FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST – ROAD – DAY

A large truck stops in the middle of a road twisting into the forest. TWO MEN IN JUMPSUITS step out of it, one fat, the other thin. Their nametags read BOB and ROY.

The two men walk to the back of the truck, open it up, and lower a flat walkway onto the ground. The inside of the truck is filled with large industrial barrels.

ROY
After you.

BOB
No, after you.

Roy frowns and enters the inside of the truck. Bob follows. Roy thrusts his hands forward to grab hold of one of the barrels.

BOB
What are you doing?

Roy freezes. His hands hover over the barrel.

ROY
Huh?

BOB
You don’t want to touch these things without gloves.

Bob reaches into a compartment in his suit, removes a pair of plastic gloves, and puts them on. Roy does the same.

BOB
You get any of this shit on you and you'll wake up tomorrow morning with a second head growing out of your shoulder.

The two men grab hold of a barrel and proceed to roll it down the walkway. When they have gotten it out of the
truck, they roll it towards the side of the road. They halt the barrel at the edge of a steep hill.

BOB
You ready?
(no response)
What’s wrong?

ROY
I just don’t feel comfortable doing this.

BOB
Why not? No one’s going to know. By the time anyone finds one of these babies, this shit’ll be deteriorated.

ROY
That’s not what I meant. I mean I don’t feel comfortable with what the company’s doing. I mean, this is toxic waste, Bob.

BOB
Look, you don’t have to feel comfortable, you just have to do your job and our job is to roll this barrel down this hill.

ROY
I don’t think I can do that, Bob.
(a beat)

BOB
Do you want to put this company out of business?

ROY
Well, maybe it should be put out of business. I mean we’re dumping toxic waste into the forest.

Bob’s face turns pink.
BOB
(irritated)
Look, Roy. If you want to lose your job, go to it, but I don’t want to lose mine. Now one way or another, this barrel is ending up at the bottom of this hill, you understand me?

ROY
I understand but I just can’t...

BOB
Good. Now help me get this barrel rolling.

ROY
I can’t do that, Bob.

BOB
Roy, roll the fucking barrel!

ROY
No!

Bob shoves Roy aside and pushes the barrel over the edge of the hill. If crashes into a tree at the bottom of the hill and steaming green liquid oozes out through a large crack, seeping into the soil.

BOB
There, that’s one barrel of toxic waste at the bottom of the hill and there’s not a fucking thing you can do about it! Now are we going to have any more problems?

Roy shakes his head sheepishly.

BOB
I didn’t think so. Now help me get the rest of these barrels rolling.

Roy nods and the two men return to the back of the truck.
EXT. RESIDENT CABIN – NIGHT

A lone cabin sits in a clearing within a darkened forest. Light from within the cabin is cast on the surrounding trees.

INT. RESIDENT CABIN – KITCHEN

The RESIDENT, red haired and bearded, stands over a stove with two frying pans placed on top of it. The resident scoops scrambled eggs from one pan onto a plate beside the stove. In the other pan, he fries bacon.

INT. RESIDENT CABIN – DINING ROOM

The resident sets his plate down on a small wooden table and takes a seat. Beside the table is a window. Outside, something small flashes by the window. The resident catches a brief glimpse of it, stares at the window for a moment, then returns his gaze to his plate.

The sound of breaking glass is heard from the room behind the resident followed by a raspy buzzing sound. The resident jolts upright and turns around. He stands and exits the dining room.

INT. KITCHEN

The resident proceeds to the center of the kitchen. There is a window overlooking the stove, one of the frames of which has been shattered. The resident shifts his gaze to the floor, which has been covered in shattered glass. The buzzing sound occurs nearby and the resident exits.

INT. CORRIDOR

The resident enters a narrow corridor. He walks forward and opens a door.

INT. BEDROOM

The resident proceeds to a small bed. He crouches beside it and looks underneath then proceeds to a closet, the door of which is ajar. The resident opens the door, peers inside, closes it. The sound is heard again and the resident exits.
INT. LIVING ROOM

The resident enters a modestly furnished living room with a small couch situated in front of a stone fireplace. The buzzing is heard somewhere within the room. The resident's gaze locks on the fireplace.

The resident crouches in front of the fireplace and places his head inside.

INT. CHIMNEY

The chimney is nothing but a viewing hole into the night sky.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The resident removes his head from the fireplace, stands, and shrugs.

INT. DINING ROOM

The resident returns to his seat at the table and drives a fork into the eggs in front of him. No sooner has he done so does a small black creature burst out of the food on his plate and attach itself to his face. The resident falls to the floor.

The resident screams and writhes in pain. He claws at his face in an attempt to remove the thing from his face. He finally grabs it in a fist and casts it aside.

The resident stands up and slams his foot onto the creature. Yellow slime spurts from its fragile body. The resident suddenly doubles over and collapses onto the ground on his back. He convulses and vomits pale white fluid until he finally passes out.

EXT. ROMERO CABIN – DAY

A taxi pulls up in front of a log cabin. STU, 18-21, steps out. He has long black hair and wears a black t-shirt with an image from a horror movie printed on it, blue jeans, and black boots.
PETE, 18-21, approaches Stu with his hand outstretched. He is bespectacled and wears blue jeans, hiking boots, and the shirt of a Boy Scout's uniform unbuttoned to reveal a white undershirt. In his other hand, he holds a duffel bag.

PETE
Hi, I’m Pete.

Stu shakes hands with Pete.

STU
Stu.

PETE
Nice to meet you, Stuart.

STU
I said Stu.

PETE
Sorry, I thought you Stuart.

STU
You should’ve called me Stu anyway. Stuart’s sounds pretty shitty, don’t you think?

PETE
It’s okay.

Stu is approached by another young man, SAM, 18-21. He long, unkempt hair and wears a faded red t-shirt, dark baggy shorts, and ratty sneakers.

SAM
Hey man. Sam.

STU
Stuart. Call me Stu.

SAM
So you have two names or something?

STU
Well, I got a first name and a last
STU (CONT.)
name.

SAM
Sorry, man. I smoked a bowl to the face before I got here.

PETE
I guess you don’t think the mind’s a terrible thing to waste, huh?

SAM
Hey man, I’m a law school student.

PETE
You’re kidding!

STU
That’s rough, man.

SAM
See? I got an excuse. If I go to class in a sober mind state, I’ll end up blowing my brains out.

The TAXI DRIVER opens the trunk and hands Stu a duffel bag of his own.

STU
So this the whole gang?

PETE
Dr. Romero said there would be five of us.

The cabin door opens and GEORGE, 20s, emerges. He is tall with an athletic build and wears a dark plaid shirt, blue jeans, and hiking boots.

GEORGE
You guys can come in, you know.

PETE
We’re waiting for one more.
GEORGE
One more? There’s only supposed to be three of you.

PETE
Who are you then?

GEORGE
George Romero. I’m Dr. Romero’s son. Come on in. My dad’ll be down soon. I’ll get your bags.

The three young men set down their bags and enter the cabin.

INT. ROMERO CABIN – CLOSET

DR. ROMERO, 50s-60s, stands inside a large closet. He is bespectacled with gray hair and stubble. The closet is lined with rows of various medical supplies. Dr. Romero removes a small vial from one of the shelves.

INT. ROMERO CABIN – LIVING ROOM

The three young men enter a living room furnished with elegant armchairs and ornate carpeting. Two glass cases mounted on the fireplace display a collection of butterflies.

PETE
Dr. Romero?

INT. CLOSET

DR. ROMERO
One moment.

Dr. Romero fills a syringe with the contents of the vial and places a cap on the needle then placing syringe in his pocket.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Dr. Romero enters.
Dr. Romero leads them into another room.

INT. DINING ROOM

The dining room is small and simple. There is a wooden table beside a window and a cabinet of silverware in the corner. There are three sheets of paper in the center of the table.

DR. ROMERO

Have a seat.

Dr. Romero hands each person a sheet of paper.

STU

Release forms?

Dr. Romero circles the table, handing a pen to each of the young men.

DR. ROMERO

I apologize. My employers require you to sign in order to participate in the expedition. It is not in their best interests to have lawsuits filed against them should you catch poison ivy or be devoured by some large woodland creature.

They sign the forms and hand them to Dr. Romero.

DR. ROMERO

Excellent. Now that formalities are behind us, I would like to sincerely thank you for volunteering to assist me this weekend...

PETE

Excuse me, Dr. Romero. What exactly are we doing? Your ad in the paper only said "collect specimens." What kind of
PETE (CONT.)
"specimens"?

DR. ROMERO
I was coming to that. We are collecting unidentified insect specimens for research.

PETE
Wait a minute, unidentified? As in possibly a new species?

DR. ROMERO
Precisely. Now, let's not stand around like a couple of zombies, we need to gather the equipment. Our weekend together has yet to begin.

EXT. ROMERO CABIN

Dr. Romero and his assistants emerge from the cabin carrying cardboard boxes, foldable tables, and camping supplies, which they proceed to load in the trunk of a station wagon.

