

GHOST LIGHT

By

Rickard B. DeMille

Rickard B. DeMille
rickdemi@yahoo.com

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Moonlight illuminates Bald Mountain. In the foreground is a guard shack with a sign: "Entrance, Area 51, Photography is prohibited beyond this point."

Inside a cave, deep in the mountain, a black slab of rock begins to crackle with energy. Tendrils of electricity spark across the slab, then fade.

Electricity sparks again, a weak RED BALL of light appears, then pulsates malevolently.

A scratching sound comes from somewhere and the Red Ball flares, then explodes.

It's now dark, but the scratching sound goes on.

INT. SCROOGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the darkness, the eerie scratching sound continues. A white pin prick of light appears, then grows closer and brighter.

A single desk lamp weakly illuminates SCROOGE (old, grey beard, eccentric). The sound is him at a desk, copying information from an old leather bound book to a piece of paper.

He stops, closes the old book and clips the note he was writing to a stack of papers. He fastidiously arranges items on the desk.

He presses the record button on a small tape recorder on his desk.

SCROOGE

I am Jonah Hightower, and I am
leaving now for Ghostlight.

He sets the book on the papers.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

If you hear this tape I am dead.

A large automatic pistol sits next to the papers.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Tonight is the Venus Transit, and
the evil will return.

He takes a photo out of the book.

INSERT - CLOSE ON PHOTO

An old west family, a man wearing a six-gun and a Sheriff's badge, wife in a faded dress, two boys (teenager and toddler).

BACK TO SCENE

He stands the photo tenderly against a lamp, next to the barrel of a shotgun that is leaning against the desk.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

I am leaving a photocopy of my grandfather's journal. It tells of the search for his missing wife and son, a search I have continued. My discoveries, the truth, are all here.

Everything grows darker until just two points of light, the lamp reflected in his glasses, are all that remain.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

They are coming, he is coming, and I'll be waiting.

A final, foreboding click and the recording stops.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

A pair of GHOST LIGHTS replace the lamp's reflections in Scrooge's glasses. They spiral into the air and speed away through the desert.

The lights startle a coyote, playfully chase a rabbit, then speed down the highway. They frolic in front of a Historical Marker and illuminate a part of it.

CLOSE ON MARKER: The Yucca Lights are mysterious, ghostly orbs that have been reported here for centuries. More secret than Area 51 itself, scientists have documented dozens local folk tales dealing with this unexplained phenomenon.

BACK TO SCENE

The lights are off again, hovering outside a truck window, watching the driver like demonic eyes, then hurry on.

They approach a sign that reads "Stop and Visit Ghostlight
- Where the Yucca Lights Come To Play. Every Night Is A
Mystery."

A view of the sign, it transitions from night to day.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Same view of sign, full daylight. A deep rumble grows, a
1960 Corvette convertible, top down, moves down the road
just as the lights did.

INT. CORVETTE - CONTINUOUS

Desert rushes by the window. Inside the car CAGE WALKER
(military haircut, wearing a wild Hawaiian shirt) struggles
to read a sheet of paper.

INSERT - CLOSE ON HAND HOLDING PAPER

U.S. Marine Corps letterhead, it reads: "The Commandant of
the Marine Corps again denies your request for transfer to
the infantry and deployment to Iraq."

A handwritten message in bold red ink. "You're a fucking
lawyer Cage, get over it and just do your job!"

BACK TO SCENE

Ahead of the Corvette, a very small town is visible.

He holds the letter up, it flutters wildly in the wind.

Cage lets go, it spirals out of the car. Cage watches it go
in the rearview mirror, then gives it the finger as it
disappears.

He passes the turn off to the town (old buildings, trailers
range from dilapidated to new), a big sign says
"Ghostlight, Nevada. Population" with the number "94"
crossed out by tape.

Cage slams on the brakes, skids into a U-turn, and burns
rubber back toward Ghostlight.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - AFTERNOON

CAGE drives slowly into town, "Hotel California" playing on
the radio. A large banner strung across the road reads "The
Ghost Lights Welcome You."

There are a few old wooden buildings that would fit perfectly on the set of Maverick, except for the satellite dishes and neon signs.

Cage pulls up to a cafe, the radio signal fades to a hiss.

On his left a large horse is hitched to a post, on the right are a pair of dirt bikes. He turns off his car, lifts himself onto the trunk area behind his seat, and looks around.

It's very hot, he undoes one more button on his shirt. The street is deserted except for a MARCIE and WALTER talking excitedly by the cafe entrance.

MARCIE

I must vigorously insist that you release Mr. Hightower, this instant.

Marcie (attractive, 30's, French accent) is sexy with very pale legs under designer shorts.

WALTER

You're not in Canada right now, and out here in the Wild West 'vigorous insistence' isn't always enough to get someone out of jail.

Walter (fit, 60's) is dressed in western clothes and boots.

MARCIE

I did not come here to have some pretend cowboy sheriff insult me to my face.

WALTER

(now with a heavy drawl)
I reckon not, missy! I'm a thinkin' most people wait 'till your back's turned afore they insult ya.

Her face turns red, anger building, and Walter gives in.

WALTER

Alright, but you'll be responsible. I'm not just the sheriff, I'm the judge, too. If he gets into trouble again you'll both be locked up.

The discussion over, Walter enters the cafe and Marcie walks away, both appear satisfied with the exchange.

She sees the Corvette and slows, giving it an appraising glance. She sees Cage, her interest lingers for a moment before a look of forced indifference replaces it.

She walks past the horse, Cage watches her underneath the animal. She gets in a red Mustang and speeds off without looking back.

Cage smiles and hops out of his car.

INT. CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

CAGE enters the small, rustic cafe and waits to be seated.

He finally picks a table and sits, still no menu or waitress. He sees tables and a stairway to his left, and a row of glass cases with food on the shelves to the right. Near them is muscular BUCK, wearing a dirty white apron and leaning on the checkout counter, reading a comic book. He has a cheap pedestal fan blowing on him and he fights to keep the pages from blowing around.

Cage walks over, trying to sound friendly.

CAGE

Hello, can I see the menu?

Buck chomps on his gum, without looking up he jabs his thumb at a menu on the wall behind him.

CAGE (CONT'D)

A hamburger with fries and a Coke sounds pretty good.

A girl's voice from the kitchen.

KATE LYNN (O.S.)

That's because you've never had one.

PATRON (O.S.)

Amen!

Cage looks around, amused. Buck turns the page, irritated. He points to a sign on the food cases, "Grill hours 11 to 2, 5 to 6:30."

Cage looks at his watch, it's 1:50.

CAGE

It's not two yet.

Buck glances impatiently at the wall where a large clock indicates 2:05. Cage starts to say something but stops.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Let me have some cold chicken from the case, potato salad and a Coke.

Buck pretends to read a moment longer then picks up the fan and moves it to the food cases. He kicks the long extension cord until it's out of the way and then adjusts the fan so it's blowing on him just right.

He now stares at Cage, pops his gum loudly, and grabs a plate. He picks through a tray of chicken for the worst pieces. He dumps on a meager spoonful of potato salad and puts the plate and a can of Coke on the case.

Cage silently grabs it and sits, debating whether or not to eat when two plates appear in front of him. One has three delicious looking pieces of chicken and a generous scoop of potato salad, the other fresh baked rolls.

Cage looks up at a smiling WALTER.

WALTER

You'll have to excuse Buck, he feels buried here in Ghostlight and resents anyone who isn't.

CAGE

Thanks.

Walter sits in the chair next to him.

WALTER

Walter Ellison, owner; also mayor of Ghostlight.

CAGE

Cage Walker.

Cage takes a bite, it's okay so he digs in.

WALTER

What brings you to Ghostlight?

CAGE

My girlfriend was from Rachel. She mentioned the Yucca lights once, then would never talk about it again.

WALTER

I can believe that! Area 51 has been declassified, but they still don't like people talking about the lights. Is she with you?

Cage stops, fork almost to his mouth. He looks away briefly.

CAGE

No.
(finishes the bite)
Anyway, they're just stories.

WALTER

Oh no, they're real. They appear most nights in the desert. The Indians, Native Americans, have legends going way back. Scientists from Groom Lake gave up studying them years ago.

Walter pauses to heighten the drama.

WALTER (CONT'D)

When they started testing the A-bombs at Yucca Flats, the lights went crazy. Only a few can be seen these days, and they don't bother people anymore.

Cage chuckles and finishes his lunch, growing more interested. Walter gives him a sly look.

WALTER (CONT'D)

If you want to learn more, there are people here with first hand experiences.

Cage pushes the plate away, Walter stands.

WALTER (CONT'D)

You can't see the lights 'till dark.

CAGE

I'll pass on the lights, but I don't mind looking around.

WALTER

You're afraid of the lights, subconsciously most people are - and you should be.

Cage starts to respond when Buck appears, now wearing a uniform shirt, badge and gun. Buck puffs up, pushing out his chest.

He stares at Cage as he speaks.

BUCK
Marshall, old Scrooge is still in
the bomb shelter, I mean cell.
That lady doctor wants him out.

WALTER
You've met Buck.

Cage extends his hand.

CAGE
Hi, Cage Walker.

Buck takes the hand and squeezes tightly, Cage just smiles and squeezes back.

Cage looks over from the challenge to an exasperated Walter, then backs off pulling his hand away.

CAGE (CONT'D)
You're a powerful man, Buck.

Buck gives him an 'Of course I am you dumbshit!' look.

WALTER
I was going to let him go anyway,
and we want to keep the cute
little doctor from asking too many
questions. Still, better keep his
guns for now; and help Jonah hitch
up his wagon while you're at it.

Buck starts to protest, but simply walks away muttering. Cage looks at Walter who shrugs.

WALTER
Buck has a big heart, but I never
realized the gene pool had a kiddy
section until my daughter married
him. She's gone, he and my
granddaughter are all I have left.

CAGE
No sweat, I deal with worse.

WALTER
You a cop?

CAGE

No, a Marine, a JAG lawyer.
Most of my clients are rock hard
and just plain nasty.

Walter becomes the welcoming committee again, likeable and very slick. He leads Cage off.

WALTER

Let's go meet the town's folk.

EXT. TOWN OF GHOSTLIGHT - AFTERNOON

CAGE and WALTER walk out of the cafe. Cage looks at the "High Speed Internet Here" sign in the window.

CAGE

I don't even have high speed
Internet, how did you get it here?

WALTER

This is also the City Hall, the
state put it in on a government
grant. Things aren't so cloak and
dagger now, but the federal boys
still go out of their way to keep
us happy, and quiet.

Cage and Walter walk a few steps down, there's a door to a different part of the same building. Cage looks over, amused, and they enter a room made into a crafts store.

INT. CRAFT SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

CAGE and WALTER are in the crafts store. A sweet old lady, CORA, is holding an embroidered pillow. It shows an old Chevy coupe with a ball of light in the passenger's side, she uses the pillow to illustrate her story.

CORA

It came in the window, floated
around inside for about a mile
then just scooted out the other
side. I was scared to death!

EXT. TOWN OF GHOSTLIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

CAGE and WALTER walk out of the craft shop, Walter in animated narration and Cage holding the pillow and an armful of bags.

They visit the run down building next to the cafe, a saddle shop. There is a narrow alley between the buildings.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - CONTINUOUS

CAGE talks with GEORGE, a tall man, late 60's, his hand on Cage's shoulder they walk.

GEORGE

No horse, aye? Shame, but let me show you something you've just got to have!

EXT. TOWN OF GHOSTLIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

WALTER and CAGE walk out of the saddle shop, another large box under Cage's arm. GEORGE comes out of the store after them, smiling.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Oh, and next time you're here, bring them boots, or your loafers, what ever, and drop 'em in the shine barrel.

(lifts the lid on a large steel drum)

I shine 'em for a buck a boot, you don't get service like THAT in the city.

EXT. GHOSTLIGHT GENERAL STORE - AFTERNOON

Outside the Ghost Light General Store, a sturdy looking building with black steel bars and mesh on the doors and windows. CAGE is hesitant to go in.

CAGE

Last stop Walter, this won't all fit in my car.

WALTER

You can't miss this, Hank has the largest known selection of books on the topic. Last stop, promise.

WALTER reaches for the door when it bursts open.

VERL and JOE BOB (40's, almost identical, overalls, boots and grimy baseball style caps) explode out.

Each carries a twelve-pack of cheap beer, lugging a large cooler between them. They almost run Walter over.

VERL

What the . . .?

They see Walter and look at each other.

VERL (CONT'D)

Sorry Walter, we didn't see ya'.
 (trying to hurry passed)
 Well, best be goin', see y'all
 later.

WALTER

Verl, Joe Bob. What's in the
 cooler?

JOE BOB

Just ice.

Walter suspiciously opens the cooler, it's full of ice.

WALTER

What's all this ice for?

VERL

Uh, for our beer, nothing like a
 cold one after a hard day.

WALTER

Then why isn't your beer in the
 ice?

They look at each other again, stumped.

WALTER (CONT'D)

We've been through this before,
 haven't we Verline.

