Dolly and Darleen have rearranged the furniture, so that Darleen sits at the window closest to the smokehouse, and Dolly at the other.

KAKI

Momma?

Tree limbs shake on the other side of the smokehouse.

DOLLY

We know, dear. We're coming. I swear, baby, we're coming.

DARLEEN

Let me know when she goes for it.

DOLLY

Right.

INT FARMHOUSE COMMON ROOM

Lonny and Ally stand next to the dining table, on which sits a shoebox full of firecrackers. Bea watches as Teena loads a black powder revolver.

LONNY

They're my firecrackers.

ALLY

So what?

LONNY

I should get to shoot'em.

ALLY

Mommy, is Lonny going to shoot all of the firecrackers by himself?

TEENA

Shutup.

The kids subside. Teena holds up the revolver.



TEENA

There, Bea. Six shots and ten minutes to reload. But it'll kill at close range.

AUNT BEA

Alright, this is the deal. Lonny and Ally light the firecrackers and pitch them out the window. When I say, Teena, you shoot off that cannon. Then I'll empty one shotgun. When I step back, that's your cue. Are we straight on this?

They nod.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Let's do it.

EXT BACKYARD

Firecrackers explode behind the house. Wolverines jump nervously. The toy cannon sticks out the window, poofs out a plume of smoke, and makes a boom as loud as a real cannon. The wolverines scamper away in fright.

Bea and her shotgun appear in the window and repeatedly blast away at the retreating wolverines.

Bea glances over the yard, then disappears inside. With the revolver in one hand, Teena flies through the window with her body held out flat like Superwoman.

She rolls on the ground like a ball, comes lightly to her feet, then sprints toward a pickup truck that sits to one side of the yard.

As she nears the truck, two wolverines charge her from underneath it. The .30-.30 shoots. One of the wolverines, caught while leaping, twists in the air and shows red on its shaggy coat.

The other wolverine blocks Teena's path to the truck. The truck windows are down. Without hesitation, Teena springs over the snapping creature and through the window into the truck cab.

A shotgun blast knocks the second wolverine to the side where it rolls and twists and snaps its jaws in death agony.

AUNT BEA (O.S.)  
HOT DAMN, SHE MADE IT.

Teena appears in the driver's window. Her nose bleeds from a rough landing, but she grins like a nut. Starting the truck, she maneuvers it next to the house and parallel to the window from which she leaped.

Through the window, Bea hands the three children, guns and ammunition, and a wooden baseball bat. The truck has a club cab, so the kids climb in back. Michael grips a toy and still has his sailor hat on.

Dolly appears with the .22 and ammunition, takes one look, and backs away.

DOLLY  
I ain't no damn rubber ball.

AUNT BEA  
No, you're the one who has to drive this damn truck. Now get in.

Grimacing, Dolly very awkwardly climbs head first through the windowsill into the truck cab.

Wolverines move toward the truck, wary but determined.

After nearly suffocating herself by standing on her nose, Dolly makes it into the cab and positions herself in the driver's seat. Teena climbs onto the truck bed through the rear sliding glass window.

AUNT BEA  
(continuing)  
Pull forward and I'll get in the back.

Dolly pulls the truck up and stops.

DOLLY

All right, girl, hop on.

With arms on the truck roof and side for support, Bea scrambles forward until her hips have passed the windowsill, then she gives a heave and rolls through the air. With a big WHUMP, she lands on her back in the truck.

TEENA

Damn, Bea, you trying to blow the tires?

Dolly pulls the truck under the upstairs window. Darleen hands down the rifle and ammunition, then hops lightly to the truck roof and onto the truck bed. Bea, still feeling the effects of her fall, stares at her.

AUNT BEA

Show off.

SOUND: TIRE BLOWING OUT

Teena looks over the side and sees wolverines swarming around a deflated tire. They leap and snap at her.

DARLEEN

Move it, Dolly.

Other wolverines can be heard scratching the sides trying to climb into the bed. The heads and front paws of two wolverines appear over the tailgate.

Bea smashes one back with the baseball bat. Darleen shoots the other.

Dolly moves the truck to the smokehouse. By the time she stops, Bea has her baseball bat in one hand and a pump shotgun in the other.

Bea takes position by the tailgate. Darleen kneels on the roof of the cab. When they reach the smokehouse, Teena leaps from the top of the cab to the smokehouse roof.

Teena scoops the two children up, one under each arm, and is just leaping back to the cab when a large tree crashes onto the smokehouse roof.

Wolverines surge from the tree trunk in two's and three's. Darleen picks them off with the efficiency of a machine, but there are far too many to stop the attack.

Wolverines swarm around the truck. Bea ignores everything but the vulnerable tailgate. As wolverines appear, she shoots with the shotgun, smashes with the bat, pumps the gun, then smashes and shoots again. Blood coats the rear of the truck.

Teena hops down to the truck bed and shoves the kids into the cab through the sliding window.

SOUND: ANOTHER TIRE BLOWING OUT

TEENA

Let's go!

The truck lurches, then rolls slowly toward the barn. With the wolverines baffled, Bea closes her eyes and heaves great gulps of air.