After the equipment has been loaded, they get into the car. Dr. Romero sits in the driver's seat, George beside him, and the others in the backseat.

GEORGE
You want me to drive?

DR. ROMERO
I'm not that old yet.

Dr. Romero starts up the car.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - ROAD - DAY

The car speeds along a curving road on the side of a forested mountain.
INT. CAR

SAM
So how long have you guys been living here?

GEORGE
Oh, we don't live here. This is just where we come on vacation. We live in the city just like you.

DR. ROMERO
This is a peaceful, secluded area where one can do what one likes without disturbance. To answer your question, we've had the cabin for about ten years now.

STU
Wait a minute. If you guys have owned this place for ten years now, how come you haven't found these things until now?

DR. ROMERO
I suspect the species emerges after extended periods of time like the Magicicada which emerges every thirteen to seventeen years. My belief is that they have been here all this time, we just haven't seen them yet.

PETE
I have a question, Dr. Romero. Please don't take this the wrong way, I really appreciate this opportunity, but why did you choose to have college students help you and not other scientists?

DR. ROMERO
I enjoy working with my son far more than working with my associates so I decided to work with college students as a means to make this expedition a more pleasant experience for the two
DR. ROMERO (CONT.)
of us and also to assist students who
may be searching for jobs. Students are
just as capable of undertaking tasks of
this nature as scientists are. And
additionally, students are less likely
to attempt to take credit for my
discovery than scientists. A little
competition never caused any harm but I
like to have a head start whenever
possible.

EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

The car parks off to the side of a large circular clearing
in the forest. Dr. Romero and his assistants step out and
Dr. Romero opens the trunk.

DR. ROMERO
This is camp. We’ll set up the smaller
tents on the edge of the circle so the
main tent can be placed in the center.

CUT TO:

The car has been unpacked. Dr. Romero and his assistants
set up the foldable tables in two rows in the center of the
campsite. Glass terrariums have been removed from their
boxes and are being placed on top of the tables.

STU
So you name is George Romero?

GEORGE
(laughs)
Here it comes.

STU
As in “Night Of The Living Dead” George
A. Romero?

GEORGE
Minus the “A.” My dad watched a lot of
horror movies when he was a kid. He
would’ve been a filmmaker if he hadn’t
GEORGE (CONT.)
become an entomologist.

STU
Don't think I could be an entomologist.
Way I see it, even the pretty bugs can
jump on you and suck your blood.

GEORGE
(laughs)
I was kind of hoping none of you would
be a Romero fan.

STU
Sorry, man.

GEORGE
Don't worry about it, I don't get it as
much as you'd think. Occasionally I'll
meet a fan but other than that, nobody
but my dad and I seem to know who he
is.

STU
That's a shame, I'm a big fan. I wish
my name was George Romero... Hey, you
ever see Cthulhu vs. The Kraken?

GEORGE
No.

STU
Oh man. Best... movie... ever!

CUT TO:

The entirety of terrariums have been filled with dirt and
placed on tables. The five proceed to place tall metal
poles in the ground, forming a rectangle around the tables.

DR. ROMERO
So what enticed the two of you to come
and assist us this weekend.
SAM
I need the cash. I’ve been thinking about doing some gardening. I need to buy some supplies.

DR. ROMERO
Really? What kind of gardening?

SAM
Herb gardening.

DR. ROMERO
Excellent! Gardening is truly one of life’s simple pleasures.

Sam smiles slyly.

DR. ROMERO
What about you, Pete?

PETE
This whole thing just sounded interesting to me. I figured I’d do it just for the experience.

DR. ROMERO
I’m sure you’ll find your experience has yet to begin.

INT. MAIN TENT - DAY

A large green tent has been erected around the two rows of terrariums mounted on tables. Dr. Romero and his assistants are at work arranging crisscrossing metal poles into a grid in the ceiling.

STU
What exactly are we doing?

GEORGE
We’re installing a battery powered lighting system in the tent.

STU
Why? I thought we were only going to be
STU (CONT.)
here a weekend.

GEORGE
You guys are. But after that, scientists from the city are going to be up here for weeks looking at these things.

STU
So do you do a lot of this kind of work with your dad?

GEORGE
In the country, yeah. We've been to forests, swamps, mountains, and caves all over the country doing stuff like this.

STU
Sounds like you guys bust your ass.

GEORGE
When my dad's overseas, work's not just hard, it's dangerous.

STU
Overseas?

GEORGE
My Dad's been everywhere. Africa, Asia, South America... I've never been though. Like I said, too dangerous. So what made you decide to come out and help us this weekend?

STU
I figured I could use the extra cash. I'm a clerk at a video store. That job pays shit.

CUT TO:

All are at work installing lamps, suspended over the tables, into the completed grid in the ceiling.
PETE
I was thinking. Being an entomologist must take you to all sorts of interesting places.

DR. ROMERO
Occasionally.

SAM
So out of all the places you could have you could have gone to research insects, why'd you decide to do it in a place where people will point a shotgun at your face if you ask to borrow some sugar?

DR. ROMERO
(laughs)
I would find it extreme to refer to the locals as if they were trigger-happy maniacs however they are quite reclusive, even paranoid, and don't take much interest in their surroundings except when it comes to hunting. That is precisely why I chose this location. Most entomologists wouldn't think of coming here if they had the opportunity to travel someplace more exotic. This area has been left unexplored which leads me to believe there are things here that have yet to be discovered.

PETE
Like new species of insects?

DR. ROMERO
In this case, yes.

SAM
What kind of bug is this?

DR. ROMERO
I suspect the specimen is a member of
DR. ROMERO
the Acrididae family of grasshoppers, more commonly known as locust. Its body is about six inches in length not including a three-inch appendage on its abdomen I suspect is a stinger.

PETE
Let me get this straight. A large insect, known for wiping out entire acres of valuable cropland, that just so happens to have a three-inch stinger attached to it?

DR. ROMERO
You needn’t be so harsh. I believe that all creatures have purpose. Spiders control the world’s insect population for example. If spiders did not exist, insects would overrun the earth. Human beings need to learn to regard these kinds of creatures with respect rather than fear. And let’s not forget, I’m a scientist. Solving nature’s mysteries is what I do and nature’s mysteries often appear to be unpleasant.

INT. MAIN TENT – DAY

The five behold the completed interior of the tent. At the end of the tent, in between the two rows of tables, is a lone table. A steel suitcase has been placed on top of it.

DR. ROMERO
Excellent. We’re ready. Follow me.

EXT. CAMPSITE

Dr. Romero leads the others to the car. He turns to them and removes five tweezer-like utensils from his pocket.

DR. ROMERO
Take one each.
Each takes one of the tweezers. Dr. Romero opens the trunk and removes two cardboard boxes, one larger than the other. He removes a box cutter from his pocket and proceeds to slit each box open.

From the larger box, he removes white bee-keeping suits. He hands one to each of the four young men and removes a fifth for himself.

STU
We preparing for nuclear war?

DR. ROMERO
(laughs)
Not yet.

The five proceed to suit up.

DR. ROMERO
As we don't know how the specimens will react to our presence, I found it logical to use bee-keeping suits. These suits will protect us from everything between a mosquito bite and certain death.

All look grim.

DR. ROMERO
Yes, mosquito bites can be quite nasty, I agree.

After all are fully suited and masked, Dr. Romero begins to remove miniature plastic terrariums from the second box and hands them out.

DR. ROMERO
This is what you'll be using to collect the specimens.

Dr. Romero unzips a compartment in his suit and removes a pair of tweezers from his pocket.

DR. ROMERO
You'll be picking them up with these. I
DR. ROMERO (CONT.)
suggest you pick them up by their stingers to ensure your suit endures no unwanted penetration. We are going to the nest. Some of the insects will be in the trees. The ones we’ll be collecting will be in the ground. So, are we ready then?

They nod.

DR. ROMERO
Excellent. Then to the nest we go.

Dr. Romero turns and heads towards the forest followed by George and Pete.

SAM
The nest. Sounds creepy.

STU
Of course it does, we’re talking huge stinging insects here. Well, that’s what he’s paying us for. Let’s go.

The two young men follow after Dr. Romero and George.

EXT. FOREST – TRAIL – DAY

The four young men follow Dr. Romero through the forest on a faint trail covered in twigs and leaves. A constant raspy buzzing permeates the air.

SAM
What’s that noise?

DR. ROMERO
Wings. We’re approaching the nest.

PETE
They’re not going to be flying around, are they? I mean, if these are locust, they could start swarming at any moment.
DR. ROMERO
Wings do not always entail swarming. They are also a method of communication. And keep in mind that we still do not know what type of insects these are. Locust is simply my own speculation.

GEORGE
The wings are getting louder. We’re close.

EXT. NEST - DAY

Dr. Romero and the four young men stand before a sunken crater encompassed in a grove of trees.

DR. ROMERO
Behold the nest!

SAM
Man, that stinks!

DR. ROMERO
Watch where you step.

They descend into the nest, tiptoeing around large black insects half buried in the soil. Dr. Romero stops in the center of the crater, pops open the terrarium, and removes tweezers from his suit.