Cage looks at Verl again. The clothes have hidden the fact
 that Verl is actually Verline, a muscular woman.

WALTER

I don't want an 'accident' setting
 a couple hundred rattlesnakes
 loose in town again.

At the word 'rattlesnakes' Cage looks stricken and takes a
 small step back. The pair hurry off.

JOE BOB

No sir, we learned our lesson. No
 snakes in town. Noooo sir.

VERL

Shut up Joe Bob, you puddin-head,
you're making things worse.

They reach their old truck and wrestle the cooler into the back. Joe Bob turns and Verl playfully grabs his butt. Joe Bob complains loudly and climbs in the passenger side.

CAGE

Rattlesnakes?

WALTER

Yep. Verl and Joe Bob call themselves snake wranglers. They catch rattlesnakes and sell the skins and meat, that's what the cooler's for. You OK?

Cage frowns and watches the pair drive off.

CAGE

Yeah, I just have this thing about snakes.

INT. GHOSTLIGHT GENERAL STORE - AFTERNOON

WALTER AND CAGE enter, there's a little bit of everything.

At the cash register is LANCE, a good looking Native American boy (athletic, late teens) reading the "Anarchist's Cookbook." Walter goes over and takes it away from him.

WALTER

Lance, you worry me sometimes. Go get your dad before I burn this.

Lance hurries off, Walter leads them to a large bookshelf on the back wall. Cage sees an old sign with the Civil Defense logo, it says "Bomb Shelter, Capacity 24."

CAGE (CONT'D)

Does every place in town have a bomb shelter?

WALTER

Almost, in the sixties I got a nice Federal Grant to put them in all the public buildings; you know, Cold War and all. This is the town library.

HANK, a capable looking Native American man (late 50's,) joins them, looks at Cage's bags and shakes his head.

HANK

I see Walter gave you the Chamber of Commerce tour, I won't try and sell you anything else. Hank Littlebear, this is my son Lance.

CAGE

Cage Walker. You can sell me a bottle of water, being a 'mark' makes me thirsty.

HANK

Glad to.
(signals to Lance)
Where you from?

CAGE

North Carolina, Camp LeJeune.

LANCE

You're a Marine! Ever kill anybody?

WALTER

What kind of question is that?
Besides, he's just a lawyer; like on JAG.

Cage looks deflated at being called "just a lawyer."

CAGE

Every Marine is combat trained, even the lawyers.

HANK

Boy, get the man his water.

Lance goes to the cooler. A bell rings as KATE LYNN and TAMERA (attractive teenage girls) rush into the store.

Tamera is wearing tight shorts and heels. Kate Lynn wearing a dirty Ghostlight Cafe shirt and stained jeans.

Kate Lynn hurries to Lance, who discreetly tries get her to notice the group in the back. It's the girl's voice we heard in the cafe.

KATE LYNN

I snuck out early. I set the clock ahead, again. My Dad doesn't have a clue! Are we still going to watch the . . .

Kate Lynn finally follows Lance's hint and looks to the back.

KATE LYNN

. . . Lord of the Rings again, at Tamera's?

She sounds convincing but Walter isn't fooled.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)

Hi grandpa, I didn't know you were here.

WALTER

Obviously not! Cage, this is my only granddaughter Kate Lynn. She's just been grounded.

KATE LYNN

That's not fair! Besides, you're not my father.

WALTER

I don't mean to 'bum you out girl friend',
 (pretending to sound
 hip)
 but when did I start caring about fair?

Lance brings Cage his water, then hurries the girls into the back room. Walter whispers to himself.

WALTER

I wish I didn't have to be your father.

Hank hurries behind the counter, Cage reaches for his wallet.

HANK

Forget it. I'll start a tab for you.

CAGE

Thanks, next time.

They walk out, arms full. Cage smiles at Walter.

CAGE

How many tourists get the complete
"Ghost Light" experience?

Walter smiles back.

WALTER

All of them who drive Corvettes.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - AFTERNOON

CAGE and WALTER cross the road to Cage's car, Cage remembers something.

CAGE

What makes you think I'm afraid of
the lights?

WALTER

Everyone is, or they should be. If
the lights are real, then our cozy
little world isn't what it seems.
Once we admit there are things
that can't be explained, actual
mysteries, then what else don't we
understand?

A dour SCROOGE appears wearing a white cotton long sleeve
shirt, black pants with suspenders and a broad brimmed grey
hat.

CAGE

That must be Scrooge? How did he
get a name like that?

WALTER

He's trying to ruin our
'Christmas', so to speak. He's
been a pain in the ass since
before this alien cover up stuff
ever got started.

Cage dumps some bags in Walter's arms and reaches in his
pocket for the car keys.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Went off and got a PhD in physics,
then came back to work here at ET
central, Area 51 that is. He
thinks the lights are dangerous,
always has. Lately he's been
fanatical, trying to scare off the
few tourists we get.

(lowers his voice)
Some think he's gone just a little
crazy.

SCROOGE
No need to whisper, Walter, I may
be older than dirt but I'm not
deaf yet.

They struggle to fit everything in the Corvette.

CAGE
Hi, my name's Cage Walker.

Scrooge ignores Cage and walks toward BUCK who appears
leading the massive horse now pulling an old buckboard
wagon.

BUCK
Take another look around, ya' old
fruitcake, everybody's just fine -
except you.

Scrooge gives Buck a contemptuous glance then climbs spryly
up to the seat.

SCROOGE
They're still comin' Walter, I
mean it.

WALTER
And I mean it, Jonah, go home!
Admit it, you were wrong.

SCROOGE
I . . . I may have missed
something, but I'm not wrong.
(calmly to Cage)
That car looks fast, get as far
away from here as it will take
you.

BUCK
Don't go scarin' the tourists. In
fact, why don't you just go,
unless you liked being locked up.

WALTER
Go home and cool off. You can have
your arsenal back in a few weeks.

BUCK

And say hello to that pretty
doctor for me, tell her I'll be
happy to help her with her
research.

Scrooge stares at them as the wagon moves off. Cage laughs.

CAGE

He looks almost Amish, though I've
never been anywhere with a
militant Amish population before.

WALTER

He's not Amish -- or crazy.

Walter is lost in thought, then recovers and looks at the
horizon. He vigorously shakes Cage's hand.

WALTER (CONT'D)

It's getting dark, go on down the
highway to the lookout. You really
should see the lights for
yourself. And you come back again,
hear?

CAGE

I couldn't afford it! I should
have talked to old Scrooge before
I stopped.

WALTER

And next time bring your
girlfriend.

Cage slows and looks at the ground, then silently gets in
his car and drives off. In the rearview mirror Cage sees
the town's people come out and congratulate Walter.

EXT. OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - NIGHT

Cage's vet is in a parking area next to a red SUV,
classical music blaring from partially opened windows. An
almost full moon casts eerie shadows.

By the Historical Marker about the lights, CAGE talks with
a well dressed MAN and WOMAN (slightly over weight, up
tight). The woman is pointing into the field, adjusting the
large flowered hat she is wearing. Points of light move in
the distance.

WOMAN

Look, there are two more. Isn't this fascinating?

MAN

Not really, that Air Force guy said they're just car lights.
(aside to Cage)
And don't those two look like flashlights?

CAGE

Those are flashlights, but I don't have a clue about all the others.

She takes off her hat and uses it to point with.

WOMAN

And that one's half way up the mountain, must be a flying car.

The man snorts. They watch and point briefly.

Cage looks at his watch.

CAGE

Whoa, I gotta go! You kids have fun.

Cage waves as he walks back to his car.

MAN

Don't let the lights get you!

They laugh, then Cage jumps as an enormous dog in the back seat of the SUV barks angrily.

WOMAN

Don't worry, he can't get out.

Cage looks at them, then the vicious looking dog. He walks to his car, muttering.

CAGE

How about "He won't hurt you?"

Cage throws dirt as the Vet disappears down the highway and into the night.

EXT. DESERT NEAR THE OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - NIGHT

VERL and JOE BOB carry long poles with metal hooks on the end, sneaking around with flashlights and looking for snakes. They see Cage drive off, music from the SUV drifts through the night.

JOE BOB

The little car's leaving.

VERL

I hope the other one leaves soon,
I can't stand that music.

JOE BOB

You don't appreciate the finer
things, Verl. Be a little more
refined.

VERL

Like you? The only thing refined
about you is your after shave, it
was refined by Exxon.

Joe Bob starts to respond when several lights get in the way. He swats at them.

JOE BOB

What's with the lights? All of a
sudden you can't get rid of 'em.

VERL

Yeah, and they're scaring
everything away; no snakes,
rabbits, mice - nothing.

JOE BOB

Maybe we should just head back.

VERL

No, let's stay a little longer,
something's bound to show up.

INT. INSIDE BALD MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

The slab of black rock begins to spark again. The RED BALL of energy appears, then sparks begin to fly.

The Ball pulses with energy, then explodes again. This time the Red Ball continues to glow, and fingers of energy crackle off in all directions.

EXT. OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - NIGHT

The COUPLE is still at the lookout, the man impatient.

MAN

I think we should go too.

WOMAN

No, look, they're getting closer.
Maybe one will come up to us.

MAN

That's all we need, then you'll
want to take it home for a pet.

They are startled by a flash of bright red light on top of Bald Mountain. What appear to be fingers of lightning blaze across the ground, crackling down from the mountain and spreading out across the valley floor.

EXT. DESERT NEAR THE OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - CONTINUOUS

Two of the GHOST LIGHTS move slowly through the desert. As the ground lightning passes under them they fall among the sagebrush and go out.

We hear thuds, then look at the spot where they dropped. There is nothing but a pair of "s" shaped tracks, like those made by huge snakes, leading off into the night. There are no more lights.

INT. CAGE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Cage is driving, searching his radio futilely for a station that isn't country western.

The radio grows loud with static, then becomes a hiss. Cage sees the crackling fingers of lightning race toward him.

As they pass under his car his engine dies and the lights and radio go out. He coasts to the side of the road and looks around, confused.

EXT. DESERT NEAR THE OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - NIGHT

VERL and JOE BOB stumble through the moonlit desert. Joe Bob trips and falls. He shakes the now dark flashlight.

JOE BOB

Son of a . . . Verline! I told you
to make sure the flashlights had
new batteries!

VERL

You were supposed to check the
batteries, I loaded the barrels.

JOE BOB

No, I was the one . . .

Screams come from the lookout.

VERL

Tourists, afraid of the dark no
doubt.

Ferocious barking, a painful yelp, silence.

JOE BOB

I guess their puppy's afraid of
the dark too. Wait!

Joe Bob gets up, something moves in the bushes ahead of
him. He bends and looks closer.

Verl hears something and moves a little to her left,
searching the bushes.

VERL

Al-right! You ready Joe Bob, looks
like we found us some snakes after
all.

EXT. DESERT NEAR THE OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

We see JOE BOB ahead of us, shining with an amber
monochrome glow, bending down and looking in our direction.
We edge forward.

EXT. DESERT NEAR THE OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - CONTINUOUS

VERL and JOE BOB advance, poles in front. Joe Bob steps
around a bush, his eyes get big.

JOE BOB

Damn, Verl, I think I'm gonna'
need a bigger pole.

Verl turns to look, a RED BALL of light floats nearby. Now a faint blue glow from the side starts to illuminate her.

VERL

You are such a . . . Ouch, what the hell?

Something has attached itself to Verl's leg. All we see is the wicked looking teeth in her leg, she panics.

Joe Bob is now back peddling, fear on his face. We see a wicked glowing tail like a scorpion's rise swaying from the bushes.

JOE BOB

Stop, no! Verline, something's after me.

Another tail, glowing like a black light, rises behind Joe Bob and strikes. There is a crack of electricity and a bright blue spark hits him in the back. He goes limp and screams.

Verl hears him, a new panic on her face. She forgets the beast attacking her, and struggles vainly to his rescue.

VERL

I'm comin' Joe Bob, hang on baby.

BOTH

No, Ahhh! Get away! It's got me!

Joe Bob is motionless on the ground. There is a crackle and spark from where Verline is, then complete silence.

A death mask of fear is on Joe Bob's face. We hear the sounds of munching flesh and crushing bones as the body is jerked from our view, inches at a time, being devoured. A light rises from his body and floats off.

INT. CORA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

CORA and CALVIN, her husband, are asleep. Chickens cackle nervously outside. Cora wakes up and pokes Calvin.

CORA

Wake up, wake up! You said you fixed the fence!

CALVIN

I did.

CORA

Then why is that skunk after the chickens again? Go scare him away, and no shooting!

Cora looks over at the alarm clock, it's completely dark. She picks it up and looks closer.

CORA

And check the breakers too.

Calvin struggles to sit. He turns on the lamp, nothing happens.

CALVIN

Damn!

He crawls out of bed and heads toward the door of their trailer.

EXT. CORA'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The door creaks open. CALVIN creeps out, mumbling angrily to himself.

CALVIN

Don't hurt the poor skunk. Don't wake the neighbors. Bunch of bull.

He grabs a shovel and carefully makes his way in the moonlight.