TEENA

(continuing)

Bea, you looked like a thousand-pound killing machine.

AUNT BEA

Thanks.

INT TRUCK CAB

Darleen sticks her head in the rear sliding window.

DARLEEN

Drive around in a circle until Bea can catch her breath.

DOLLY

All right.

Darleen reaches out to Michael. He climbs up to her and she hugs him.

DARLEEN

I needed that. Are you okay?

MICHAEL

Okay. What's all the noise,

Mom?

DARLEEN

Just doing something that has  
to be done.

DOLLY

Yeah, cleaning up somebody  
else's mess.

DARLEEN

Men don't think ahead, that's  
all.

DOLLY

You mean they don't think.

DARLEEN

Would you shut up and drive.

DOLLY

Well, excuse me.

DARLEEN

We'll excuse her this time,  
won't we, Michael?

MICHAEL

Yes.

DOLLY

Thanks.

EXT TRUCK BED

The truck continues to circle.

AUNT BEA

It surely would've been nice  
to drive across those fields.

TEENA

Wet fields are wet fields.  
Don't worry, Bea, God has his  
hand on us.

AUNT BEA

I sincerely hope so.

Darleen pulls out of the cab and sits on top  
of it with her legs hanging over windshield  
and a rifle across her lap.



TEENA

I saw him.

AUNT BEA

Who?

TEENA

Il duce.

AUNT BEA

What was he doing?

TEENA

Watching.

AUNT BEA

The truck?

TEENA

No, Bea, he was watching you.

AUNT BEA

Macho bastard.

TEENA

He knows you're the one responsible for messing up his plans.

AUNT BEA

Maybe. Have you noticed any dead wolverines?

TEENA

What do you mean?

AUNT BEA

There are no bodies.

Teena looks around the yard.

TEENA

Tidy little darlings, aren't they?

EXT WOODS NEAR FARMHOUSE

The wolverines drag dead and nearly-dead wolverines into a pit, then scratch dirt over them.



INT BARN

A more expensive barn than most, this one has several large windows, which allows the exterior floodlights to illuminate the interior somewhat. A small office, consisting of three thin, metal walls, joins to a barn wall that has a window set in it. A desk, lamp, and door complete the office. It has no roof.

The office window slides open and Teena climbs in. She steps across the desk, peeks over the wall, then uses a flashlight to scrutinize the barn interior. Large holes have been burrowed under the walls. There is no movement, but eyes glint in the flashlight beam.

TEENA

A goddamn trap.

She removes her blouse, lays it along the top of a wall to protect her hands, then vaults over. As soon as she hits dirt, she leaps to a sixty gallon barrel drum filled with pesticide. Jaws snap behind her.

Other barrel drums sit in a row. In three long steps, she dashes across the barrels to the enormous rear tire of a John Deere 4420 tractor, which has a cab and a front blade attachment.

Shining the flashlight where she needs to step to reach the cab, she finds several wolverines trying to claw their way up to her. Aiming carefully with the revolver, she shoots three of the wolverines.

In a flash, she uses a dying wolverine as a step, reaches the cab door, and throws herself inside. A wolverine clamps itself to her pants leg.

Screwing her arms around, she places the revolver barrel against its head and shoots. While struggling to get the dead wolverine out of the doorway, another leaps at her with teeth snapping. She jams the gun in its mouth

and shoots.

With a heave, she pushes both animals out of the cab and slams the door.

EXT BARN

A rope runs from the truck bed, where Bea keeps out the slack, to the handle of the barn door. The truck rolls forward, then backward, staying in motion to ward off attacks on both tires and people.

SOUND: TRACTOR ROARS INSIDE THE BARN

Bea hauls on the rope as fast as she can. The barn door opens smoothly on metal rollers, and the tractor jumps out into the night, then stops. Teena wrestles with a wolverine inside the cab.

AUNT BEA

Pull alongside quick.

With a sharp turn, Dolly has the truck bed next to the tractor. Bea hops to the cab door and gets it open.

INT TRACTOR CAB

The wolverine champs on Teena's scalp. Blood is every-where. Teena has jammed a hoe kept in the cab for cleaning the plow against its belly trying to hold it off.

EXT BARN

Suspicious of the heavy machinery, only a few wolverines charge, most holding back. From her perch atop the truck cab, Darleen picks off any attackers as Bea helps Teena.

Bea smashes the wolverine so hard that her baseball bat breaks. She uses the sharp, broken handle to pry the its mouth open and free Teena. Then Bea grabs it by the scruff of the neck, tugs it away from Teena, and holds it in the doorway.

AUNT BEA

Shoot!

Darleen pumps three rounds in it.

DARLEEN

Dump it, Bea!

Bea pitches it into the darkness, then drags the semi-conscious Teena to the truck and into Darleen's arms.

AUNT BEA

Take her and go and don't you dare stop until the children are safe.

Snatching up the pump shotgun, Bea shoots around the tractor to be certain that her path back to the tractor is clear. Then she climbs into the tractor cab and slams the door.