He crouches down, thrusts the tweezers into the ground, and removes an insect, hanging by a thin stinger.

The insect resembles both a grasshopper and a wasp with remnants of sticky white film clinging to its exoskeleton. It buzzes angrily as Dr. Romero places it inside the terrarium and slams the lid shut.

DR. ROMERO
Let’s get started then, shall we?

They spread out throughout the nest and proceed to collect the insects.
CUT TO:

Dr. Romero and his assistants climb the nest, now carrying insects in their terrariums. As they proceed to return to the campsite, it is revealed that past the nest, several yards from its edge, is a collection of large metal barrels half buried in the ground. The soil surrounding the barrels emits wisps of thick white smoke.

INT. MAIN TENT - DAY

Still in their suits, Dr. Romero and his assistants file down the rows of tables transferring the insects from the smaller plastic terrariums to the larger glass ones.

LATER:

The insects have been completely transferred to the glass terrariums; there are no more than three insects in each. Dr. Romero removes his mask and smiles.

   DR. ROMERO
   Not bad at all for a day’s work. We
   will be returning tomorrow to collect
   more specimens. Excellent work,
   everybody.

INT. MAIN TENT - NIGHT

Dr. Romero enters the tent now enshrouded in darkness. He bends down beside one of the tables and flips a switch activating a battery-powered fluorescent lighting system. He walks to the end of the tent and opens the steel suitcase on the table.

From the suitcase he removes a three-lens microscope and an empty glass vial from which he removes the rubber stopper. Dr. Romero removes an insect from a terrarium, gripping its thorax between tweezers. It thrusts its free stinger forward and a droplet of venom falls from its pointed tip.

   DR. ROMERO
   So a venom carrier you are indeed. Am I
   permitted to attain a sample?
The insect buzzes angrily.

DR. ROMERO

Thank you.

Dr. Romero removes a second pair of tweezers from his pocket. He pinches the insect's stinger over the glass vial, which fills with a sickly yellow liquid. He then returns the insect to its terrarium.

Dr. Romero removes a glass slide and an eyedropper from the suitcase. He places the slide under the microscope and applies a sample of venom to it with the eyedropper. He places a stopper on the vial and peers through the microscope, adjusting it until it is focused through the third lens.

The doctor removes a vial of blood from the suitcase, removes the stopper, and applies a sample of it to the slide of venom.

He gazes through the microscope and suddenly gasps. He looks to see one of the insects perched upon his forearm. It removes its stinger from his flesh and flies away into the night.

DR. ROMERO

Oh God.

Dr. Romero thrusts his hand into his pocket and removes a syringe. He removes the plastic cover from the needle and drives the syringe into the minute puncture wound on his arm.

He then dashes towards the tent entrance, stumbles, quickly gets to his feet, and evacuates the tent.

EXT. CAMPSITE

He runs in cl Bundy strides to one of the smaller tents and paws frantically at its flaps. He undoes the zipper and throws them open revealing a second pair of flaps designed to allow air into the tent. He yanks the second zipper upwards and falls forward.
INT. ROMERO TENT

A disoriented George sits up from his sleeping bag.

GEORGE
(sleepily)
What’s wrong?

Dr. Romero releases a jet of projectile vomit, drenching George in milky white fluid, and passes out on the sleeping bag.

EXT. CAMPSITE

George dives out of the tent yowling in disgust. He lands on his hands and knees and vomits himself.

INT. STU’S TENT – DAY

Stu is awakened by the sound of the tent zipper being undone. He looks up to see George standing over him.

GEORGE
We have a problem.

EXT. CAMPSITE

The four young men are gathered outside the Romero tent. George unzips the inner flaps. Stu slaps his hand over his face and turns away. George grabs his arm.

STU
(muffled)
It fucking stinks.

GEORGE
I said we have a problem.

Stu turns back to the tent, his hand still covering his face. George throws back the flaps. All grimace in disgust.
INT. ROMERO TENT

The contents of the tent have been stained white. Dr. Romero lies on his side inside a sleeping bag. He is deathly pale and his mouth is encrusted with bile.

SAM
What’s wrong with him?

GEORGE
I have no idea. We have to take him to a hospital.

PETE
What about the insects?

GEORGE
We can worry about the insects later. Right now, we have to get my dad to a hospital.

DR. ROMERO
(choked)
No!

GEORGE
What?

DR. ROMERO
I’ll be alright. I was...

GEORGE
Dad, you’re not...

DR. ROMERO
(forcefully)
I was prepared for this! I’ll be alright. I just don’t...
(sputters)
...don’t know how long it’s going to take. The research is important. Go.

PETE
You know, I think he’ll be alright. It looks like he’s got a common stomach
PETE (O.S.)

virus to me.

GEORGE

You think?

PETE

Well, I’m no doctor but it happens. Just leave him alone for now. Let him get it out of his system.

GEORGE

But look at the poor guy.

PETE

If he’s still like this by the afternoon, we’ll take him to a hospital.

GEORGE

Maybe you’re right. We should continue as planned and see how he is later. I just hope things don’t come to us driving to the hospital for an hour with him vomiting every five minutes.

George pats his father on the shoulder.

GEORGE

Feel better, okay? Drink lots of water.

EXT. CAMPsite

George zips the inner flaps closed allowing fresh air inside the tent.

EXT. NEST – DAY

The insects buzz in unison. They burst from the ground one by one and swarm into the forest.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

The sound of buzzing wings resonates through the air.
EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

Heavy wheezing breath emanates from inside the Romero tent. The inner flaps are unzipped and Dr. Romero emerges; his face is not visible. He peers around the campsite for a moment than disappears.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

Dr. Romero lumbers off into the forest.

EXT. FOREST – TRAIL – DAY

George leads the others on the trail through the forest. They are clad in bee-keeping garb.

GEORGE
Something’s wrong. Listen...

STU
I get it. It’s nature. Free from the sounds of civilization. No cars, no radios, no TVs, I don’t care.

GEORGE
I said something’s wrong.

STU
Sarcasms one of many services I can offer... I don’t hear anything.

PETE
The wings are gone.

GEORGE
Exactly.

EXT. NEST – DAY

The four young men arrive to find the nest completely deserted. The ground is pockmarked with holes where the insects one were.

SAM
Man, these things straight dipped out.
PETE
Looks like they’ve migrated.

SAM
Bugs, man... weird.

GEORGE
I don’t think the other scientists are going to be happy about this.

STU
Eh, they can still play around with the ones we got. We’re off the hook. Come on. Let’s get out of here.

EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

The four young men remove their suits and head towards the Romero tent. George parts the inner flaps.

GEORGE
Dad, you’re not going to believe this...

INT. ROMERO TENT

The tent is empty.

SAM
Where the hell did he go?

GEORGE
I don’t understand. He could barely get up this morning.

EXT. CAMPSITE

The four young men scan the area.

STU
This day’s starting to turn into an episode of the Twilight Zone... no, X-Files... X-Files is cooler.
SAM
Whatever, man. It’s fucked up.

GEORGE
We have to go look for him.

PETE
We can’t all go look for him. What if he comes back and we’re not here? Two of us should stay behind in case he comes back.

SAM
I’m staying.

PETE
I’ll go. Stu, you come with me.

GEORGE
Now, wait a minute, this is my dad. What kind of son would I be if I didn’t help look for him?

PETE
We can’t afford to lose you too. You’re the only one who knows the way around here.
(a beat)

GEORGE
(sighs)
Okay, I’ll stay.

STU
We’ll find him. He couldn’t have gotten far.

PETE
We’re less likely to get lost if we follow a trail. Since we would have seen him on the way back from the nest, I suggest we take the other trail.

STU
Sounds like a plan. Let’s go.
Pete and Stu walk towards the forest.

SAM
Good luck. Hope you can find him if he doesn't find us first.
(to George)
What now?

GEORGE
We wait. Come with me. Something tells me that's no stomach virus my dad has.

INT. MAIN TENT

Sam and George enter the tent. Sam spots the open suitcase and lab supplies on the table at the end.

SAM
Looks like your dad was doing some experimenting last night.

GEORGE
That's what he was doing last night. I should have known.

SAM
Nothing wrong with a little experimentation.

They walk over to the table. Sam examines the vials of blood and venom. George stares through the microscope.

GEORGE
Oh my God.

EXT. FOREST – TRAIL – DAY

Pete and Stu go left where the single trail forks into two.

LATER:

They come across a muddy ditch alongside the trail. Footprints leading into the forest are imprinted in the mud.
PETE
Stu, footprints. Let’s go.

STU
I don’t know. I’d hate to run into any of the Doc’s “woodland creatures.”

PETE
It’s worth a try. We’ll leave marks on the trees so we can find our way back.

They drop off the trail into the ditch and venture further into the forest.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

Pete and Stu walk through the forest.

STU
So you trying to earn a new badge or something?

PETE
Hmm?

STU
Shooting for Eagle Scout, eh?

PETE
Not a Scout anymore.

STU
What’d you do? Start a forest fire or something?

PETE
I quit.

STU
Really? How come?