He rounds the corner of a shed, stops and squints. The chickens are still in a frenzy but he can't see what's causing it. He gets closer holding the shovel in front of him menacingly.

There is a rustling in the bushes behind him, he turns when it rustles again and something bursts out. Calvin gasps, then looks exasperated. We see a fat, lazy skunk ambling toward the chickens. Calvin waves the shovel, getting its attention without scaring it.

CALVIN (CONT'D)

Get away from here. Go on, shoo!

The skunk thinks it over, then turns and ambles back into the bushes. Calvin urges it away then goes inside, mumbling and cursing.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

CAGE is under the hood of his Vet, checking the battery. He gets back inside, nothing works.

Frustrated, he starts to lock the car then stops. He reaches inside and pulls out a small automatic pistol.

He tucks it in the trouser waist band behind his back, under his loose Hawaiian shirt, locks the door, then calmly walks back the way he came.

A rhythmic tapping is heard, then grows louder. Cage looks behind him warily.

Finally SCROOGE appears in his horse drawn wagon, Coleman lantern on a pole by the seat. Cage waves, Scrooge ignores him.

Cage steps in his path, Scrooge urges the horse on faster.

CAGE

Hey, wait a minute.

Cage jumps out of the way.

The wagon passes, Cage runs to catch up. He grabs the back of the wagon and vaults easily inside.

He lands, and is greeted by shrieks and squeals. Small hands pummel his head and shoulders as he rolls agilely away.

CAGE (CONT'D)

What the . . .

MARCIE sits in the back of the wagon. She is wearing dark clothes, and her white skin almost glows in the moonlight. Cage squints and realizes it's the woman from in front of the cafe.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Sorry, I didn't know you were there.

MARCIE

Still, you should have been more careful.

Marcie's accent gets stronger as she gets upset. Cage stands easily and brushes himself off.

CAGE
Look, I said I'm . . .

Scrooge shakes the reins, the wagon lurches. Cage is thrown into Marcie again, and again she slaps him until they are untangled. Marcie swears under her breath in French.

Cage climbs to the front and sits by Scrooge. Scrooge takes the leather bound book from the seat and puts it behind him in the wagon.

CAGE
That wasn't very nice.

Scrooge looks over and just smiles, he didn't want to be nice. Cage notices a shotgun propped up next to the old man. He adjusts his position to free up his own gun.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Exactly who is that hellcat?

No response. Cage gives up and looks in the back, Marcie is sitting, arms around her knees.

CAGE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, we got off on the wrong foot. My name's Cage Walker.

She looks away.

CAGE (CONT'D)
What are the odds? Stuck in a wagon with two mutes. I'll just call you 'The Crazy Mute Lady in the Back'.
(to Scrooge)
Where did you pick up the crazy mute lady in the back?

Scrooge looks over, not amused.

MARCIE
My name is Dr. St. Claire.

CAGE
What kind of doctor?

She sounds a little haughty.

MARCIE
A psychologist, I am also associate editor for "Canadian Psychology Review" magazine.

CAGE

Then you're doing research on unusual phenomenon?

MARCIE

No, on unusual people.

Looks at Scrooge who glares back.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

I am writing a series on delusional behavior.

SCROOGE

One local newspaper interview to warn everyone, then she shows up and won't go away.

Scrooge is quite annoyed, Cage can't resist a little pique of his own.

CAGE

Doctor of Psychology, aye? Pity, I was hoping you'd ask me to turn my head and cough.

Scrooge explodes with laughter, Cage stifles a laugh also. Marcie knows she should be offended, but doesn't know why.

MARCIE

What does that mean?

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - LATER

They have been riding a while, CAGE tries to apologize again.

CAGE

I'm sorry if I offended you, it's just nerves. This has been a weird night.

MARCIE looks away, thinking it over.

The constant drumbeat of the horse's hooves creates ominous background music. Cage looks carefully at SCROOGE.

CAGE (CONT'D)

And you know what's going on. If there's any danger, you need to tell us.

Cage notices the State Lookout Sign and the red SUV, but not its occupants.

CAGE
Stop! Stop here.

The others follow his gaze. He dismounts.

CAGE (CONT'D)
There was a couple here, I'm going to see if they need any help. Wait for me.

SCROOGE
One minute, but you can't help them.

Cage carefully approaches the car, the sound of his shoes crunching the gravel. He looks through the SUV's windows, it is dark and foreboding.

Cage scans the area, it's too quiet. He slowly looks inside the open door. The back of the car is a battle scene; the seats are destroyed, cushion material is everywhere.

He sees what looks like the dogs tail and begins to reach. Suddenly, something grabs his other arm.

He twists and stands to meet the threat, banging his head.

CAGE
Shit!

MARCIE
Are you OK?

CAGE
I was 'till you got here. Damn, that hurts.

MARCIE
I came to help.

Marcie actually seems concerned. He rubs his forehead.

CAGE
How, by scaring the shit out of me?

MARCIE
Well, see if I try and help you again.

CAGE

Good, I'll be safer!

Marcie storms back to the wagon. Cage watches, wishing he hadn't been so harsh. He thinks about following her to apologize - again, but there are more important matters.

He slowly walks around, searching. A few feet into the brush he sees the woman's hat and goes to pick it up.

EXT. OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

An amber, glowing CAGE is in front of us, looking back to the wagon. In muffled, almost echo sounds we hear.

SCROOGE (O.S.)

Best not go in there.

CAGE

Give me a second.

Cage steps forward, we move toward him.

EXT. OFFICIAL LOOKOUT SPOT - CONTINUOUS

CAGE hears the wagon start to move. He spins to see SCROOGE encouraging his horse on. Cage yells.

CAGE

Hold your horses, horse.

He sprints to the wagon and climbs up.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Are you always an asshole?

Scrooge's mouth turns up in a satisfied grin.

SCROOGE

I said one minute.

CAGE

What happened to them?

Scrooge looks over at Cage for a moment, serious, then looks straight ahead and shakes the reins.

INT. CORA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

CORA and CALVIN are asleep again. We hear the chickens in a frenzy once more. She pokes him in the back and growls.

CORA

You said that skunk was gone.

She jabs him again, sharply.

CORA (CONT'D)

Tomorrow you're fixin' that fence,
for sure!

Calvin stomps his way to the back door. This time he grabs his rifle as he passes.

CALVIN

Damn skunk won't be comin' back,
and that's for sure!

EXT. CORA'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

CALVIN throws the screen open and marches to the chicken coop, nothing there so he starts into the near by bushes.

CALVIN

Where the hell are you?

Calvin hears something behind him. He spins angrily and points the rifle, then squints. A look of shock comes over him. He fires the rifle.

A huge set of teeth are on him.

INT. WALTER'S BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUSLY

WALTER is asleep, snoring, a gunshot shatters the night. He gets up, opens the window and sticks his head out. The welcome banner stretching across the road is flapping over his head.

More shots and Walter is angrily getting dressed. Through his open door, he can see all the way down a peaceful hallway. There are stairs, bedroom doors, and finally a window at the end.

He staggers to his dresser and opens a drawer, taking out his police rig. He sets it on the bed, grabs the flashlight and starts to leave. He stops and goes back to the bed, grabbing his revolver.

He walks down the hall, muttering angrily. He enters the last bedroom, obviously a girl's room.

WALTER

Kattie, I've got to . . .

The bed hasn't been slept in. Walter looks back toward the stairs, he can see his bed. Kate would have to walk past his open bedroom door at the head of the stair to go out.

WALTER (CONT'D)

How does she get out?

He opens the door across the hall. BUCK is almost sideways in the bed, hanging out of the sheets.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Buck, Buck! Wake up.

Buck doesn't move. Walter tries to turn on the flashlight to shine it in his eyes, but it doesn't come on.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Son of a . . . Buck, get your lazy ass out of bed.

Buck begins to stir. He looks up at Walter.

BUCK

Am I awake?

WALTER

You're never awake, but get up anyway. Katie's gone, go find her. She was with Tamera Potter earlier. Come on, get your sorry self moving.

Walter leaves. As he moves down the stairs, each step squeaks loudly. He looks back again at his open bedroom door.

WALTER (CONT'D)

How the hell does she get out?

Several more quick shots ring out.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Calvin, damn you and that skunk.

He slams a hat on his head and walks out.

EXT. CORA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

In the foreground, CORA's body disappears inch by inch. Sounds of munching and grinding flesh as in the distance, WALTER approaches the fence.

Cora's body is now gone. The chickens are flying madly around the hen house as Walter fumbles with the gate, there is panicked clucking from the chickens then everything goes quiet.

Walter manages to get the gate open and steps into the yard.

WALTER

Calvin. Calvin, that you doing all the shooting? Don't you know what time it is?

Walter waits for an answer, nothing. He looks around, then makes his way carefully toward us.

He peeks around the corner of the shed, but doesn't see a thing. He edges his way closer, then starts poking through the bushes. He finds Calvin's rifle, then Cora's broom.

He picks up the broom. It is in two pieces, it looks like something's taken a bite out of the middle. He bends over to look and sees spots of blood on the ground.

He straightens up, there's shouting near by. Then gunshots echo from across town. Walter looks quickly around. Close on his face, he's afraid.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - NIGHT

Close on KATE LYNN's face, she's mad. She stomps around and sits in the open back of Lance's small hatchback car which has all the doors open.

LANCE

I swear! I didn't plan this, the car just went dead.

LANCE tries to take her hand but she pulls it back.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Try it yourself.

He grabs her hand, pulls her to the driver's seat. She plays with the keys, lights and radio, nothing. She gives in.

She pulls out a cell phone. She stares at it, resigned, wanting to postpone the call home for help.

KATE LYNN
I'm dead, Grandpa can be so mean.

LANCE
He just worries about you.

KATE LYNN
That's what he says.

She pushes a button, then all of the buttons.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)
It's dead!

Lance now has his cell phone, pushing buttons.

LANCE
Mine too.

KATE LYNN
Great, now what?

She slumps, her head on the steering wheel. Lance looks around, concerned.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

We are outside the passenger's side of the car, same monochrome sepia tint. Both doors are open and we see KATE LYNN in the driver's seat, head on the steering wheel.

We move in.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

KATE LYNN is angry. She takes the keys out of the ignition and exits.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

We are inside the car, moving rapidly toward KATE LYNN when the door slams in our face.

We watch her through the window as she moves to the rear of the car.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE and KATE LYNN are behind the car in front of the open back.

KATE LYNN
I am going to be in so much
trouble. I'll be grounded forever.

LANCE
Me too. I didn't even tell my dad
I was leaving.

Lance nervously scans the area.

INT. LANCE'S TOYOTA - CONTINUOUS

Snake POV

LANCE and KATE LYNN are just outside the open hatch back.
We watch, then move toward them.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE turns, reaching up to slam the hatch closed.

LANCE
We should make for the highway and
hitch a ride to town.

KATE LYNN
Great, this is how I pictured the
evening. Stranded, then hitching a
ride home with some maniac
stranger.

LANCE
Do you have a better idea?

KATE LYNN thinks, then shakes her head. Lance walks quickly to the passenger side, still looking nervously around.

INT. LANCE'S TOYOTA - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

We are just inside the tinted hatch back window. We see LANCE walk to the front. We look at KATE LYNN again, then move to follow Lance.

EXT. MAKE OUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

LANCE slams the passenger door, the snake is now trapped inside the car. He hurries to KATE LYNN, puts his arm around her, they walk to the highway.

LANCE

Don't worry, what could happen?

He, however, does look worried. Behind them we see the car rocking back and forth.

They reach the road and stop, looking both ways as if expecting something to happen. Lance starts walking.

LANCE

Town is this way.

KATE LYNN

I'm not walking! We should stay close to the car. When someone comes by, they can just give us a jump start.

Lance doesn't like the idea and starts to protest. He sees she's made up her mind and gives in.

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

CAGE looks at SCROOGE. MARCIE has moved to the front, kneeling just behind the seat.

MARCIE

Yes, you must tell us what is happening.

CAGE

Something's going on here.

SCROOGE

You wouldn't believe me.

CAGE

Oh, I think you'll find us pretty receptive. No lights or phones, my car just stopped. The Doc here's probably loving it though.

MARCIE

How could you possibly think . . .

SCROOGE

Alright! Don't you two get started. I'll tell you.

MARCIE

One minute,
 (to Cage)
 I can not believe . . .

SCROOGE

Do you want me to tell you or not.

Marcie starts to talk again, but Cage holds up a finger in warning. She glares but keeps quiet.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

The Jews and Palestinians get along better than you two. I don't have all the answers, but I think it started 370 million years ago when the meteor hit here.

Scrooge holds up his hand before they can ask any questions.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Trust me, a meteor hit right here, they think it helped kill off the dinosaurs.

Cage and Marcie just listen, and he's glad someone is interested in his story. The night closes in on them.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

The lights are like embryos, larva or something.

He looks at his passengers, making sure they are not laughing.

CAGE

We're listening!

Scrooge looks satisfied and goes on.

SCROOGE
 Alright then . . .

EXT. HIGHWAY NEAR MAKE OUT ROAD - LATER

LANCE and KATE are sitting. A sound drifts to them, a staccato beat, constant, unrelenting - and growing louder.