INT TRACTOR CAB

In the cab, Bea finds the window immediately facing the driver missing. Propping the shotgun on one side, she picks the revolver off the floor and lays it on her lap with the broken baseball bat. Ignoring the blood that smears her with every movement, she slams the tractor in gear and rolls towards the house.

EXT FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY          BEA'S P.O.V.

Due to a sloping yard and ditches, the sheriff's car blocks the only exit--the gravel driveway. Bea stops the tractor in front of the patrol car.

She lowers the blade, then rolls the tractor forward. The patrol car slides backward.

Everything goes well at first, then the car slips around, slanting across the driveway. Bea stops and backs up. When she turns again, Il duce is on the tractor hood running straight for her.

She shoves the revolver at him and fires. The shot tears off one of his paws. Il duce slips but recovers and comes at her. Bea jams the sharp, broken bat into his mouth.

EXT FRONT YARD

As they struggle in the cab, the tractor lurches forward and turns the patrol car

completely over. The pickup truck driven by  
Dolly rolls down the drive and onto the road.

Meanwhile, Bea loses control and the tractor runs down a slope to a ditch and flips over on one side. The pickup truck continues until out of sight.

INT TRACTOR CAB

Stunned for a moment, Bea gasps for air. Then she quickly looks around. There is no sign of Il duce.

AUNT BEA

God, I hope they got away.

She finds the revolver and checks the loads.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Empty, babe.

Drawing the shotgun to her, she racks it open.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Empty. I'm in deep shit and there's no debating that.

She looks around. She picks up the hoe.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Bastard ate my bat. But at least I got a hoe.

Taking another, very frightened breath, she opens the door and rises from the cab.

EXT FRONT YARD

Wolverines surround the wrecked tractor in a fanged circle.

AUNT BEA

At least I got a h--

Her voice gives out.

With a wrecked paw dangling by a bit of skin, and blood dripping from his mouth, a single

wolverine pushes its way

towards her from the circle of teeth and shaggy fur. It is Il duce.

He stops on a clear spot of grass between the circle and Bea. She steps out of the cab. Walking to within six feet, juggling the hoe in her hands, she stops. The ring of wolverines crouches to the ground.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Then it's a fight.

Waving the hoe in front of Il Duce's eyes, she circles him. Il Duce matches her. She smacks him on the top of his head. The hoe is too light to inflict damage, but there's a satisfying thump. He shakes his head in irritation.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Don't like that, do you? Makes you mad.

Feinting a rush, she side-steps and thumps him again.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Hurting, aren't you? Saving your strength for the kill.

She closes the circle to cut down his maneuvering area. He suddenly hops at her and snaps. She backpedals while giving him a series of thumps on the head.

AUNT BEA

(continuing)

Don't you want my flesh, babe? There's so much of it.

(shouting)

YOU HAVE TO KILL ME FIRST.

With this, she crouches slightly and swings the hoe widely from side-to-side. The wolverine snarls and rushes at her legs.

Letting the hoe slip from her hands, Bea hops

and pulls up her knees. The wolverine misses her legs and stops. He now stands under her. The 300-plus pounds of Aunt Bea crashes down on his back.

Bea quickly rolls away. Still alive, Il duce rolls his eyes wildly and digs at the ground with a front paw, snapping at the air with his teeth. The rest of him is inoperable.

Bea waits. Two wolverines approach. They stare at her for a moment, then drag Il duce away.

AUNT BEA  
(continuing)  
Carnivorous.  
(takes a breath)  
Hope they like the way I  
dance.

Bending over and sticking her chin out, Bea shuffles in a circle. Then she begins walking.

AUNT BEA  
(continuing)  
Time for me to take you babies  
back home.

She walks down the road. The wolverines follow.

INT CONGRESSIONAL ROOM

RANT  
At last, somebody used their  
brains.

Rant confers quietly with her fellows at the desk.

BLANK  
I have an expert witness whose  
opinion might be helpful.

RANT  
Who?

Col. Blank motions. The door opens and a figure enters. Doctor S, the Two-Headed Man, sits down.

DOCTOR S  
Good day, Senator Rant, I want

to thank you for this  
opportunity to explain the  
absolute necessity for  
unrestrained genetic research.

RANT

Doctor, can I tell the voters  
in my district that their  
money has not been squandered  
on meaningless projects? Can  
you put all this into  
perspective?

DOCTOR S

Yes, I can. Despite a few  
unavoidable accidents, we must  
increase funding for research.  
We must ensure that the nation  
remains competitive by  
pursuing aggressive genetic  
discovery. And, above all, we  
must have unquestioning faith  
in the inevitability of  
scientific progress.

The 2nd Head SINGS.

2ND HEAD

Molasses, molasses,  
It's icky sticky goo.  
Molasses, molasses,  
It'll always stick to you!

FADE OUT

SONG CREDITS:

"Molasses, Molasses"  
("It's Icky Sticky Goo")  
Written by L. Clinton  
Sung by The Galli Sisters  
National Records Company (NRC)  
#9127  
(#634)  
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ASCAP-2:32