PETE
Guess once you’re an Eagle Scout, there’s not much left for you to do except teach other Scouts to become
PETE (CONT.)
Eagle Scouts. Just didn’t see what the point was, I guess.

STU
Well, I got to tell you, Pete, I feel a hell of a lot safer in these woods with an ex-Boy Scout. I’d have never thought to mark the trees.

PETE
I didn’t learn that from the Boy Scouts. I spend a lot of time outdoors. I live for it. I’m what advertisers call an “experiencer.” No one experiences things anymore. It’s all cell phones and I-Pods nowadays.

STU
You know what, Pete, I think you’re on the level. I-Pods are for Abercrombie douche bags. They like all that cutesie stuff. Now a CD player... that’s got personality.

CUT TO:

Pete and Stu stand in an endless grove of trees. Pete scrapes the bark off a tree forcefully with a large branch. The branch leaves a large indentation on the tree.

STU
(quietly)
Hey Pete, come here.

Pete joins Stu behind a tree. Stu leans out and points.

STU
There’s a man out there.

In the distance, a SKINNY MAN shambles aimlessly through the forest. He pauses for a moment, looks up at the trees in a daze, and continues to drag his feet.
STU
What'd you think he's doing?

PETE
I don’t know but it’s not the doctor.
Lets move on.

LATER:

Pete scratches a mark into another tree and continues walking.

PETE
Dr. Romero!

STU
Hey Doc!

Pete stops.

STU
Why'd you stop?

PETE
Shh!
(in a whisper)
Listen...

STU
(in a whisper)
I don't here anything.

PETE
Dr. Romero?
(a beat)
Sorry, I thought I heard something.

Pete and Stu continue walking. The crackling of twigs and leaves is heard nearby and Pete stops again.

PETE
(in a whisper)
Dr. Romero?
The noise continues. Both appear unnerved.

    STU
    (in a whisper)
    I don’t think that’s him.

    PETE
    (in a whisper)
    Me neither... Stay absolutely still. If it’s an animal, it’ll chase you if you try to run.

Stu nods. The noise continues briefly and from behind a tree, Dr. Romero emerges wheezing noisily. His face is ghostly white.

    PETE
    (exhales)
    Dr. Romero, are you okay?

Dr. Romero stretches out his arms as Pete approaches him. With surprising force, he grabs Pete by the throat with both hands, choking him.

    PETE
    (choked)
    What are you doing.

Pete grips Dr. Romero by the forearms, attempting to remove his hands from his throat. Dr. Romero holds strong. He opens his mouth and leans in towards Pete.

    PETE
    (choked)
    Help.

Stu runs to Dr. Romero. The doctor grabs him by the shirt and shoves him hard to the ground. Dr. Romero jerks Pete’s arm towards his face and sinks his teeth into his flesh.

Pete screams in agony as Dr. Romero removes a ragged piece of flesh from below his wrist.
Stu grabs the crazed doctor in a headlock and hurls him against a tree face first, breaking his nose. He turns just as Stu grabs him by the head and slams it against the tree until he collapses into unconsciousness.

Stu stares at the sprawled figure at the base of the tree.

STU
Pete... Tell me what the fuck just happened.

Pete screams. Stu turns to see him writhing on the ground cradling his wounded arm.

STU
Oh shit!

Stu tears a strip of cloth from the bottom of his shirt and runs to Pete.

STU
Let me see it!

Pete reluctantly surrenders his arm. Stu wraps it tightly with the cloth. Stu places an arm under Pete’s opposite shoulder and lifts him to his feet.

STU
We have to get you to a hospital.

EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

Stu appears on the campsite supporting a pale-faced Pete. Sam and George emerge from the main tent.

SAM
Holy shit, what the fuck happened?!

Sam and George race towards the two.

STU
We have to get Pete to a hospital right now!
SAM
What the fuck happened?! Did an animal do this?!

PETE
(sputtering)
The doctor.

SAM
The doctor?

GEORGE
What?

STU
Your dad attacked Pete.

GEORGE
What’d you mean he attacked Pete?

STU
We found your dad in the woods. Pete tried to help him and he bit a piece of his arm out.

GEORGE
My dad would never do something like that to anyone. You guys must have done something that forced him to defend himself.

PETE
(weakly)
Why are we still here?

STU
George, we don’t have time for this. We have to get Pete to a hospital.

GEORGE
First, just tell me where my dad is then we can leave.
(a beat)
STU
He was trying to hurt Pete. I grabbed him off and threw him against a tree. He tried to come after me and...

GEORGE
And what... And what?!

STU
I think I might have killed him.

GEORGE
What?

STU
I think... I think your father’s dead...

GEORGE
What makes you think he’s...

STU
I... well... he took some pretty hard blows to the head...

GEORGE
Oh my God... you... oh my god...

George places his face in his hands and begins to breath heavily through his fingers.

STU
Look, it was an accident. I didn’t mean for...

George lunges at Stu and grabs him by the shoulders. As a result, Pete falls to the ground. Sam rushes to his side and lifts him to his feet.

GEORGE
A fucking accident?! You killed my father, you son of a bitch!
SAM
He’s alive!

Dr. Romero has appeared behind them. His face is smeared with blood.

GEORGE
(to Stu)
You lucky bastard.

George drops Stu and starts towards his father.

GEORGE
Dad, are you okay? What happened to you?

STU
Don’t go near him, George!

GEORGE
Shut up! Dad, these guys are saying...

Dr. Romero dives at George, knocking him to the ground. He bears teeth stained with Pete’s blood.

GEORGE
Oh God, it’s true.

Dr. Romero brings his head down and clamps his teeth shut on air inches from his son’s face. Stu has grabbed him in a chokehold.

With one hand, Stu holds up his chin so he cannot bite. George stands facing his father who snarls and gnashes his teeth. George shuts his eyes and grits his teeth.

GEORGE
Sorry, Dad.

George plants a fist squarely on Dr. Romero’s broken nose. Stu releases him and he topples to the ground. Bile dribbles out of his mouth. George looks at Stu in utter disbelief.
STU
You believe me now?

GEORGE
Yeah.

STU
We have to tie him up.

SAM
That's the smartest idea I've heard all day.

GEORGE
Come on, you guys. He's already knocked out.

Dr. Romero is rolled onto his belly. Sam removes his belt and binds his father's hands behind his back while Stu binds his feet.

GEORGE
Guys, come on.

STU
What's the plan, George?

GEORGE
I-

STU
What's the plan? We got to do something about this mess and seeing as this expedition shit is your area of expertise, I'd recommend you come up with something...

GEORGE
Alright, here's the plan. First, we're going to take Pete to the hospital. Then we're going to take my dad to the labs. He's been stung by an insect. Once the other scientists have him, they'll be able to find out what's wrong with him and hopefully how to cure whatever it is.
George slips his arms under his father’s armpits and lifts him upright.

SAM  
I’m not sitting next to him when he wakes up.

GEORGE  
Don’t worry, he’s sitting next to me. Now let’s get out of here.

INT. CAR – DAY

George starts the car. Dr. Romero is slumped beside him in the passenger seat and the others sit in the backseat.

STU  
This place is officially not our problem anymore. I’ve had just about as much of it as I can take.

SAM  
I’m going to have to second that. Law school and my dad lecturing me about the American Dream is better than people getting fucked up in the woods.

The car speeds away from the campsite on a dirt road.

EXT. FOREST – ROAD – DAY

The car moves steadily along the road through the forest.

INT. CAR

SAM  
Yep, all in all, this turned out to be a pretty fucked up day.

STU  
It could be worse. At least we’re finally on our way.
GEORGE
How’s Pete doing?

Pete has passed out.

STU
Like I said, could be worse.

Dr. Romero awakens and hurls himself out his seatbelt and onto George, causing the car to lean sharply to the left. George jerks the steering wheel to the right, inadvertently sending the car off the road and into the forest.

The car jerks side to side as George madly dodges trees with Dr. Romero collapsed on top of him. George eventually manages to turn the car sharply enough to throw the doctor against the passenger seat window.

GEORGE
Oh shit!

The car slams hard into a large tree sending Dr. Romero careening through the dashboard. He slams against the tree and lands with a heavy thud on the distorted hood. He proceeds to spasm violently, spewing blood-tinged bile in all directions then he goes still.

INT. CAR – DAY

Sam awakens in a daze.

SAM
(disoriented)
Where are we? What happened?

He brushes his hand through his hair and removes it with blood on his fingers. George awakens unscathed; the front seat air bag has softened the blow of the crash.

GEORGE
(disoriented)
Where...

Through a gaping hole in the dashboard, George sees his father lying dead on the hood of the car.
EXT. FOREST – CRASHSITE – DAY

Dr. Romero’s body is laid on the ground. Stu removes the binds on his feet and George, the binds on his hands. He is turned over and his glasses are removed. George uses his shirt to wipe his face clean of filth.

George, Stu, and Sam proceed to use their hands to scrape away soil from the ground, eventually creating a large rectangular hole. They place the body inside the hole. George uses his fingers to close Dr. Romero’s eyelids.