First they are encouraged, then nervous. Finally Lance recognizes the sound.

LANCE
 Hey, that sounds like a horse!

They stand as Scrooge's wagon appears, SCROOGE, CAGE and MARCIE engrossed in conversation.

Lance and Kate hug each other, smile, and get ready to be rescued. They watch smiling as the wagon draws near. They look confused as the wagon passes them across the road.

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

SCROOGE
 I was able to figure out the timing because of the . . .

SCROOGE, CAGE and MARCIE stop and turn as screaming voices intrude into their universe.

KATE LYNN (O.S.)
 Excuse me!

LANCE (O.S.)
 Hey!

EXT. HIGHWAY NEAR MAKE OUT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

LANCE and KATE are waving, the wagon in the background.

LANCE
 How about stopping!

SCROOGE
 What were you kids doing out here on Make Out Road?

KATE LYNN

(whispers to Lance)

It's old Scrooge, maybe we should wait. He can't give us a jump with that wagon, anyway.

LANCE

He may be strange, but I really think we should get out of here.

They hear the sound of a car window shattering in the night. They turn to stare into the dark, then at each other.

The kids are now running toward the wagon.

EXT. HIGHWAY NEAR MAKE OUT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

In an amber glow, LANCE and KATE run toward the wagon, we are trying to catch them, hissing with rage.

Kate reaches the side of the wagon and is helped up. Hands reach down to grab Lance, but we are almost there. We lunge for his leg, it disappears a fraction of a second before our teeth strike. Instead, we grab a wheel spoke, shattering it.

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

CAGE lifts LANCE, who is hanging half way out when they hear the sound of splintering wood.

The wagon shudders, then bumps as the rear wheel runs over something. Lance is almost dumped out of the wagon, and Cage barely grabs him in time.

MARCIE

What was that?

They look back, but see only dark shapes and shadows. No one can make out what's laying in the road. As they drive off, the wheel wobbles where the snake bit it.

Lance leans back against the side of the wagon and starts to relax, he puts his hand down beside him. It touches something, and he pulls a book out from under the seat and starts to look through it.

SCROOGE

Walter's not going to be happy.

Kate gets closer and whispers to Lance.

KATE LYNN
Don't worry, grandpa will be
asleep.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

WALTER walks nervously down the street carrying a shotgun, wearing a hunting vest bulging with ammunition.

He scans both sides of the road then angles toward the General Store. He stops, peers in the window, then knocks.

WALTER
Hank, wake up.

HANK
I'm awake, no doubt about that.

Walter looks with a start as HANK emerges from the shadows.

WALTER
Cora and Calvin are missing, I
think something might have
attacked them.

HANK
Lance is missing too, so's Katie I
bet.

WALTER
(nodding)
I sent Buck out to look for her.

Hank is calm, but Walter is struggling with the obvious.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Could Jonah be right? You always
believed him, why?

HANK
My grandfather told me stories -
I hoped they were just stories.

Gunfire erupts toward the trailers, Hank pulls out a pistol and starts down the street.

WALTER
Where you going?

HANK
To find Lance.

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

MARCIE talks secretly with KATE, then moves to stand angrily behind CAGE who is still seated next to Scrooge.

MARCIE

Turn your head and cough indeed.
You are a rogue!

CAGE

Is that good or bad?

MARCIE

How can you not know what this means?

CAGE

I'm a lawyer, it can mean whatever I want.

MARCIE

You don't look like a lawyer, and you are crude and ill mannered. You appear to be a simple thug.

LANCE

He's a Marine.

MARCIE

A thug, I was correct!

SCROOGE

(impatiently)

We were talking about what's going on, do you want to hear the stories or not?

EXT. TOWN OF GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

WALTER and HANK are walking in stride down the street.

WALTER

What stories? What's out there?

HANK

I don't really know what's out there, but I do know that Area 51 wasn't built as a place to bring the unexplained or unexplainable to be studied. It was built to study something that was already here. All the others stuff came later

WALTER

I heard you daddy say that, what does it mean?

HANK

I don't know exactly.
 (shaking his head)
 The one thing I know for sure is that only the young survive.

WALTER

And what the hell does that mean?

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

LANCE is holding Scrooge's book.

LANCE

I don't know, "only the young survive," that's what the book says. Maybe so there will be more victims for next time.

SCROOGE turns around in the seat and tries to get the book. Lance moves away.

SCROOGE

That's mine.

CAGE

Give it back.

MARCIE

No, keep reading.

CAGE

It's not his.

MARCIE

Every good researcher takes advantage of . . .

SCROOGE

Jeez, let him have the damn book.

KATE LYNN

What else does it say?

KATE is skeptical but interested.

LANCE

It says the lights turn into creatures of some kind during the transit. What's a transit?

SCROOGE
The Venus Transit.

They all wait but Scrooge doesn't say any more.

KATE LYNN
And that is . . . ?

SCROOGE
When Venus passes between the
earth and the sun, the solar winds
strip off some of Venus'
atmosphere and bring it here.

MARCIE
And this was tonight?

She is skeptical, like she's conducting an interview.

SCROOGE
Last night, that's why I went to
town before. I didn't remember
that it takes a while for the
solar wind to reach earth. My
guess is that it lasts about six
hours.

MARCIE
I'm sorry but that sounds a little
too fantastic for me.

LANCE
(suddenly animated)
No, it makes sense! There's a rift
in the Space/Time Continuum,
that's why they built Area 51
here. The charge from Venus'
atmosphere activates it.
(pacing and thinking)
So these things are like alien
creatures from another dimension,
here to harvest our life force to
feed their evil spawn.

More worked up by the second, the others get concerned.

LANCE (CONT'D)
We have to make a stand and save
the species. Awesome!

CAGE

Take a step back there, Young Skywalker. Star Fleet Academy isn't accepting applications quite yet.

LANCE

Skywalker is Star Wars, Star Fleet is Star Trek. They're not the same.

CAGE

What ever.

(to Scrooge)

The book is how you learned about all this?

SCROOGE

Parts, other parts from stories I heard, some from newspapers. I worked at Groom Lake for 28 years and saw everything they called research, the Indian legends have more information.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

WALTER and HANK continue nervously down the street.

HANK

The Comanche and Shoshone stories are the best.

They hear something and stop. Nothing happens so they resume walking, Hank continues with the story.

HANK (CONT'D)

They say that Bald Mountain was claimed by Iktomi, he's kind of like the Devil. He was imprisoned there in a ball of fire, and is trying to find a way to escape.

WALTER

I had no idea.

HANK

Every few generations he sends out his biting and stinging demons to steal the souls of men. When they're stung, men and beasts become the lights we see in the valley.

WALTER

No shit?

HANK

Before he died, my father swore it was more than just a legend.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

MARCIE is very skeptical, questioning everything.

MARCIE

Then why has no one heard of this?

SCROOGE

They have, read what it says about the Lincoln County Massacre?

LANCE pages through the book.

LANCE

Here it is. "Early December of 1882 much of the adult population of Lincoln County vanished."

KATE LYNN

Hey, we're in Lincoln County.

SCROOGE

There was a Venus Transit on December 6, 1882.

LANCE

"The settlers, Bandits and Indians were at war, and a party of Bandits or Indians was blamed, though no one witnessed the event."

SCROOGE

There were witnesses, no one believed them.

CAGE

What did they say?

SCROOGE

It was the lights.

KATE LYNN

But the lights are gone.

LANCE

Not all of them. There's one, and
it's coming toward us!

Silence as a light bounces slowly toward them. They are
spellbound, Marcie snaps out of it first.

MARCIE

I think that maybe we should
hurry.

SCROOGE

I thought this was all 'too
fantastical' for you?

KATE LYNN

I don't think I believe it either,
but I still want to go. Now!

MARCIE

You want to hurry to town, right?

Scrooge nods, and is about to prod his horse on when Cage
grabs his wrist.

CAGE

Something's wrong.

LANCE

Damn right something's wrong,
we're about to be zapped!

CAGE

Stop the wagon. You wanted to do
something? Why not start here?
(to lance)

And I thought you wanted to make a
stand, save the species?

Lance is a little hurt, but the others erupt. Cage grabs
the reins and stops the horse. He reaches into his
waistband and pulls out pistol. Marcie glares.

MARCIE

You have a gun too?

CAGE

You have a problem with guns?

MARCIE

There is nothing that can be
accomplished with a gun that isn't
better done by compromise and
negotiation. I think . . .

SCROOGE
Jesus H. Christ!
(to Cage)
Your move, hero.

Cage gets down and starts toward the light.

SCROOGE
But I'm telling you, if there's a
problem, we're gone.

Cage walks quickly off.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cage moves toward the unknown danger.

He slows as he gets closer, but the light moves faster. Cage squints to get a better look, the night is closing in and so is the light. It is now bouncing forward, faster still.

They are close, and suddenly the light is in his eyes, blinding him. He covers his eyes and hears a high pitched squeal followed by a crash. The light goes out as something grabs his leg.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The OTHERS watch, spellbound. A gasp is heard when CAGE and the LIGHT meet and the light vanishes. Finally they breathe.

LANCE
He didn't even get off a shot.

MARCIE
I can see nothing. Is he still
there?

SCROOGE shrugs. They wait in silence, scouring the area for some sign of what happened.

KATE LYNN
Should we go look for him?

LANCE
Give me a gun, I'll go!

MARCIE
No! We should leave, quickly.

SCROOGE

For once I agree with you.

He picks up the reins and starts the wagon moving. Out of the darkness comes a voice.

CAGE (O.S.)

Hey! Where are you going?

Scrooge stops the wagon and they strain to see into the night; finally a vague outline is visible, but something has attached itself to him. They start to panic.

KATE LYNN

Something's got him. Geez, lets go!

Scrooge again tries to get moving.

CAGE

God Damn it, wait!

They wait, possibly for their doom. Cage gets close enough for them to make out the blond hair and pink nightclothes of a LITTLE GIRL.

Cage is at the wagon. We can't see the little girl's face but she is sobbing quietly, squeezing Cage's neck in a death grip.

Cage hands Kate a broken miner's lamp and speaks to Marcie.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Here, take her.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Snakes POV

The sepia image of the wagon and its occupants is a little distance away, we are circling.

CAGE tries to separate the LITTLE GIRL from his neck. The distorted, echoed sounds and voices reach us. The little girl squeals in protest.

HOPE

No-o-o!

CAGE

Ok, Ok! Help me up.

THEY help Cage into the wagon, we move slowly toward the group. The horse looks back and starts to stomp nervously.

SCROOGE

I think it's time to leave.

The horse needs no encouragement and moves briskly down the road. We hurry to keep up, but watch the wagon disappear into the night.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

CAGE and SCROOGE are in the wagon seat, the OTHERS kneeling behind.

CAGE

Does anyone know who she is?

LANCE

Hope Anderson, she comes into the store with her parents. Nice people.

Cage is uncomfortable, obviously not used to kids.

CAGE

Hey there Hope, How's it . . .
what's up?

He looks around, not sure what to do next.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Why don't you go to Kate?

He tries again to separate himself from the child, but she begins to sob again. Cage looks back at MARCIE.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Why don't you try talking to her,
we need to find out why she's out
here alone.

Marcie is offended again.

MARCIE

And you assume this is a woman's
job?

CAGE

Yeah, kind of. You know, motherly
instinct.

MARCIE

I am a professional, not a nursemaid.

Cage is getting mad.

CAGE

Professional? I never realized that being a pain in the ass was a profession in Canada.

MARCIE

That is what I'd expect from someone like you.

CAGE

Oh really, how do you know 'someone like me' won't decide to tie you up, gag you, and toss you naked out of this wagon?

Everyone chuckles. Marcie is speechless, stunned that someone would talk to her like that. KATE pushes her way by Marcie.

KATE LYNN

Sorry, I left my Midol at home.

Kate moves the hair from in front of HOPE's tear stained face and strokes her head.

KATE LYNN

Hi Hope, I'm Katie from the cafe, remember me.

The little girl is motionless, but her eyes eventually move, she looks at Kate and nods.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)

Good! Where are your parents?

Hope erupts. Tears cascade onto Cage's shoulder, the helpless look on his face brings a smirk to Marcie's.

Cage gives Scrooge a challenging stare.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Do you know where she lives?

Scrooge's eyes narrow. He's not sure what Cage is thinking, but he is sure he won't like it.

CAGE (CONT'D)

You're after these beasts, aren't you? Besides, do you want a little girl with you all night?

Scrooge looks back defiantly, then shrugs and turns the wagon onto a dirt road to their left. The others look in disbelief.

LANCE

Wha . . . what, we're going after them?

He realizes that sounded cowardly, Kate looks at him.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Excellent! Let's go kick some alien ass.

Marcie starts to say something, a menacing glare from Cage stops her. She sits in the back, confused. Kate sits next to her. Marcie mumbles to Kate.

MARCIE

Men don't treat me like this!

They look forward. Cage is giving instructions to Scrooge, obviously accustomed to being in charge.

KATE LYNN

I think you should hope he was just joking about that tying you up part.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

A middle aged COUPLE runs up to HANK and WALTER.

MAN #2

What are you doing? They're coming! You gotta go back.

HANK

What? Who's coming?

MAN #2

Those -- I don't know, run!

The couple runs down the street toward downtown.

WALTER

Get to the cafe, we'll meet there.

They ignore him and keep running. People are screaming and running around them. One struggles across the street with something attached to him, glowing ominously.

Walter and Hank look at each other, questioning the decision to go on.

HANK

I'm not leaving Lance out there.

They go on, an electric crackle and a blue flash ahead.

EXT. TREES BY HOPE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They are in the wagon near Hope's house, debating what to do next. CAGE hops down.

SCROOGE

Why don't we just keep going, Kate can take care of the kid.

CAGE

Fine, but I'm still going to check on her parents.

Cage walks up to SCROOGE and points at the shotgun beside him.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Mind if I take the Browning?

SCROOGE

Damn right I mind.

MARCIE

This is most absurd, you should not be frightened by children's stories.

SCROOGE gives her a dirty look, then pulls a bag from under his seat. He gets a pump shotgun, a box of shells, and hands them to CAGE.

CAGE

Wait here, I'll be back.

SCROOGE

Don't you think that shirt's a little conspicuous?

Cage takes it off his almost florescent shirt, folds it up, and hands it to KATE.

He's wearing a tight fitting undershirt.

Before he seemed fit, as he walks off we see he's a stud. Kate takes the shirt and looks at MARCIE, she mouths the word "HOT" and Marcie looks at Cage, thinking it over.

CAGE
(over his shoulder)
That's my lucky shirt, take care
of it.

He turns, crouches, and starts toward the buildings.

LANCE watches Cage leave, then edges to the back of the wagon and starts to climb out to follow.

As he climbs down he sees Kate and Marcie whispering.

KATE LYNN
He can tie me up.

They giggle and Marcie takes the shirt.

MARCIE
"Turn my head and cough" indeed!

Marcie tosses Cage's shirt over a bush near the wagon.

MARCIE (CONT'D)
Now we will be even.

Lance walks up to Scrooge and holds out his hand for a weapon, Scrooge scowls.

Lance turns and goes after Cage.

EXT. HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

LANCE tries to follow, inching down the side of the barn. He reaches a corner and peeks around.

CAGE
Am I there?

Lance spins.

CAGE (CONT'D)
I didn't think you could just sit.
(pulls out his pistol)
Can you handle an automatic?

LANCE
I had a gun before I had a bike.

CAGE gives it to him then looks him in the eyes.

CAGE

And if you ever do anything like
this again, I'll kick your butt.
You're rear guard, make sure
nothing surprises us from behind.

Lance nods, they move to the corner of the barn.

Cage runs to the house and stops at the front door, Lance
on his tail. Cage looks carefully inside, then slips
through the door.

EXT. TREES BY HOPE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SCROOGE turns to the girls.

SCROOGE

Do you know how to shoot?

KATE LYNN

I go shooting with my dad a lot.

MARCIE

I do not touch firearms. Besides,
we are in no danger.

Scrooge pulls out a pistol and hands it to KATE.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Katie, you have 15 shots. When
you're ready . . .

Kate grabs the slide, chambers a round then puts it on
safety like she's done it a million times.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Be careful, I don't want you to
accidentally shoot anybody.

Kate Lynn looks over at Marcie who still looks like she's
sucking on a lemon. Kate smirks.

KATE LYNN

What if it's not an accident?

INT. HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

CAGE looks back. LANCE is not there. Exasperated, he
reaches outside the door and drags him in.

Cage signals: two fingers pointing to his eyes then pointing behind them. Lance nods intensely.

They move through the house, signs of a struggle everywhere. They follow a path of destruction deeper into the house. Cage steps in a sticky puddle, it looks like a pool of snot.

They sneak down the hall, dark ominous rooms on both sides.

Cage looks in the first room and moves past, but Lance sneaks up on it. Back to the wall, he jumps into the doorway pointing his gun, menacing any would be occupants like cops on the police shows.

Cage is in his face, index finger wagging back and forth.
No!

Cage picks up his pace. As they pass the next door Lance again jumps into a shooting stance. Cage is about scold him when Lance screams, then fires.

A high pitched squeal is heard. Cage looks, a huge snake like creature is barely visible in the shadows. Cage backs away.

CAGE

Holy shit! A snake.

Lance fires, again the snake is hit but starts to move forward.

LANCE

Hello! Mr. Marine, I just pissed him off.

Cage snaps out of it and fires with the shotgun. The snake shudders but struggles closer. Cage fires again and its head explodes.

Cage and Lance look at each other, when two more creatures appear. Cage fires away, as the shotgun clicks empty the last of the attackers falls dead at their feet.

They bend down to look at it as Cage reloads, but we don't get a clear view.

LANCE (CONT'D)

What the hell is that?

CAGE

How should I know?

(looks around nervously)

But it looks like we got them all.

INT. INSIDE BALD MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

The black stone slab begins to glow red, the RED BALL forms over the slab. It grows brighter, crackling with energy, then speeds away.

INT. HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

They look at the creatures they killed once more, then keep moving down the hall.

The door at the end is closed, a large hole in the bottom. Part of the hole is from shotgun blasts, but part of it looks like something chewed its way inside. The bottom of the door is covered by the sticky goo.

As they enter the room a squeal comes from behind them. They spin and see the RED BALL of energy hovering in the doorway. It grows brighter and they have to shield their eyes.

Suddenly Cage jumps back as a mottled green serpent's head lunges for his leg.

Reflexively Lance fires, emptying his gun into the snake which finally shudders and dies. The skin looks like thick leather instead of scales like a snake. There is no head, just a pair of eyes and a huge round mouth with several rows of needle like teeth.

Cage looks at the Red Ball and fires into it, with no effect. He flips it the bird and the Red Ball glows brighter, rushing through Cage with an electric crackle and disappearing through a wall.

Cage drops his gun and falls to his knees, almost paralyzed by the shock. He shakes it off, picks up his shotgun and struggles to his feet

LANCE

I've never seen a light like that,
let's get out of here!

CAGE

We need to make sure no one is
left. I'm not leaving anyone
behind.

Lance is skeptical. They look around the room, it's a disaster. The window glass is broken, streaks of blood reach to the bottom. Cage picks up a doll from under the window and hands it to Lance. Next he grabs part of a boot, a large bite has been taken from it. He and Lance look at each other helplessly.

Suddenly, a noise from behind! Lance spins, startled, gun ready and pointed at the door. Click, the gun is empty.

MARCIE

I thought I saw the lights on.

Cage grabs the barrel and points it at the ceiling, then gives MARCIE a look that could kill. Lance sighs heavily.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

What has happened here?

LANCE

What happened? You almost got shot! Any other stupid questions?

Marcie stomps away. Cage and Lance watch her go then examine the room.

CAGE

I don't like this, no bodies. This was too big a fight to have nothing left.

There is crashing sound behind them, then voices of the others. They hurry out

INT. LIVING ROOM - HOPE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Things are straightened enough to sit. EVERYONE except Kate and Hope are there, discussing the situation. MARCIE has the floor.

MARCIE

The things that did this have been killed, we can now relax.

KATE and HOPE walk back in, Kate adjusting Hope's cloths. Hope is clutching the doll Cage found.

LANCE

I'm not relaxed, I get the bathroom next.

He gets up and leaves the room.

SCROOGE

I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm going to town.

KATE LYNN

I would like to get home before my dad and Grandpa Walter wake up.

MARCIE

That would be a mistake! This is the safest place.

CAGE watches Hope, who has been looking around the house, getting upset. She looks as if she's about to cry.

CAGE

Wait.

He walks over to Hope and Kate, whispering to Kate.

CAGE (CONT'D)

We should probably take Hope out of here, do you know what you want to do?

SCROOGE

Here, I'll take her, you all can talk things over. No hurry, take two or three minutes if you need to, then I'm leaving.

Scrooge and Hope walk to the front door and turn as Lance enters from the kitchen, holding a can of soda and stuffing his mouth with chips.

SCROOGE

That's a little warped, don't you think?

Lance simply shrugs, a 'What ever!' look on his face.

EXT. HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

SCROOGE and HOPE walk to the porch steps. They sit and Hope crawls up in his lap. He tries to look stern and unconcerned, Hope starts to relax.

HOPE

You look like a grandpa.

SCROOGE

I am, but I made sure my grand kids were all away from here.

HOPE
Is my grampa dead too?

He doesn't know how to answer.

HOPE (CONT'D)
Come here.

She grabs his hand and leads him excitedly to the barn. She finds a camouflage hunting bucket with a swivel seat on top, and sets it upright.

HOPE (CONT'D)
Spin me!

Scrooge sits and tries it out, it swivels easily. He does a little spin. Hope smiles and crawls into his lap. He spins around, Hope giggles.

INT. HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

MARCIE is still arguing. KATE is getting impatient, but also eyeing LANCE's chips.

KATE LYNN
What if he leaves us?

MARCIE
Let him go, we can simply wait here for help.

LANCE
I don't know, what if my dad needs me?

MARCIE
This place is safe! Would it be right of you to take Kate Lynn and the girl and expose them to danger?

Lance shakes his head, a look of triumph on Marcie's face. CAGE smirks.

Kate gives in to hunger and starts eating chips also.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

Snakes POV

SCROOGE and HOPE are on the stool. Scrooge's back has a bright amber glow. We carefully approach.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

SCROOGE and HOPE spin again. Hope is giggling until she gets halfway around and sees something, she goes silent.

Scrooge didn't see a thing, but panic grips Hope, who is too frightened to move or make a sound.

SCROOGE
Let's do it again!

He is enjoying himself, he winds up and spins harder.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Snake's POV

We see SCROOGE from behind, a bright amber glow. He spins around and stops, facing us.

Instead of a bright glow, HOPE takes up most of the view. She's a dull, unattractive target.

We scan the pair and fix our attention on Scrooge's leg, glowing brightly in front of us. We attack.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Panic flashes across their faces, HOPE screams.

SCROOGE moves his leg as the creature strikes, hitting the stool and knocking them backward onto a bale of hay.

The bucket is stuck on the snake's teeth, it shakes the bucket, trying to get it off.

Scrooge rights himself, and pulls out a pistol. He moves Hope protectively behind his body, Hope puts the doll behind her body. Scrooge raises the gun.

INT. HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

KATE walks out of the kitchen with two drinks and hands one to MARCIE, they are sharing the chips.

LANCE
I just don't know.

MARCIE

Nothing good can come from going to town. If things are quiet, there is no need to worry. If things are not quiet, why go there and give them something else to worry about?

CAGE smiles, she's slick.

CAGE

Either way, I'm going to town.

MARCIE

Would you really leave these . . .

They hear gunshots from the barn. Cage heads for the door, several more shots and everyone hurries out.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

SCROOGE and HOPE are backing away, he fires again. The creature moves in.

Scrooge fires once more wounding it, but the gun is empty. The snake is now half way over the bale, approaching them carefully. Hissing angrily, it appears to be herding them to a corner, not letting them get past.

The tail is beginning to glow with the fuzzy blue of a black light, casting ominous shadows over them.

INT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - NIGHT

CAGE rushes in, shotgun ready. He sees the snake, panic on his face.

CAGE

Another snake, a fucking big snake.

Cage takes a half step back, then gets himself under control and aims. The snake is directly between him and Scrooge; he can't take a shot without hitting them. He lowers the gun.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Shit!

Looking around he sees a pitch fork. He grabs it, forcing himself toward the snake.

The snake slithers further onto the bale after SCROOGE. It raises its hideous head, launching itself when the pitchfork slices through its body, pinning it to the bale. It stops mere inches short of Scrooge's.

The snake spins, striking with amazing speed, snapping the handle like a twig in its jaws.

The tail lunges toward CAGE, a blue spark arcs out striking Cage on the left arm. His arm drops limply to his side, the others rush in. Cage struggles to move his arm.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Not again.

The snake is struggling but can't get free. It bites the wood of the handle which splinters to nothing, but it can't bite through the metal.

The beast is about six feet long and ten inches in diameter. Its skin is like thick leather, a mottled black and white in color. Its thrashing tail tapers to a curved spine which is starting to glow again.

It makes a piercing, high pitched squeal and menaces them when it is not gnawing at the pitchfork.

LANCE

Another one!

He chambers a round in his shotgun and advances.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Chew on this!

LANCE fires. The beast's head explodes, throwing chunks of flesh and goo in all directions. Everyone is covered by snake parts.

Marcie wipes several sloppy chunks off her face.

MARCIE

I cannot believe you did that.

Cage shakes off bits of snake and turns to Scrooge and HOPE.

CAGE

You can come out now.

They come forward, taking a path well away from the beast.

LANCE

Are you alright?

They nod, then hear a now familiar high pitched squeal from outside. They all run for the door, KATE speaks to MARCIE as they pass.

KATE LYNN

Feel free to stay as long as you want.

Marcie is alone. She looks back at the beast, the screeching from outside is louder, she spins to follow.