He stands and tosses a handful of dirt onto his chest. George and the others then proceed to bury him. When Dr. Romero has been completely buried, a mock cross, constructed of two branches tied together, is placed at the head of the grave.

Stu places a hand on George’s shoulder.

STU
I’m sorry, man.

GEORGE
It’s not your fault. It’s nobody’s fault.

STU
What now?

GEORGE
Anyone have a working cell phone?

STU
No.

Sam shakes his head.

GEORGE
Then it looks like we have to go back to the cabin.
SAM
How far is that?

GEORGE
I’ve never had to walk there before. An hour, maybe less.

SAM
An hour in what direction, man?

George turns around. He raises a finger to point but lowers it before it even reaches his chest.

GEORGE
Where’s the road? We couldn’t have gone that far off.

SAM
What do we do?

GEORGE
I don’t know. If there were any tire tracks, I’d say follow them.

STU
Why don’t we just go in the direction opposite the car? It’s the most likely place we could have came from.

GEORGE
Works for me. Now there’s just one more thing we have to do.

STU
What’s that?

GEORGE
Pete’s going to be dangerous to have around with that wound. We have to do something about those rags or he’s going attract us some unwanted attention.
INT. CAR – DAY

A door opens. Pete looks up weekly.

EXT. FOREST – CRASH SITE – DAY

Pete lies on the ground. Stu removes the rag from his arm and hands it to Sam. Sam proceeds to dig a small hole in the ground and bury it. Stu tears another piece of cloth from his shirt and applies it to the wound.

STU
We’re ready to go.

Stu and Sam help Pete up to his feet and the four young men set off in the direction opposite the wreckage of the car. George stops and turns around.

GEORGE
Bye Dad.

George turns back and the group continues on.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

Stu and Sam support Pete who walks in short, lethargic steps. He moans with exhaustion.

SAM
What’s wrong, you need to stop? We have to keep moving. You might not make it if we stop.

Pete moans again. What little motion remains in his feet ceases and his legs drag on the leafy ground. Finally, his own weight overcomes him and he falls to the ground. He shivers in a fetal position.

PETE
(weakly)
Leave me.

STU
What?
PETE
I’m not going to make it.

Stu attempts to lift Pete who is uncooperative.

PETE
No.

STU
Look, if you want to die, there’s nothing we can do about that. But we sure as hell aren’t going to leave you here. If you’re going to die, it’s going to have to be with us on our way to the cabin.

PETE
I can’t...

Stu wraps his arms around Pete’s chest and lifts him upright.

STU
You’re coming with us whether you like it or not.

SAM
I don’t think he’s not going to make, Stu.

STU
I’m not leaving him unless he’s dead.

SAM
I’ve been meaning to bring something up. Shouldn’t we have come across the road by now?

STU
I would’ve thought it was obvious at this point that we aren’t going to find the road.

SAM
So we’re lost? Shit, man! We’re done!
SAM (CONT.)
All they’re going to find is what the wolves leave behind! Fuck!

GEORGE
Calm down, calm down! Yes, I think it’s safe to say we’re lost. But there’re still ways we can get out of here without the car. There’re a lot of campsites in this part of the mountains. We’re bound to come across some people willing to help us out.

SAM
What about the people who live here?

STU
Are you fucking kidding? Have you seen “Deliverance”? We don’t want to have anything to do with those people. Only thing worse than wolves is being found with our pants down and shotgun blasts in our skulls.

SAM
Oh shit, man!

STU
Calm down, man! You want these people to hear us?

Sam shuts up immediately.

GEORGE
The people who live here live alone and like it that way. Most of them probably don’t know a phone from a shotgun. Now look, lets keep moving. We’ve got to find a way out of these woods sooner or later.

SAM
And what if we don’t? What if we just keep going deeper into the woods?
GEORGE
Well, we’re not going to find out unless we keep moving and if Pete still has a chance to live, we should start moving now. The last thing we need is to be lost in the woods in the dark of night. Night is the one thing in these woods that’s always following you and never loses your scent.

CUT TO:

Stu alone drags an unconscious Pete through the forest as the four young men progress. Sam stops and turns to something that has caught his attention. He slowly approaches a tree and examines it.

SAM
Uh, guys...

The others stop and turn.

SAM
I think you better come take a look at this.

GEORGE
What is it?

The others join Sam around a tree smeared with blood. The blood has trickled down the bark creating a large pool at its base. More blood has speckled the leaves on the ground creating a trail off into the distance.

STU
I don’t think it’s the smartest idea to follow a trail of blood. This is the perfect place for someone to bury their dirty little secrets. Someone could have been attacked here and I don’t want to be following a trail of blood that could lead us to the attacker.

GEORGE
My guess would’ve be a deer.
STU
I’m not going any further in this direction. It’s not in my best interests to star in a real Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

SAM
You got to cut that shit out, man!

GEORGE
Fine. We’ll go this way.

George leads the others in a direction diagonal to the tree. Sam turns around and stares at the tree for a moment before following the others.

CUT TO:

George, leading the others through the forest, stops dead in his tracks.

SAM
What’s wrong?

The others gather around George who stares fixatedly at another spot of blood on the ground.

GEORGE
A deer couldn’t have made it this far without bleeding to death. I don’t know what’s going on here but I don’t like it.

The four young men proceed cautiously following the trail of blood. The trail grows thinner as they trace it until it vanishes completely. George scans the surroundings suspiciously.

GEORGE
What’s going on here?

Heavy breathing is heard nearby followed by a wet slurping sound, the smacking of lips, and a loud gulp. The apparent sounds of mastication continue in this pattern. All appear tense except for the incapacitated Pete.
SAM
(in a whisper)
Is it an animal?

STU
(in a whisper)
I don’t think so.

GEORGE
(in a whisper)
Everybody quiet.

George turns to a tree at his left.

GEORGE
(in a whisper)
I’m going to get to the bottom of this.

He grabs a branch on the tree and snaps it off loudly; the noises abruptly stop. A long silence passes and the noises resume. George’s eyes dart about the vicinity. He shakes the branch in his hand intently. Across from him, he spots another tree branch dripping with blood.

GEORGE
(in a whisper)
This way.

George ducks under the bloody branch followed by the others. The sounds grow louder along the way. George places his back against a large tree and motions for the others to come. George points behind the tree indicating the source of the noises.

George raises the branch above his head and slowly emerges from his cover behind the tree; the others follow. In front of them is the skinny man, from before, hovering over a large mass.

He raises his head to reveal a ghostly face with sunken eyes and blood dripping from its mouth. Below him is the body of a long dead man whose throat has been reduced to a gaping chasm of gore.
GEORGE
Oh my God.

The man rises to his feet and stares at George. Primal hunger glows within his eyes. George jabs the branch menacingly towards his face.

GEORGE
Stay the fuck back!

Without even a pause to acknowledge what George has just said, the man begins to walk slowly forward with his arms outstretched.

GEORGE
Not another step!

The man takes another step. George lays the branch hard upside his head. His head flops to the side but he continues forward.

George hits him again over the head; the man lunges at him with his mouth hanging open. George blocks the bite by catching the man’s mouth on the branch. The man bites deep into the branch and breaks off a piece.

GEORGE
Holy shit!

George lowers his weapon. Sam looks over his shoulder and his jaw drops in horror.

SAM
Oh shit!

GEORGE
What is it?!

SAM
We’ve got more company.

Three more ZOMBIES have appeared behind them. They are all deathly pale and paw towards the four young men hungrily.

George raises the branch in front of his chest, holding it
with two hands as a guard, and charges at the zombie in front of him, bowling him over. The zombie reaches for George’s leg but George kicks him in the face, knocking him out.

George
This way!

George and Sam run past the incapacitated man, followed by Stu who heaves Pete after them just quickly enough to evade the fiends. George stops as he realizes the entire area has become populated by ghostly figures. All of them shamble their way hungrily towards the four young men.

George
They’re fucking everywhere.

Stu
(breathless)
I don’t believe it. They’re fucking zombies.

George lifts his branch and rushes towards the oncoming zombies. He waves the branch about maniacally but to his surprise, several walk past him. He then realizes that they are all focusing on Pete.

George waves his branch, yells, and runs to the right into the forest. This catches the attention of several zombies who begin to pursue him but others continue to approach.

Sam has also realized their primary target. He runs in George’s direction screaming and waving his arms to stray the zombies away from Pete. Several zombies pursue but still several remain focused on their initial goal.

Stu
They’re not going to get you. You’re going to be okay. I’m not going to let them get you.

The zombies form a crude semicircle around their prey.

Stu
Stay the fuck back, you bastards!
STU (CONT.)
You’re not going to get him!

The zombies close in on the two young men. One zombie steps forward in front of the rest.

STU
You’re not going to get him, you hear?!
I’m not going to let him go!

The zombie grabs onto Pete.

STU
I’m not letting go!

The zombie bites into Pete’s throat.

STU
No!

The zombie tears a chunk of bloody meat from Pete’s throat. Blood gushes out of the wound sluggishly. Stu tears a piece from Pete’s shirt as the zombie pulls him out of his arms and on to the ground.