EXT. BARN - HOPE'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

MARCIE exits the barn and is instantly menaced by a snake. She edges along the wall of the barn. The tail of the beast is raised, glowing eerily.

CAGE

I'd go with negotiation, compromise means it only eats half of you.

CAGE walks casually towards her, shotgun at his side. His left arm is still dangling.

MARCIE

What are you doing?!

CAGE

I'm here to learn. You can show me how negotiating is better.

MARCIE

Do something, quickly!

CAGE

What? You want me to use a gun to solve your problem?

The snake attacks, Cage blows it sideways, almost cutting it in half. Another round turns the head into an omelet.

Cage sees movement in the corner of his eye. He grabs Marcie's blouse, yanking her violently to the side as a powerful blue spark strikes the wall where she was standing. The wall starts to smolder.

Cage fires and another snake shudders, a tattered mess.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Get to the wagon.

Cage reloads, more snakes join the hunt. Marcie sprints toward the wagon, her blouse ripped. Before she reaches the wagon more snakes appear.

SCROOGE

Take the reins!

SCROOGE jumps down to help, LANCE takes his place at the reins, KATE LYNN and HOPE urge them on.

Cage is backing up, firing as he goes. He spins and makes a dash for the wagon, Scrooge covering him. They both start to climb up.

Cage puts a foot on the wheel. As he jumps they hear a crack, a blue spark hits one of the spokes of the already damaged wheel, igniting it. Scrooge grabs the side of the wagon and starts to climb in.

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Move it, let's go!

Lance starts the frantic horse moving as a blue spark hits Scrooge. They pass another snake and another charge hits him and he falls.

Lance struggles to stop the horse, Scrooge is a short distance behind them. Cage is firing, trying to keep the snakes away without hitting the old man.

CAGE

Hurry, turn it around, we can't leave him.

Lance is fighting the horse, it doesn't want to turn back. Cage tries to get down but is forced to pull his legs back as sparks crackle past.

They watch in horror as Scrooge struggles to his feet, then is shocked again. He stumbles and a snake attaches itself to his leg and starts to wrap itself around his body.

The occupants of the wagon are frozen, watching Scrooge fight on, he falls. Cage tries once more to dismount to rescue Scrooge, but there are too many beasts between them. The snake attacking Scrooge positions its stinger by the back of Scrooge's neck and the glow from its tail intensifies.

Lance continues to struggle with the horse, but it won't stop.

There is a massive spark and Scrooge goes rigid, petrified. A light begins to form in his body which then goes limp. The light rises from him and floats slowly away.

Time has stopped, no one can manage a breath. The horse rears up, fighting to leave as the snakes advance, the horse is almost out of control.

Cage sees the snakes starting to eat Scrooge's body and fires again. He moves to the opposite side of the wagon, sees an opening and starts to jump out.

Marcie grabs his arm.

MARCIE

Look, there is nothing to recover.

Cage looks, Scrooge's body is gone. Cage looks down, then shakes Lance.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

He's is gone, we need to get out of here. Now!

Lance doesn't want to leave, Cage looks him in the eyes.

CAGE

Do it!

Lance moves the horse forward, the snakes give chase as they hurry off.

They are stunned, silent. They don't notice that the wagon wheel is wobbling even more than before.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

WALTER and HANK are further down the street when a uniformed BUCK appears with TAMERA, in pajamas.

BUCK

They weren't there, Tamera ain't seen them. Also, she heard gunshots, and both her parents are missing.

WALTER

Did you see anything else?

Buck hesitates, looking down at his boots. He doesn't want to answer.

WALTER (CONT'D)

What did you see?

BUCK

I ain't been drinking, I swear.
But it looked like, like some big
snakes were eating people. Really,
I'm not crazy!

Buck is surprised when they aren't upset.

Gunshots nearby, then the crackle and blue spark of a
snake.

Hank turns to Tamera

HANK

Where are Lance and Katie?

TAMERA

They went to make out road. But
only to look at the lights,
really.

Walter is upset, then relaxes

WALTER

At least they're out of town where
it's safe.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Everyone in the wagon is frightened. KATE cries softly,
HOPE clings to CAGE's neck. An eerie silence, they're
afraid to speak.

The empty rhythm of the hoof beats is swallowed up by the
night. MARCIE moves next to Cage.

MARCIE

There was nothing you could do.

CAGE

Good, because nothing is exactly
what I did.

Cage looks at MARCIE. Buttons are missing from her open
blouse, revealing a sexy black bra.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Sorry, you were just trying to help. Thanks. And sorry about the blouse, Kate would you give Marcie my shirt.

KATE hesitates then pretends to look around.

MARCIE

Thank you, for saving me from . .
. Thank you.

Cage tries to smile, Kate returns and breaks an awkward silence.

KATE LYNN

Uh, it must have blown out or something.

The girls exchange glances.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)

What are those things?

CAGE

I doubt they have a name, the people who've seen them probably didn't bother. Their glow is strange though, maybe we can call them 'Beings of Light'?

Marcie laughs. They are relieved to think about something else.

MARCIE

That sounds like something that would grant you three wishes, or clear up your acne.

LANCE

How about "snake-oids?"

KATE LYNN

I know, we can call them basilisks, like in Harry Potter.

CAGE

I don't think basilisk fits. The basilisk from mythology were reptiles, with wings and a head like a rooster.

Marcie disagrees, but teasing this time.

MARCIE

That is a more modern image, the ancient Greeks left no doubt that the basilisk was a serpent.

LANCE yanks back on the reins, looking back at them impatiently.

CAGE

Basilisk, sounds good. It is a serpent you know.

Marcie offers Cage her hand.

MARCIE

Marcie.

CAGE

You already said thank you.

Marcie is briefly confused.

MARCIE

Marcie, not mercie. My name is . . .

.

She realizes Cage is teasing. She starts to get mad, but gives a sarcastic little smile instead. Cage takes her hand.

CAGE

A pleasure Marcie.

Lance pops the horse which lurches forward, throwing Cage into Marcie. They are in each others arms a little longer than necessary.

EXT. WAGON - HIGHWAY - LATER

CAGE and LANCE are discussing their plans, the others look out into the night. MARCIE moves to the front.

MARCIE

You know the town is possibly overrun by now. This wagon seems to be the safest place.

LANCE

I have to find out about my dad.

CAGE

If they are in danger, I can't
just ride away. I have to do what
I can.

MARCIE

Will we not be in danger if you
take us there?

She looks at HOPE and KATE LYNN.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

And even greater danger if you
leave us?

Silence. Cage looks at the girls. Lance stops the wagon,
they need to make a decision.

KATE LYNN

We could take a vote.

CAGE

It's not that simple, not when
it's life or death.

MARCIE

Lance and Kate have a reason to go
to town, we have none.

CAGE

We could split up, leave you and
Lance with your family.

LANCE

Won't you be safer in town?

CAGE

I don't think the 'basilisks' can
get into the moving wagon, and
this horse is probably too big for
them. Scrooge seems to have done
his homework.

They look at each other briefly, then realize the decision
has been made. Kate takes Hope and sit in the front next to
Lance.

Cage and Marcie are sitting in the back, facing each other.

MARCIE

I have to assume you are not
married and don't have a girl
friend.

CAGE
(looks at his left hand)
Lots of men don't wear a ring.

MARCIE
Not that. If there was someone,
you would not be in such a hurry
to die.

CAGE
I'm not in a hurry to die, but
someone has to be willing to act.
(pause)
I had a girlfriend, she was a
Marine, too.

MARCIE
She got out of the Marines?

Cage just looks down, Marcie understands.

MARCIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

Cage just nods, still looking down.

CAGE
It's been three years, and this
vacation is to say goodbye and
move on with my life. Still, it's
hard to keep watching from the
sidelines. She gave her life to
keep the terrorists over there,
all I've been giving is legal
counsel.

Marcie looks at Cage.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

WALTER, HANK, BUCK and TAMERA hurry back to the Cafe. Buck
and Walter are behind, firing.

A MAN rides up on a bicycle and a pair of snakes slither
out, he swerves to miss the first but the second shocks him
and he tumbles limply to the ground.

The first snake wraps itself around him, tail glowing. It
shocks him in the neck. He goes stiff, then his body glows
and a light rises and floats away. The snakes eat him, one
from each end. They meet in the middle and fight over the
scraps.

Walter fires a shotgun blast to their left, a snake's head explodes. Two more take its place. Buck empties his automatic into one on the right, but it barely slows it down.

BUCK

We can't hold them off! Walter,
give me the shotgun and run.

Walter passes the shotgun and hurries the others toward the cafe, Buck fires still bringing up the rear. They are getting close to the door.

WALTER

Hurry, we're almost there!

They pick up their pace, but snakes come from all directions, it's obvious they can't make it to the cafe door.

Hank steps forward, firing at the snakes blocking their path with his pistol. They are surrounded, backing toward the wall. A spark barely misses them.

Behind them, the door to the saddle shop suddenly opens.

GEORGE

Inside!

They spin, Walter pushes Tamera inside and follows. Hank is in, and Buck is firing as fast as he can to give them time.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

BUCK backs up to the door firing. He dives inside, crying out in pain as a blue spark stuns his leg. George pulls the door closed as a snake crashes into the door.

THEY lay there, exhausted, Buck clutching his leg.

HANK

Thanks George, you saved our
(looks at Tamera) behinds!

GEORGE

Did anyone see Sarah? When I woke
she was gone, I was hoping she
came here to work on the books.

They shake their heads, a solemn looking group.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm going to look for her.

They stop him.

WALTER
It's not safe out there.

George struggles to get by them.

EXT. OUTSIDE GHOST LIGHT TEXAS - LATER

The wagon turns off the highway and onto Main Street then stops. EVERYONE looks worried but glad they're home.

CAGE
Here's the plan. We find your
parents, drop you two off, then
keep heading East on the highway
until we're safe.

MARCIE
I no longer like that plan. I
think we should all go to town.

KATE LYNN
It won't be as safe there.

MARCIE
I am no longer convinced of that.
I think we will be safe as long as
we have good legal counsel.

MARCIE looks at Cage, LANCE urges the horse forward before anyone can respond.

LANCE
Then it's settled!

Marcie smiles at Cage, who looks appreciatively back.

Gunshots ring out, screaming in the distance.

They watch, horrified, as a small light floats past them toward the road.

The wagon continues forward. The streets appear deserted until they reach the front of the store and snakes appear from everywhere.

MARCIE
This is just as bad.

CAGE and KATE are both firing.

CAGE
No worse, let's get out of here.

LANCE nods and pulls the horse into a tight turn.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

EVERYONE is at the counter conducting an inventory of guns and ammo. There is a shotgun blast near by, only BUCK hobbles over to look. His eyes go wide!

BUCK
Look, Katie and Lance. They're here.

The others run to the window. Snakes are coming from everywhere, they start shouting.

GROUP
Keep going. Get out of here! Don't stop!

The snakes are close, the people fire from the wagon. The wagon begin to wheel toward the highway, they cheer. The wagon is almost around when the wobbly wheel collapses, people in the wagon fall.

The occupants of the saddle shop are screaming, Walter and Buck move toward the door. George blocks the door.

GEORGE
It's not safe, remember?

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

KATE is on the ground and scrambles to her feet, disoriented. The wagon is between her and the store, snakes move toward her.

MARCIE crawls up in the back of the wagon looking stunned.

CAGE
Damn!

CAGE hops out of the wagon. More snakes start toward them. He yells to Lance.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Hurry, open the store.

LANCE jumps down, shooting snakes as he runs for the front door, fishing for his keys.

Cage reaches up, grabs HOPE and keeps her by his side. He blasts a snake trying to block them in, Lance gets the door open.

LANCE
Everybody into the store, quick.

Cage looks around but doesn't see Kate or Marcie.

CAGE
Marcie, Kate?

MARCIE
Up here!

Kate screams from behind the wagon.

Two snakes appear in front of Cage. He shoots one, but is empty when he tries to fire at the other. He grabs shells from his pocket and reloads, Kate screams again from the other side of the wagon.

Marcie moves to the edge of the wagon and looks down at Kate who has her back to the broken wheel. Marcie looks around helplessly and sees a shotgun lying in the back.

A snake lunges at Kate but a shotgun blast knocks it down. Several poorly aimed blasts follow, and the snake finally stops moving.

Kate looks up at Marcie holding a smoking shotgun.

MARCIE (CONT'D)
Quick, under the wagon!

Cage shoots the other snake, now almost on him, when something grabs his leg. He jumps back, ready to fire again, but Kate crawls out from under the wagon. She stands, grabs Hope and sprints to the store.

KATE LYNN
Let's Go!

Marcie jumps down and joins them as they rush toward the store and safety.

They reach the store, but the horse is now going crazy. Cage runs to the horse but realizes he doesn't know how to unhitch it.

He shoots another snake as it attacks, then turns helplessly back to the horse.

Cage reloads, more beasts appear. Three blasts from the shotgun shatter the wagon tong and free the horse.

Cage and the horse run simultaneously in opposite directions.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - CONTINUOUS

As Cage reaches the store, the door opens and he lunges inside, breathing heavily. The metal door slams shut.

MARCIE

That was very brave.

Marcie smiles at Cage, who looks uncomfortable. Lance, however, is all action.

LANCE

Help me make sure everything's secure.

Under Lance's supervision, they check every door, window, vent and crack in the store and a sense of security is growing. They relax and assess the situation.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

They look across the street. The snakes are agitated, hissing and squealing loudly.

WALTER

Did they make it?

HANK

Yeah, I think they're all safe.

They start to relax a little.

BUCK

Now what?

They look at each other.

HANK

We wait.

INT. GHOSTLIGHT GENERAL STORE - LATER

KATE and HOPE watch at the window, CAGE and MARCIE look around. Cage has shotgun ammo and Marcie has a bow and hunting arrows.

LANCE comes out of the back with a tray of steaming hot drinks. He offers them a cup, then walks to Kate and Hope.

LANCE

You two want some hot chocolate?

Hope nods enthusiastically.

MARCIE

I thought there was no power?

LANCE

The stove is gas, all the buildings in town use gas for almost everything. Walter got us enrolled in some government subsidy program.

Cage smiles, walks over to the snack aisle and grabs some donuts.

CAGE

Hey Lance, put these on my tab.

LANCE

Sorry, cash only! I don't think you'll live long enough to pay the tab.

Everybody laughs. Cage hands out the food. He stops at Marcie and looks at the bow and arrows, then her cleavage.

CAGE

Everybody look around, maybe there is something else we can use as a weapon. Lance, find Marcie a shirt.

INT. IN THE GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

CAGE goes through the Sporting Goods aisle. He stops to swing a golf club then puts it back.

On the next aisle he finds Lance stuffing shirts into a bag.

CAGE

I know you aren't hiding those shirts.

LANCE bolts upright. He just stands there, caught red handed.

LANCE

Well, yeah. I kind of thought you wouldn't mind.

CAGE

She is nice looking.

LANCE

That too, but I was talking about your shirt. It didn't get lost, Marcie ditched it. She said something about 'turning your head and coughing' and 'getting even'.

A light comes on in Cage's mind, Lance presses his case.

LANCE (CONT'D)

She should already have a shirt, it's her own fault!

Cage nods his head, but starts looking through the shirts.

CAGE

That's not the point. We're gentlemen and she needs a new shirt.

Cage tosses him a white t-shirt.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Go give it to her. Tell her it's my new lucky shirt.

Lance holds it up, a small youth size. He smiles and hurries off.

INT. IN THE GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

They meet at the front of the store, each with an armful of potential weapons.

MARCIE is at the counter using a razor edged hunting arrow to trim and cut something. She is done and holds it in front of her. It's the little shirt, but it has been cut down even more. It looks like it might cover her breasts.

She calmly takes off the remnants of her blouse, the black bra highlighting her white skin. She struggles into the tiny shirt. CAGE and LANCE stare in silent appreciation.

LANCE

Damn!

KATE walks up behind him and pops him in the back of the head. Lance looks for a way out.

LANCE (CONT'D)

No, the shirt. I'm just saying I'm impressed.

Everyone looks at Marcie's bulging bodice. Cage chuckles. Lance's eyes get big, he's made it worse.

CAGE

I know I'm impressed.

LANCE

No! That's not what I mean. I didn't think it would fit!

KATE LYNN

It doesn't fit.

Cage rescues him.

CAGE

Let's see what we got.

They examine everything. There are the expected items: knives, axes, ammunition, etc. Kate hands Cage a yellow case.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)

It's a flare gun, maybe we can signal for help.

Cage opens it revealing a flare gun and three flares. Lance gets a wicked grin, he walks to the door loading the gun.

He opens the door, leaving the bars closed. He puts his face up close to the bars, then leans back as a snake lunges futilely at him. Blue sparks crackle, the bars glow red.

Only inches away he points the flare gun at the snake, when its mouth opens he fires the flare down its throat.

The snake recoils and shudders. The flare finally explodes inside the beast, then the beast also explodes showering goo and bits of flesh over everyone. They stare at each other - grossed out.

Marcie wipes several sloppy chunks off her face.

MARCIE

Not again! Could you please stop doing that?

INT. IN THE GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

They clean themselves off. CAGE and MARCIE have their shirts off, toweling themselves.

KATE LYNN
What just happened?

LANCE
I don't know, but that was great!
I want to do it again.

Marcie holds out a t-shirt for Cage, smiling. It's even smaller than the one they gave her. Cage laughs.

CAGE
Hold on.

He walks over to the bag Lance used to hide the other shirts and gives one to Marcie and the others. He puts on a clean shirt.

MARCIE
This is funny.

She turns, it's a plain white t-shirt that says "Ghost Lights, The Mystery Will Last A Lifetime."

Everybody laughs.

MARCIE (CONT'D)
I hope the lifetime outlasts the mystery.

Kate looks angrily at her reflection in the window, pulling pieces of snake out of her hair.

KATE LYNN
This is so gross! I didn't know those flares were so powerful!

Cage walks to the door, thinking.

CAGE
They're not.

He looks out at the snake remains, now a lump of flesh.

MARCIE
They must be like the electric eels.

LANCE
Are there really electric eels?

CAGE
Not really.

MARCIE
Of course there are!

CAGE
So there are eels that store
electricity and shock people?

MARCIE
Yes, well no. They come from
Brazil and are fish not eels.

She gives Cage an 'evil eye' when he starts to reply. He shuts up, Kate gives them both a knowing look. Marcie picks up a baseball bat, grabbing the fat part. One more 'look' at Cage and she continues.

MARCIE
The whole back part of these
'fish' is like a battery, it
stores the electricity there.

LANCE
Yeah, that makes sense, when you
throw a battery in the fire, it
explodes. Get them hot enough and

Lance makes an explosion sound and gestures with his hands. He thinks, then grabs two cans of lantern fuel, Cage grabs two pump-up sprayers. They look at each other and smile.

CAGE
Maybe we'll get our own chapter in
the "Anarchists Cookbook."

INT. IN THE GENERAL STORE - LATER

KATE watches out the window. Snakes hiss and screech loudly outside, then it grows quiet.

CAGE is working with a cigarette lighter and a can of hair spray, making a flame thrower. LANCE and MARCIE fill the pump sprayers with lantern fuel.

KATE LYNN
What is that?

The RED BALL of energy floats up to the metal bars across the front door and hovers.

Cage grabs a metal broom handle and walks over, stopping just inside the bars.

CAGE

If it isn't old red balls, how's
it hanging?

The Ball of energy glows brighter and moves a little closer to the bars. The bars begin to heat up and glow.

Cage smiles, touches the broom handle to the bars, grounding it, then jabs the end into the Ball of energy. There is a loud crackle, the Ball jerks away from the bar and Cage drops the red hot handle.

The Energy Ball pulses slowly. Suddenly it speeds toward Cage, angling away at the last second and disappearing into the night.

They stand, speechless, looking at each other.

KATE LYNN

Look there, hurry!

Something has her attention, she stands straight, pointing across the street. They hurry over.

KATE LYNN (CONT'D)

There in front, those basilisks
are going underneath the saddle
shop.

They look, only a few snakes are still in sight and they are slithering below the building.

Everybody starts yelling, waving and pointing, trying to warn the others.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - CONTINUOUS

BUCK watches but can't make out what's going on across the street.

BUCK

What are they doing?

HANK

They are all waving, but I can't
make out what they're saying.

Buck smiles and waves back.

WALTER

Are you sure they're safe in there?

HANK

Positive! My grand-dad built that place, he was a kid when this happened before. No way those things are getting in.

HANK waves back and looks around outside.

HANK (CONT'D)

Besides, it looks like they're gone.

INT. IN THE GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

They stop waving, frustrated. The last snake has disappeared under the tack shop.

KATE LYNN

We have to warn them!

LANCE starts to the front door.

CAGE

I'll go with you.

CAGE holds a pump up garden sprayer. Lance fires up his spray can torch in response. They start toward the door, MARCIE steps in front of Cage.

MARCIE

We go together.

CAGE

It's safer in here.

He looks at her, then hands her a sprayer.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Press here to spray the fuel, try and get it down their throats.

(to the others)

We are going to the saddle shop, everybody move as fast as you can, and stay together.

They walk to the door, Cage gives Marcie's sprayer a couple more pumps then smiles at her. He nods to Lance, who lets out a war cry as they bolt out the door, Cage in front.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

They barely reach the street when snakes appear. CAGE sprays down the throat of the first, it hesitates and LANCE hits it with the torch.

Fire billows from its mouth and it explodes, they cheer.

More snakes approach, they spray and torch as they hurry across, chased by flaming snakes.

CAGE

Hurry, we're almost there!

They concentrate on clearing a path. When it looks like there is enough of an opening Cage shouts.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Run!

Cage drops the sprayer and they start to run. Yells to Marcie and Lance.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Drop them, no fire inside the building.

Gun fire from inside the store slows the pursuing snakes, and they tumble in as the door opens, then it slams closed behind them.

INT. SADDLE SHOP - GHOSTLIGHT - NIGHT

The PEOPLE in the tack shop help the OTHERS to their feet, they greet and hug.

WALTER

I didn't expect you back this soon.

CAGE

Later, we have a problem. The basilisks are getting in here.

Walter and Hank look at each other, confused.

KATE LYNN

Snakes, the snakes are getting under the saddle shoe.

Silence, everyone looks around, panic starting to build.

CAGE

What's in the basement, anything
with a vent to the outside?

GEORGE

Yeah, the dryer has a vent. I
don't know about the heater, but
if they get in the ducts they can
get anywhere in the building.

Everyone looks around, worried.

CAGE

How do I get to the basement?

GEORGE

Over here.

They run into a back room and approach a door. They don't
need to get into the basement, the snakes have almost eaten
their way through.

HANK

How could we be so stupid?

CAGE

Shhh. Everybody be quiet.

They listen to muted sounds in the ducts overhead. The
snakes are inside.

Everyone is in motion, near panic. They pile things in
front of the door, everyone racing fearfully for their
weapons.

CAGE (CONT'D)

We have to get out.

It sounds like snakes are everywhere.

TAMERA

So many! They must ALL be coming
for us.

KATE LYNN

We're trapped!

While this is going on George is thinking. He looks around,
then at the ceiling. He points at a skylight.

GEORGE

We put that in when we took out
our old swamp cooler.

MARCIE

How do we get it open.

BUCK

(trying to impress her)
I'll handle this!

He pumps a shell into his shotgun and fires at the skylight. Pieces of plastic fly in all directions and they duck for cover. Buck is standing there covered with plastic and dirt.

GEORGE

Or, you could use the latch, it
swings up.

George gives Buck a dirty look, Walter hangs his head and Kate looks embarrassed. Cage isn't distracted.

CAGE

Do you have a ladder?

GEORGE

Yes!
(suddenly less excited)
It's in the basement.

Cage looks around. He starts pushing the counter under the skylight, BUCK finally understands that Cage is making stairs and helps. Next they stack chairs on the counter.

BUCK

You go up and pull, I'll lift.

Cage nods and climbs up to unlock the perforated skylight. The handle is stuck, he bangs on it several times and it finally swings open. He lifts himself easily through.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Let's go, one at a time, women and
children first.

They start lifting people and equipment out. Screeching from the ducts gets louder, they have to hurry.

George is last, as Buck helps him up we hear screeching and the sound of snakes dropping and moving around in the store. A blue spark hits George, a snake attaches itself to his leg, pulling them down.

GEORGE

Help. Help me, please.

Buck struggles, but George is pulled from his grasp. Buck grabs his shotgun and blows the head off the snake attacking George.

Buck helps him up, but they are attacked again. George screams, another snake has him. A blue spark and he's gone.

Buck has his own problems, several snakes close in. He fires rapidly, they are blown away.

CAGE

Buck, come on! Hurry up.

A snake lunges, Buck shoots it in midair. He blows snakes out of the way and tries to get to the counter.

CAGE (CONT'D)

You can do it!

There is a snake on the counter glowing stinger ready, others join it. Buck fires again, shoving more shells into his shotgun and Cage is firing from the roof. There are too many, he can't reach the roof.

More snakes rush through the basement door and drop from the vents. Cage is trying to cover Buck as he approaches the counter once more, still too many.

EXT. ROOF OF TACK SHOP - CONTINUOUS

We see through the skylight into the saddle shop. CAGE is firing from above and BUCK moving back and forth, in and out of our field of vision below.

Buck yells defiantly, but the glowing and sparks intensify.

BUCK

Come get me you bastards! You want me, you're going to pay.

There is now rapid pistol fire from below.

BUCK (CONT'D)

You're not going to get me, not alive.

WALTER

Buck, no! We'll get to you out.

KATE tries to get to the skylight but WALTER holds her back. There is a moment of silence, then a single shotgun blast is heard accompanied by the sound of breaking glass and a body hitting the ground.

CAGE
Grab my belt!

Walter and Kate grab Cage's belt and he leans as far into the building as possible. He looks around and finally signals them to pull him up.