STU
Get away from him!

The zombies pay no attention to Stu as they crowd around Pete’s body.

STU
No!

The zombies proceed to feed upon Pete. They bite his body and tear away pieces of clothes and skin with their hands.

STU
(breathless)
No.

Several zombies begin to look up eying Stu as potential prey. Blood and gore dribbles from their lips. One zombie comes forward and grabs Stu. Stu shoves him hard to the
ground and kicks him in the face. He then takes off running past the others.

LATER

Stu dashes through the forest at astounding speed until he finally collapses in exhaustion. He then realizes he still carries the scrap of Pete's shirt in his hand. He stands up and ties the scrap to a tree branch.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Stu walks alone through the woods. A twig snaps and he stops. A rustling is heard nearby. Stu snaps a branch off a tree. The sound continues. Stu follows the sound a few feet and stops.

STU
Come out, you bastards... Come out!

SAM (O.S.)
(in the distance)
Stu?!

STU
Sam!

GEORGE (O.S.)
(in the distance)
Stu!

STU
George!

GEORGE (O.S.)
(in the distance)
Stu, keep talking!

STU
Guys, I'm right here! Follow my voice!

The rustling grows louder.

STU
Follow my voice!
SAM (O.S.)
(closer)
Stu, you’re getting louder!

Sam and George appear.

SAM
There you are. We thought you’d been killed.

GEORGE
Pete?

Stu shakes his head.

SAM
Shit.

GEORGE
Well, I guess now that’s there’s three of us, we should try to make sure we don’t lose anyone else. Let’s keep moving.

CUT TO:

The remaining three young men continue on through the woods.

SAM
Hey I think I see something?

STU
More of them?

SAM
No. Light.

In the distance, light glows through the trees.

GEORGE
I see it too. Let’s move.
EXT. RESIDENT CABIN - NIGHT

Hiding behind a tree, the disheveled young men behold a luminous cabin in the dark of the night.

GEORGE
We have to get inside that cabin. If these mountain people are as paranoid as they’re supposed to be, maybe they’ll let us inside if we explain what’s going on.

STU
Are you insane? They’re probably just as bad...

GEORGE
We’re better off taking our chances over there than out here. Come on.

Stu sighs and reluctantly follows George and Sam to the cabin. George raps loudly on the door. After several tries and no response, George opens the door.

INT. RESIDENT CABIN - LIVING ROOM

A pair of keys falls from the doorframe when the door is opened. George picks them up and places them back on the frame.

GEORGE
Hello? Anyone here? Hello?
(a beat)
I guess there’s no one here.

No sooner have the words left his mouth is heavy wheezing heard somewhere in the house.

SAM
Let’s go, George.

GEORGE
Wait.
The ZOMBIFIED RESIDENT emerges frothing at the mouth from a room on the left and marches directly towards George. George punches him in the face but to no effect; the zombie grabs him and brings him to the floor.

Sam strikes him hard on the back with a fire poker. The zombie turns and glares, his eyes burning with malice.

The zombie shambles towards Sam howling with rage. Sam strikes him repeatedly in the chest, also having no effect upon the madman.

The zombie lunges and Sam instinctively plunges the fire poker deep into his abdomen. Sam watches in horror as the zombie slowly wrenches it out of his torso and drops it to the floor.

The zombie grabs Sam and closes in for a bite. Stu brings the fire poker down hard upon his skull. The zombie moans, his eyes roll inside his head, and he crashes to the floor. The three young men gather around and stare at the felled creature with blood pooling around its head.

STU
Stay here. I’m going to check out the rest of the house.

Stu picks up the fire poker and exits the living room.

INT. DINING ROOM

There is a plate of cold eggs and bacon on the table. The floor is covered in bile and the splattered remains of an insect. Stu grimaces and exits.

INT. KITCHEN

The kitchen is a mess. Assorted pots and pans and shattered plates and glass cover the floor. Stu maneuvers carefully through the debris and exits.

INT. CORRIDOR

Stu walks forward and opens a door to reveal a bedroom. He walks further down the corridor and opens a second door on
the left to reveal a bathroom. He continues on to the end of the corridor.

INT. LIVING ROOM

STU
All clear.

SAM
Can we throw something over this guy? I can't stand to look at him anymore.

INT. BEDROOM

The three young men strip the top sheet off the bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The bed sheet is thrown over the zombie’s body. Blood seeps through the fabric.

STU
There. Now, from here, there’s got to be a way out of these woods.

GEORGE
We’re not going anywhere. It’s dark. We’re not safe out there. Looks like we’re stuck here until morning.

STU
Then we need to board up the house. If the zombies...

GEORGE
They’re not zombies, Stu, it’s the insects. They’ve turned everyone like this.

STU
Well, whatever you want to call them, if they find us here, they’re going to come straight through the windows. We
STU (CONT.)

have to board up the house. There has
to be a tool shed nearby.

The kitchen door is opened. Not far from the house is a
tool shed, enshrouded in shadows.

STU

Bingo.

INT. TOOL SHED

The tool shed is cramped and cluttered with equipment. There is a workbench against the left wall. Stu hands a hammer to both Sam and George, drops another into his pocket, and picks up a box of nails.

STU

Pick up all the boards you can carry.

INT. KITCHEN

Sam and George enter carrying several wooden boards. Stu drops three boards by the door and shuts it behind them.

STU

We'll board this door last so we can go back to the shed if we need anything more.

All three then proceed to nail two boards across the kitchen window.

INT. DINING ROOM

The three young men nail two boards across the dining room window.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Three boards are nailed across the front door.
INT. BEDROOM

Two boards are nailed across the bedroom window. Sam reaches for another nail on the night table. There are only three nails left in the box.

SAM
Shit, we don't have enough nails left for the back door. We have to go back.

EXT. RESIDENT CABIN – NIGHT

The three young men walk from the cabin to the shed.

INT. TOOL SHED

George reaches on the top shelf of the workbench and clasps his hand around a box of nails.

GEORGE
Let's go.

George throws open the shed door revealing the entire vicinity now populated by zombies.

GEORGE
Holy shit!

George slams the door shut and locks it. The door shudders violently as zombies bang at it from the outside. Stu removes an axe from against the wall.

SAM
What are you doing?

Stu hands Sam a large pickaxe.

STU
We're going to have to fight our way back to the cabin.

SAM
Shit.

Stu hands George a large shovel.
STU
If we don’t kill them, they’re going to kill us. We have to fight our way back.

Stu throws open the door and buries his axe into the skull of an oncoming zombie, splattering his face with blood. Stu steps out of the shed and swings the axe into a zombie to his left and then into one to his right.

Sam and George stand dumbfounded by this display. They too emerge from the cabin swinging their own weapons.

EXT. RESIDENT CABIN – NIGHT

Carnage ensues. Axes and shovel are thrown in all directions. Zombies are felled to the ground. The occasional head and limb is severed until the three young men have reached the cabin.

INT. KITCHEN

The three young men enter the kitchen looking like demons out of Hell; they are completely drenched in zombie blood. The kitchen door is shut, locked, and they immediately go to work boarding it up.

When they are finished, they turn to see three zombies shambling towards them in the kitchen. They pick up their weapons and start towards them; their actions are not seen but the sounds are heard in gruesome detail.

INT. LIVING ROOM

George and Sam sit on the couch staring blank faced at a large mass in front of them. The newly slain zombies have been wrapped in the bloodstained bed sheet with the first zombie that was killed.

INT. KITCHEN

Stu leans over the kitchen sink rinsing the blood from his hands, face, and neck creating a crimson spiral, which disappears into the drain.
INT. LIVING ROOM

Stu enters the living room, his face still slightly blemished red. He joins George and Sam on the couch. A long silence passes.

SAM
We just killed a whole bunch of people.

STU
It was us or them. We did what we had to do.
(a beat)

GEORGE
These are human beings, Stu—

STU
I didn’t see you showing them much compassion back in the woods or when we got here and one of them came out of the kitchen.

GEORGE
That was self-defense. What we just did was murder. These people are...

STU
These people are not the same people they once were and probably never will be again. I’m telling you, they’re...

GEORGE
I don’t want to hear anymore! These people are not zombies! There is no such thing as fucking zombies! This is madness!

STU
They look like zombies, they sound like zombies, they walk like zombies, and let’s not forget the insatiable taste for human flesh.
SAM
How do you know so much about zombies?

STU
I watch a lot of movies. Granted these are no ordinary zombies. If these were ordinary zombies, Pete would have turned into a zombie a long time ago. It doesn’t take much to kill these zombies either so they’re not the living dead, they’re just diseased, but they’re zombies just the same.

SAM
You know what, man? I think these people could be zombies.

GEORGE
I can’t believe we’re discussing this.

STU
Can you at least agree that they have zombie-like characteristics?

GEORGE
I agree that... no! This is a disease carried by insects, not zombies!

STU
We all know it’s the insects, George, but that doesn’t change anything. Now, if you can’t agree with us that these are zombies then can you agree that these people are sick, murdering bastards out for our blood?