Cage shakes his head and looks down, then turns and closes the skylight. Walter hangs his head, Kate screams.

EXT. ROOF OF TACK SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

WALTER comforts KATE, the other survivors look around the edge of the building. CAGE sees the large concrete mound of the bomb shelter and the propane tanks in back. HANK looks at the windows of the cafe next door, they are out of reach.

They congregate near the middle of the roof.

WALTER
We can't stay here.

LANCE
We won't have to. Scrooge said it will only last about six hours.

Cage looks at his watch.

CAGE
When did it start?

HANK and others respond.

HANK
Nine forty-five. That's when my watch stopped.

CAGE
It's four twenty. This is an old military watch, a wind up model.

WALTER
Then it ended a half hour ago. So much for that idea.

They look around, unsure what to do.

CAGE

Does anybody think the snakes will give up?

Everyone shakes their heads, they look for a way out.

While the others talk, Lance walks to the edge of the roof near the cafe building next door. Two second story windows of the cafe are just out of reach. Kate joins him, they discuss something quietly.

Kate shakes her head emphatically and takes Hope toward the front of the roof.

LANCE

Well, at least we're safe for now.

EXT. ROOF OF TACK SHOP - SOON AFTER

HOPE looks over the front of the roof.

HOPE

They're here.

CAGE hurries over, as he looks over the edge a snake raise its head in front of him. Cage pulls out the flare gun and fires down its throat.

He grabs his shotgun and fires at another snake, then backs away as the first snake explodes.

CAGE

We have a problem here!

Everyone backs away. They look at the cafe, it offers their only hope but is still out of reach. LANCE is standing across from a cafe window, wrestling with some internal demon. He looks at Kate, she nods.

LANCE

Over here!

Lance picks up a wide board lying on their roof and balances it on the ledge opposite a cafe window. He carefully inches it forward until it slides onto the cafe window frame, under the partially open window pane.

A bridge, one he has obviously created before.

WALTER

That's Kate's window!

Lance looks over sheepishly and shrugs.

WALTER (CONT'D)
When this is over, we need to
talk!
(to Kate, mocking)
You are so busted, girlfriend.

Lance grabs a second board, locating it securely next to the first, Walter is glaring. Lance walks carefully across, opens the window, and ducks inside.

LANCE
One at a time, hurry!

EXT. ROOF OF TACK SHOP - CONTINUOUS

CAGE keeps the growing number of snakes at bay, but runs out of ammo as WALTER finally squeezes through the window, leaving just Cage outside.

LANCE
Cage, let's go!

Cage scampers across the bouncing boards and literally dives through the window, a blue spark hits the frame behind him.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CAGE bowls over TAMERA and MARCIE as he explodes through the window. LANCE pushes the boards away as a snake begins to cross them, it falls screeching to the ground.

Everyone is momentarily silent, catching their breath.

CAGE
We're not safe here, they'll be
coming.

WALTER
There must be some way to get rid
of them!

WALTER and Marcie comforting KATE who is sitting on the bed.

HANK
I could use a drink about now!

LANCE
Me too.

Walter arches his eyebrows, then watches Lance from the corner of his eye.

The others talk, Lance is lost in thought. He moves to a dresser and scoots it away from the wall. Kate sees him and almost jumps up, but looks at Walter and stays quiet.

Walter is now watching suspiciously as Lance reaches behind and pulls out a can of beer. Walter is shocked.

LANCE

We need a mine, or a cave!
 (pops open the beer)
 They always trap the monsters in
 like a cave or mine, and blow them
 up while the people are safe
 outside.

Lance starts to take a sip, Walter grabs the can roughly from his hands, scowling at the kids.

WALTER

We REALLY need to talk!

An idea forms in Cage's mind. He walks to the window, pulls out the flare gun and loads it.

CAGE

Maybe we can be safe on the
inside. Does the building have a
fire escape?

WALTER

There's a window at the end of the
 hall, right outside this door.
 There's an escape ladder just
 outside.

Walter looks at Kate, then Lance.

WALTER (CONT'D)

But you'll have to break the
 window, it's nailed shut. Someone
 kept sneaking out.

The kids give sheepish grins, Cage jumps into action.

CAGE

Then let's go.

Everyone hurry downstairs. Cage talks to Walter, checking the flare gun again.

CAGE (CONT'D)
How good's your insurance?

Walter looks slyly at Cage.

WALTER
Good, and I bet the government
will put up big money to keep this
quiet.

CAGE
Walter, Lance, I want every gas
line in the building busted open.
Hank, get the others to the bomb
shelter.

Everyone hurries downstairs.

Walter, Lance and Cage go to the heaters and stove, Marcie follows them. They use the butts of their guns to break the gas lines, the hiss of escaping gas grows louder every second.

CAGE (CONT'D)
I need all the snakes inside. Bust
a hole in the back door big enough
for them to get through, then get
to the shelter. Don't open up
until I get there.

LANCE
You only have one flare left.

CAGE
One will have to be enough.
(a hand on Walters
shoulder)
Go, either way you'll be safe.

They cover their faces from the growing smell of gas. Cage leaves, Marcie grabs Lance's shotgun and follows. Snakes appear as Walter pushes Lance to the shelter.

INT. CAFE - CONTINUOUS

CAGE rushes to a heater near the front wall, Marcie goes to the other. They bust the lines using their guns as clubs.

CAGE
Get in the shelter, please.

MARCIE

Unthinkable! Where else can I
study insanity, stupidity and
delusions of grandeur so closely?

Cage smiles and kicks a hole in the bottom of the wood
door.

CAGE

Stupidity? I thought this was a
good idea.

MARCIE

I'll have to settle for insanity
then.

They laugh and start to run for the stairs when the Red
Ball of energy appears again. They try to get around it,
but it moves to block their path.

The screech of approaching snakes comes from outside.

CAGE

I'll go right, when it moves to
block me get to the stairs.

Cage jumps to the right, Marcie moves with him.

MARCIE

I think not.

Cage looks around and sees the fan on its pole. He grabs it
and bangs the motor until it is broken open, wires hanging
out.

CAGE

Stay behind me.

A snake appears in the hole, Marcie aims her gun. Cage
grabs it with one hand.

CAGE (CONT'D)

No guns, the gas!

She understands. Cage approaches the Red Ball, pulling the
extension cord behind him.

MARCIE

Won't that create sparks?

CAGE

I don't know, but we're snake food
if we get trapped in here.

He pushes the exposed wires of the fan toward the Ball, it pulses and moves backwards. He jabs the exposed wires toward the Ball again and it retreats further, not letting Cage touch it.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Smart little devil. Don't want to
fry the kiddies, do we?

The Ball spins off and disappears through the wall.

Cage and Marcie run toward the stairs. He grabs the near by furniture and constructs a rough barricade on the stairs, snakes are starting to pour in.

CAGE
Wait at the top of the stairs.

It seems that all of the snakes are crowded into the cafe. Cage is beating them back with his shotgun as they try and cross the barricade. The gas is beginning to affect him.

MARCIE
Cage!

CAGE
One minute more, I want to make
sure.

MARCIE
No, NOW!

He sprints up the stairs and follows her gaze. The Red Ball is floating just inside the window at the end of the hall, one snake is in the hallway and another drops through.

CAGE
Too damn smart.

Marcie looks around and sees the door to Walter's room. She pulls him inside and slams it shut.

INT. BOMB SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

LANCE and WALTER arrive at the shelter, snakes on their heels. Lance is using the shotgun as a club.

HANK waits anxiously at the door.

HANK
Hurry! We have to get inside now!

They dive in - snakes right behind them. They try to pull the door closed, but a snake manages to get its head inside.

They struggle to get the snake out, but can't. The snake tries angrily to get its teeth into somebody.

INT. WALTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAGE and MARCIE look around. Cage piles furniture in front of the door.

Marcie sees the policeman's belt on the bed, then the open window. She stares a second at the banner outside the window, then looks back at the belt.

Cage has the flare gun out and checks it again. He sniffs the air and watches the door.

CAGE

The air is fresher, I think we can fire from in here. I'm not sure we'll make it through the explosion though.

MARCIE

We won't have to.

He looks, Marcie is hanging out the window. She is working on something above the window. She steps down holding two ends of a bed sheet.

Cage looks, she has fashioned a slide by hanging Walter's handcuffs over the cable of the welcome banner and feeding the sheet through the wrist holes of the handcuffs.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

Do you know how to do that sliding thing?

CAGE

Damn right!

Cage looks at the flare gun and realizes that if they go, no one can set off the explosion.

CAGE (CONT'D)

You go, I'll light things up here. Just hang on tight till you get to the middle then slide down.

Marcie gives him an exasperated look, then takes the flare gun from him.

MARCIE

Can you hold us both?

(Cage nods)

Then get ready.

Cage sits on the window, legs hanging outside. We can see it is getting lighter outside. Marcie grabs the shotgun and moves to the door.

She catches her breath, then blows a hole in the door. She fires the flare through the hole into the cafe below, then runs and throws her arms around Cage's neck.

EXT. HANGING OVER THE STREET - DAWN

CAGE and MARCIE emerge from the window. As they slide down the rope as the cafe explodes in a ball of fire.

They barely escape the flames erupting from every window.

INT. BOMB SHELTER - DAWN

LANCE and WALTER struggle to pull the door closed. It is only open a crack but a second snake is struggling inside.

WALTER

We have to do something now!

They hear an explosion, a ball of flame is boiling down the hallway toward the bomb shelter. They struggle harder when the pressure from the explosion forces the door firmly closed, knocking them down.

Two severed snake heads are lying on the floor, shuddering. They breathe heavily and look at each other in relief.

EXT. HANGING OVER THE STREET - DAWN

CAGE and MARCIE are dangling at the center of the sagging cable, over the middle of the road.

The RED BALL appears and circles them slowly, menacingly. It approaches Cage slowly, then rushes through them with a jolt of energy.

They fall awkwardly to the ground, landing with a thud.

They struggle to their feet, but are numb and can't get up. The Red Ball circles them again, they hear a screech coming from the cafe. Two flaming snakes appear, then collapse on the ground.

More screeching is heard in the distance, growing louder. Suddenly the Red Ball's movements become erratic, it shudders.

Fingers of ground lightening have started on Bald Mountain and are crackling toward the town. The Red Ball begins to pulsate, then explodes.

Faint lights rise from the snakes, dead and alive, and float away as fingers of lightning crackle through the town.

Cage and Marcie struggle to their feet. They look around, then at each other. They hug, then kiss with both passion and relief. After a minute they turn toward the cafe.

CAGE

So, what do you do for excitement?

INT. BURNT OUT CAFE - CONTINUOUS

CAGE and MARCIE make their way through the ruins of the cafe.

MARCIE

How many Marines have seen combat like this?

He smiles and takes her hand.

They get to the bomb shelter entrance and clear away the debris.

Cage uses a mangled frying pan to bang on the door, which slowly opens. He holds out the pan

CAGE

Room service.

Those inside rush out, jubilant. We spend a moment watching the joyous victory celebration. Kate looks around, tears forming in her eyes. Walter goes over and hugs her, she begins to sob. They become more somber realizing what has happened to the others.

They walk to the front of what was once the cafe, when banging and noises come from their left. Guns are up and the nerves are back.

They watch as the shine barrel from in front of the saddle shop rocks then rolls over, the lid pops off. A pile of boots emerge, followed by Buck in a daze.

Kate runs over and hugs him, crying with joy. The others follow, patting him on the back, celebrating again.

BUCK

Am I dead?

WALTER

I don't think I'm qualified to answer that.

Marcie walks over.

MARCIE

Allow me, I am a doctor. Turn your head and cough.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GHOSTLIGHT - DUSK

It's over. They walk to Cage's car. MARCIE puts a shotgun between the seats, then gets in the passengers side. Everyone's there to see them off, Kate hugging Buck possessively.

CAGE

Thanks. You guys really know how to throw a party.

WALTER

Why don't you stay here tonight.

They look around at the ravaged town.

MARCIE

We are in a hurry to get to Toronto.

They get into the car.

CAGE

We're going to Camp LeJeune, but we'll be back soon.

Marcie turns, pouts for a second then relents.

MARCIE

Fine, we can go to your camp, but I do not believe we will be back here.

She smiles at the assembled group.

MARCIE (CONT'D)
No offense to 'y'all,' but I avoid
any place where people have
recently been eaten.

CAGE
Why? Maybe you can branch out and
write a food column too!

Cage gives the well wishers a nod and a thumbs up as they
drive off. As they leave we hear.

MARCIE
That is disgusting!

CAGE
How about an article, "Demon
Snake, Fried or Broiled?"

MARCIE
You are impossible!

CAGE
When cleaning your Devil Snake,
please make sure it is properly
grounded to avoid a nasty shock.

MARCIE
Really! How can you talk about it
like that?

They drive off into the distance and the conversation
fades, the group waving goodbye.

KATE LYNN
I give them a week.

WALTER
Oh, I don't know, they say the
first year together is the
hardest. They argue like they've
been together ten!

We follow the car out of town, as it passes the city limits
sign two Ghost Lights come out of the brush and follow it
down the road.

THE END