(a beat)

GEORGE
Yes, I agree that these people are “sick, murdering bastards out for our blood” and not zombies.

STU
Good. Now we’re getting somewhere—
GEORGE
If you'll excuse me, I need to use the bathroom first.

George exits.

INT. CORRIDOR

George opens the door to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM

George locks the door behind him and vomits pale liquid into the toilet.

INT. LIVING ROOM

George is heard retching from the bathroom.

SAM
What's that?

The sound continues.

STU
George!

INT. CORRIDOR

Stu and Sam appear in front of the bathroom door. Stu raps on it forcefully.

STU
George, what's going on in there?

GEORGE (O.S.)
I'm fine. Leave me alone.

STU
You don't sound like you're fine to me. Open up.

GEORGE (O.S.)
No, go away.
George, if you don’t open up, I’m going to break this door down.

No response.

George, I’m coming in.

Stu backs up and charges at the door.

INT. BATHROOM

The door bursts open. George lies on the ground with his back against the toilet. He is pale and covered in vomit.

INT. CORRIDOR

Stu and Sam evacuate the bathroom and slam the door shut. Stu holds the doorknob.

GEORGE (O.S.)
What the fuck are you doing, guys?!

George bangs violently at the door.

Sam, get me a hammer, some nails, and three of those extra boards.

GEORGE (O.S.)
What?! No! Let me out!

SAM
Stu, don’t you think that’s a little—

STU
Do it now, Sam!

Sam exits.

When did this happen, George?
GEORGE (O.S.)
I don’t fucking know! Let me out and we can talk about... 

STU
We can’t let you out, George. You’re going to turn into one of them.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Stu, we can talk about this!

Sam returns carrying supplies.

STU
Sam, hold the door.

Sam puts the supplies on the floor and grabs the doorknob. Stu picks up a board and places it against the door.

STU
Hold this.

Sam holds the board in place. Stu picks up a hammer and some nails.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Stu, what are you doing?

Stu proceeds to nail the board in front of the door.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Stu, don’t you fucking board up this door!

STU
I’m sorry, George.

SAM
Wait a minute. Why don’t we just tie him up?

Stu stops.

GEORGE (O.S.)
Let me out, Stu!
STU
Okay.

Stu removes the board and opens the door.

INT. DINING ROOM

George sits in a chair as Stu and Sam bind his hands and feet.

STU
If you turn, we’re going to have to kill you.

GEORGE
Sounds fair.

STU
How did this happen, George?

GEORGE
I don’t know...

STU
Think.

GEORGE
Stu, I...

STU
Think!

GEORGE
Okay!

(a beat)
When we came back in here, we were all covered in blood laced with insect venom. It was bound to happen to someone.

SAM
You mean we could all be infected?!

STU
I think if we were infected, we’d both
STU (CONT.)
be puking our guts out just like him.

SAM
How do you know?!

STU
This disease acts fast.
(to George)
So blood's your answer?

GEORGE
Makes sense, doesn't it?

STU
It's good enough for me. Now we've got more important things to discuss. And in your case, George, extremely important.

Stu and Sam sit down. Stu picks up the plate of food and drops it on the floor.

STU
Okay, we're in a cabin in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by zombies.

George groans.

STU
I thought we went through—

GEORGE
Yeah, I'll shut up.

STU
Okay. Now, does anyone have any ideas how to get out of here.
(a beat)
Don't all jump at once.

SAM
Why don't we lure all the zombies inside the cabin and climb out through the top of the chimney.
GEORGE
You know how hard it's going to be to all of them inside this cabin at once? And besides, none of us are going to fit up that chimney.

STU
Any other ideas?
(a beat)

SAM
Well, you're the movie guy. How'd they do it in the movies?

GEORGE
You want us to use zombie movies to get out of here?

SAM
Well, yeah...

STU
Works for me. Let's start with the basics. What does basically every character in a zombie movie use or try to use to escape from zombies?

SAM
Like... a big gun or something?

STU
A mode of transportation. In Fulci's "Zombie", they use a boat, in Romero's "Dawn" and "Day"—

Sam turns to George, awestruck.

GEORGE
It's just a coincidence.

STU
(clears throat)
In Romero's "Dawn" and "Day Of The Dead", they use helicopters. Obviously we don't have those kinds of things but
STU (CONT.)
something we could have is a car. Do we have a car?

Sam peers through the boards of the dining room window.

SAM
All I see is zombies.

STU
Check the bedroom. I’ll check the kitchen.

Stu and Sam exit briefly then return.

SAM
Zombies everywhere.

STU
Okay, here’s another idea. In “Dawn Of The Dead”, the characters manage to lure zombies towards them by banging on the shop windows in the mall. If we can make enough noise to lure all the zombies towards the front of back doors, we can kill them one by one as they try to get inside the cabin.

GEORGE
Again, you know what it’s going to take to lure all of them towards the cabin? And even if we do, if they get inside, we'll be trapped like rats. We’re better off fighting our way out.

SAM
Why don’t we just wait for help. We can start a fire in the fireplace to let people know we’re here.

GEORGE
What makes you think there’s anyone out there looking for us?
STU
Sam's got a point. Pete said the insects migrated. They've turned everyone in the mountains into zombies. If they've made it to the city, there have to be people out there trying to fight the problem.

GEORGE
And how are we supposed to if they're people out there fighting the problem?

STU
"Night Of The Living Dead" is the answer to that. In that movie, the characters used a radio to keep track of what was going on outside.

GEORGE
Do we have a radio?

SAM
Lets look for one.

INT. BEDROOM

Stu and Sam search through the night table and dresser drawers. Sam opens the closet door.

INT. CLOSET

Assorted items are stored on a single shelf and on the floor. Amongst the items on the shelf is a portable radio.

SAM
Found a radio.

Sam removes the radio from the shelf.

SAM
There's something else here too.

Stu appears to see what Sam has found. Propped in a corner behind a fishing rod is a hunting rifle.
INT. DINING ROOM

Stu places the hunting rifle and a box of bullets on the table.

GEORGE
Where’d you find that?

STU
Bedroom closet.

SAM
Same place we found this.

Sam places the radio on the table and raises a flimsy antenna.

SAM
Lets see if it works.

Sam switches the radio on. Static issues from the speakers. He turns a dial but the sound remains the same. He turns the dial several more times. The static does not waver.

SAM
Hold on.

Sam twists the dial once more. Country music emits from the speakers in poor quality. Sam finally switches the radio off.

GEORGE
No one in the city fighting would’ve come up here anyway.

STU
Dammit, this is going nowhere. Listen, if no one can come up with a decent idea on how we’re going to get out of here, it looks like we’re going to have to fight our way out.

SAM
We can shoot our way out. We can shoot all the zombies through the windows
SAM (CONT.)
then leave, no problem.

STU
I don't think we have enough bullets
to do that.

SAM
Then I got nothing.

STU
George. Any ideas?

GEORGE
Nothing.

STU
Then it looks like we're fighting.

GEORGE
I suggest we wait until morning then.

STU
You could be one of them by morning.

GEORGE
Then I guess I'll just be one more of
them for you to kill.

STU
Glad we understand each other. Sam, you
and I will take turns keeping watch
until morning. When that door opens
tomorrow, we're going to come out
fighting like demons out of Hell.
George, if you're still with us by
then, you can join us. Sam, I'll take
first watch. We switch off every hour.

EXT. RESIDENT CABIN – DAWN

The sun rises over the cabin. The zombies stare mesmerized
by the glowing orb.
INT. DINING ROOM

George lies fast asleep still bound to the chair. His face is ashen and his lips are tinged blue. He chokes and regurgitates onto the table. Sam enters and stares at George with concern.

    GEORGE
    (sputtering)
    I'm not one of them yet.

Morning shines in between the boards in the window. Sam peers through the window and his eyes widen.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Stu lies asleep on the couch. Sam rushes to him and shakes him impatiently.

    SAM
    (excitedly)
    Stu, get up! Get up!

Stu awakens immediately alert as if he had not been sleeping.

    STU
    What is it?

    SAM
    We don't have to fight our way out of here after all!

    STU
    What are you talking about?

    SAM
    We have a way out! Follow me!

Stu follows Sam into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM

Sam leads Stu to the window.
SAM
Look outside!

Stu looks out the window to see a red pickup truck tipped on its side not far from the cabin.

STU
Holy shit, we have a truck!

George moans. Stu turns to see him with foam dripping sluggishly from his jaw.

STU
How's he doing?

SAM
He's still with us.

STU
Help me untie him.

Stu unties the binds on George's feet while Sam unties the binds on his arms.

STU
How're you doing? Can you stand up? Can you walk?

GEORGE
(weakly)
I think so.

STU
It looks like we'll be able to get you out of here. We'll take you to the labs and they can find out what's wrong with you and how to cure it just like you said.

Stu takes a seat.

STU
Okay, here's the plan.

Sam takes a seat.
STU
In "Night Of The Living Dead" they specifically note that zombies, when in groups, can overturn a car. That means one of us has to lead the zombies to the truck and get them to flip it right side up by standing on top of it. Then that person has to start the truck and come back for whoever stays behind. The keys we found when we got here should go to the truck. Unfortunately, we'll have to assume we have enough gas to get us out of here but that's the plan.

SAM
Wait a minute, which one of us is going to go?

STU
Lets find out.

Stu puts out a fist. Sam, understanding, does the same. Stu and Sam play rock, paper, scissors. Stu beats Sam with a rock.

SAM
Shit.

STU
Sorry, man.

SAM
Come on, bro—

STU
Dude, you lost. Sorry, man. You got to—

SAM
Best two out of three.

STU
Stop being a pansy—
Hey man. Pansies are fucking soldiers. They stay out all winter and never wilt—

Fine. Then make like a pansy and get that car.

Sam’s face droops.

Alright.

Once you get in sight of the window, I can take out some of the zombies for you with the rifle.

Sam holds a shovel in his hands. Stu removes the pair of keys from the doorframe and gives them to Sam. They then proceed to remove the boards from the front door.

Sam stands in front of the bare front door.

Before he sent my ass to law school, my dad said make something of myself.

Make him proud, man.

Are you kidding? My dad’s a fucking asshole.

Here goes.

The front door flies open and Sam emerges wielding the shovel.
INT. LIVING ROOM

Stu shuts the door behind Sam and locks it.

INT. DINING ROOM

Stu loads the rifle and smashes out the glass in the window. Sam appears slicing zombies left and right. Stu takes aim.

EXT. RESIDENT CABIN

Zombies begin to fall to the ground as Stu shoots them down. Sam reaches the truck and climbs onto its side. Shovel in hand, he crouches down to the door and removes the pair of keys from his pocket.

Zombies have collected on both sides of the truck and have proceeded to rock it back and forth. Holding on to the side of the truck with one hand, Sam attempts to unlock the passenger door with the other door.

The zombies on the roof side of the car prevail and turn it over onto the zombies at its underbelly. Sam flies off the car, hits the ground hard, and rolls, dropping the shovel.

Keys still in hand, he rushes to the truck but trips on the shovel. The keys fly out of his hand and under the truck.

    SAM
    Fuck!

Sam picks up the shovel and darts towards the truck. A zombie laying crushed under the truck fumbles for Sam’s leg. Sam whacks its head with the shovel and crawls under the truck.

He grabs the keys and turns to see more zombies collected around the truck. They drop to their hands and knees and grope for Sam.
INT. DINING ROOM

Stu continues to fire at the zombies outside. The rifle eventually clicks. Stu reaches for more bullets and his hand finds an empty cardboard box.

STU
Shit, out of bullets. I have to go out and get him or he's not going to make it.

GEORGE
(strained)
I'm coming with you.

STU
Are you insane? Maybe you can walk but you're in no state to fight. You'll be killed.

GEORGE
(forcefully)
I said I'm...

STU
No, you stay here. We'll come back for you.

Stu quickly departs the room.

EXT. RESIDENT CABIN

Stu emerges from the cabin holding an axe. He starts slicing away at zombies in a path towards the truck.

He stops a few meters away from the truck and begins to yell and call attention to himself. The zombies pawing at Sam stand up and proceed towards Stu.

George throws open the cabin door holding a pickaxe. He immediately vomits and collapses to the ground. Zombies begin to descend upon him. One zombie sniffs at him and suddenly they all back away to continue lumbering around the cabin.
George stands up, looking confused, and proceeds to swing the pickaxe at the zombies who stare at him with equal confusion.

Sam emerges from under the truck and unlocks the passenger door. He tosses in the shovel and climbs in.

INT. TRUCK

Sam slams the passenger door and buckles himself into the driver's seat. Zombies pound at the driver side window. Sam starts up the car and slams his foot on the gas. He speeds towards Stu, crushing zombies in his path. He pulls up beside him and Stu opens the door.

SAM
Get in! Get in!

Stilling holding his axe, Stu climbs into the truck and slams the door. Sam pulls up in front of the cabin. George approaches it and hoists himself into the back compartment. The zombies surrounding him pay him no attention.

STU
Lets get the fuck out of here!

Sam speeds onto a road to the side of the cabin. George convulses violently in the back. He spews white liquid across the red metal surface.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

A car pulls into the campsite and three scientists in lab coats step out. One is blonde, one is fat, and one is bearded.

BLONDE SCIENTIST
Dr. Romero?

FAT SCIENTIST
Dr. Romero?

BLONDE SCIENTIST
Where'd they go?
BEARDED SCIENTIST
Something's not right here.

INT. MAIN TENT

FAT SCIENTIST
Dr. Romero?

The fat scientist throws open the flaps of the main tent. There is no one inside. The five bee-keeping suits lie strewn on the ground.

EXT. CAMPSITE

BEARDED SCIENTIST
His car's not here. Something's wrong.

EXT. FOREST – ROAD – DAY

The car speeds along a road through the forest.

INT. TRUCK

SAM
So what now?

STU
What do you mean, what now? We're taking George to the labs and then we're going home. That's what now.

SAM
That's not what I meant. I mean these mountains are full of zombies. Sooner or later, they're going to find their way to the city.

STU
You're forgetting about the insects. They could've already turned everyone in the city into zombies.

SAM
But what if they haven't? They could still be coming. The zombies could be
SAM (CONT.)
coming. We have to tell someone.

STU
Like who?

SAM
The police... The mayor... I don’t know.

STU
And tell them what? There’re a bunch of fucking zombies coming down the mountain.

SAM
Well... yeah, that sounds about right.

STU
They’ll never believe us.

SAM
We still have to tell them...

STU
The other scientists were supposed to be coming up here today. Once they find out Dr. Romero’s missing, they’ll tell the police. And if they encounter any zombies, they’ll definitely tell the police. And not just the police, they’ll tell others too. The National Guard. The Army maybe. And people will believe them. I mean, they’re scientists. People have to believe them.

Behind the glass frame behind Sam and Stu, George rises from the back compartment of the truck. He is a zombie. Stu spots him in the mirror.

STU
Sam!
EXT. CAMPSITE – DAY

The sound of leaves crunching is heard nearby.

BLONDE SCIENTIST
Dr. Romero?

A zombie lumbers onto the scene. He stretches his hands forwards and shambles towards the blonde scientist.

BLONDE SCIENTIST
Oh my God. Sir, are you alright.

The blonde scientist walks forward towards the zombie. It grabs him by the head and sinks its teeth into his face. The blonde scientist is brought to the ground screaming.

BEARDED SCIENTIST
Oh my God.

The bearded scientist backs away in horror as the zombie tears strips of flesh away from his victim and devours them voraciously. Another zombie appears behind the bearded zombie and bites into his shoulder.

The fat scientist emerges from the tent to witness the two zombies feeding in addition to a legion of zombies that has suddenly populated the area. It doesn’t take long for him to process the scene occurring before him. He immediately retreats back into the tent in fear.

INT. TRUCK

STU
Sam!

Sam spots George in the mirror.

SAM
Shit!

Sam slams on the breaks causing George to slam against the glass frame, shattering it. He speeds up sending George rolling to the back of the truck. Sam swerves violently on
the road throwing George back and forth against the walls of the back compartment.

George manages to reach the front of the truck and grabs Sam. Sam is pulled off the wheel, the car leans off the road and crashes into a tree.

George proceeds to pull Sam screaming out of the driver’s seat. Stu grabs onto Sam and attempts to pull him back inside the car. George bites deep into Sam’s throat.

Stu is sprayed with blood. He throws open the passenger door, grabs the shovel out of the truck, and runs into the woods as George proceeds to rip Sam to shreds.

INT. MAIN TENT – DAY

A dozen or so zombies enter the tent forcing the fat scientist into the back. With nowhere else to go, the scientist crawls under one of the tables. The zombies grope after him. The scientist eludes them by squeezing under the green tarp.

EXT. CAMPSITE

Outside, even more zombies greet the scientist. He screams and runs the length of the tent towards the car. He fumbles for the keys and manages to unlock the passenger seat door.

INT. CAR

The fat scientist dives inside the car only to be dragged out of it by several zombies that have grabbed onto his legs. He grabs hold of the passenger seat in an effort to stay in his sanctuary but a zombie bites his leg and the pain forces him to release his grip.

The fat scientist is dragged onto the ground screaming. The zombies descend upon him and begin to feed.

EXT. FOREST – ROAD – DAY

George raises his head from the bloody mess that once was Sam. His face is covered in blood and gore. He climbs out of the back of the truck and disappears into the forest.
EXT. FOREST – DAY

Stu hides behind a tree as George searches for his prey. As George approaches the tree, Stu jumps out from behind it and stabs George in the stomach with the shovel.

George waves his hands at Stu who slams him hard against a tree. George spews vomit onto Stu’s face causing him to howl in disgust.

Stu forces the shovel deeper into George’s body. George gurgles up blood. Stu yanks out the shovel and George collapses to the ground. Stu stands over him and raises the shovel over his head.

FADE OUT:

The sounds of Stu hacking madly away at George are heard over the black.

THE END