

# THE TRUNK

AN  
ORIGINAL  
SCREENPLAY  
BY  
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"Sooner or later, the problem of origin ends in mystery."  
Dr E. Cooley, Division of Parapsychology, West Coast University,  
California. USA

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**BLACKNESS**

SOUND OFF: of a loud hissing noise! The SOUND increases, becoming horribly 'high-pitched'. It's cut off to a muffled noise by a real loud metallic CLUMP! Somebody just this second slammed the trunk lid of a car shut.

SOUND OFF: of somebody breathing--heavily. Mixes with a tumult of frenetic, cumbersome THUMPS!

MIXES WITH--

The person, who shut the trunk, cries out a little as if *they're in pain!*

SOUND OFF: of hurried footfalls on cement. They stop. A car door opens--somebody's backside hits a leather seat. Car door SLAMS! A bunch of keys jangle in the ignition, car's engine turns over, catches and fires. The driver revs the vehicle's well-tuned engine. Driver drops the transmission into gear and floors the accelerator. The vehicle reverses...and stalls...

**DRIVER V/O**

*(speaks in a crisp English accent)*

Shit!

SOUND OFF: of the car re-starting. The transmission crunches into reverse, the accelerator nailed. After a couple of seconds a dull short squeal of tires sound on asphalt, driver changes to first gear, depresses the accelerator again. The vehicle's engine revolutions rapidly increase. A few moments pass...SOUND OF the driver winding down his side window. SOUND OF air rushing in to the car's interior. The driver's breathing eases a little.

The radio is switched on, rock music blares from the stereo speakers.

The driver changes the radio's frequency.

STATIC INTERFERANCE.

A local news channel reports local news. Frequency changes...STATIC INTERFERANCE. Gregorian chant music comes on.

Driver adjusts the frequency dial again.

(CONTINUED)

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STATIC INTERFERANCE. More rock/pop music BLASTS out from the speakers.

TIME CUT

SOUND OFF: of the car's engine approaching, beginning to lose revolutions, slowing to a steady tick over. A 1970s track plays from the vehicles' interior.

ENGINE NOISE MIXES WITH the cumbersome THUMPS resonating from the trunk--AS TIME DRAWS ON THE SOUNDS give way to the odd occasional periodic THUD.

FADE IN:

EXT. NEVADA. INTERSECTION RAIL CROSSING. DESERT--NIGHT

Waiting to cross the intersection's width is a jet-black 1976 Cadillac Seville, engine thrumming, headlights blazing, silhouette of the driver sat behind the wheel. Subtitles appear at the bottom of screen:

**1985. The Fall.  
Somewhere in Nevada...**

INT. CADILLAC

The driver is perhaps in his late thirties, early forties. He has an athletic build. He looks like he's been involved in a slapfight. He wears a dark grey-charcoal suit. Around his lower abdomen his white shirt has been ripped open, the bloodied wound dressed with a piece of gauze.

(The driver's name is KELLER...he has an edge to him.)

THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN: CLOSE UP: of the 'flashing' crossing lights on red.

As Keller waits he reaches into the glove compartment and grabs a carton of 'pain-relief' pills, pops the top off, consumes a mouthful.

He then reaches down into the passenger footwell and comes up with a bottle of Vodka. He pulls the cork off the bottle with his teeth, spits it out, downs several swallows, pours some of the alcohol over his bloody wound.

He winces.

SOUND OFF: From the TRUNK: a LOUD THUD resonates, followed by a group of heavier BLOWS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

SILENCE FOR A SECOND. Noises of slithery movement! MORE THUMPS!

EXT. NEVADA. CADILLAC DESERT--NIGHT

The thuds against the trunk interior are so violent they make the Seville's chassis and independent suspension shake.

INT. CADILLAC

Keller turns in his seat and stares at the rear seat's back rest with a stony expression on his face.

NOTE: There's a large, loaded up gear-bag perched crossways on the rear passenger seats.

From the trunk: silence, no more thudding. *No movement.*

EXT. NEVADA INTERSECTION RAIL CROSSING --NIGHT

HIGH and WIDE on the intersection as the crossing's WARNING BELLS begin to chime. A large freight train approaches, its metal wheels squealing on metal.

Air horns start honking.

The freight train tears through FRAME boxcar after boxcar, flatcars after flatcars---

Keller twists around to face the wheel. He impassively watches the massive locomotive race past and wind its way along the tracks and off into the distant outline of foothills.

-- finally the CABOOSE exits FRAME, red lights trailing.

The crossing's barriers rise-

A gas-guzzling MACK truck and tank trailer pulls up behind the Cadillac. The truck's driver sounds the MACK'S air-horns.

INT. CADILLAC

With a quick glance in the rear-view mirror Keller scowls at the MACK. He wedges the bottle into his lap and turns the radio volume up, dips the clutch, drops the gear stick and hits the throttle.

EXT. NEVADA INTERSECTION RAIL CROSSING--NIGHT  
The Cadillac races across the intersection--closely followed by the MACK rig--its big engine droning.

TIME CUT

EXT. DESERT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY-NIGHT  
Long winding desert road--in the distance, glowing pool of lights appear over a rise & fast approach: it's the '76 Cadillac Seville's headlights.

LOW ANGLE: as the--illuminated via dipped headlights--two-lane highway streaks through FRAME at over ninety feet a second.

HIGH & WIDE of the Seville as the vehicle speeds along the lonesome desert road. In the distance, on the horizon, is a halo of neon lights: a township!

INT. CADILLAC

As Keller drives he takes slugs from the bottle of Vodka. A few moments pass. Keller leans forwards, staring intently at something ahead.

SOUND OFF: a troupe of POWERFUL BLOWS sound from the trunk!

Keller ignores the noises...

Through the windshield, about two hundred yards away, up on the left hand side of the road is a collection of well-lit---via florescent-strip lights, steel and glass buildings.

The Seville draws closer. It's a lone gas station/shop and repair garage.

Keller activates the indicator lever, changes gear, spins the steering wheel a hard left...

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT

The Cadillac pulls onto the gas station's brightly lit forecourt.

The forecourt boasts four 'self-service' petrol pumps.

Keller parks beside the pump adjacent to, yet furthest away from, the Gas Stations glass entrance door.

He takes a few moments to look out of every window, scanning his surroundings.

Keller turns off the engine and exits the car.  
He walks stealthy across the forecourt.

A group of LOUD BLOWS hit the underside of the trunk.  
 Followed by the noise of (from inside the trunk)  
 something comparable to WATER lapping lazily against the  
 ledge of a jetty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller turns and unemotionally regards the Seville's trunk for a moment.

He twirls-in mid-step--and starts walking.

There's a sign hung on the entrance door to the station's shop that reads:

PUMP STATION & STORE OPEN  
 DOOR LOCKED  
 PLEASE USE KIOSK WINDOW

As Keller approaches he peers in through the premise's plate glass picture windows.

REVERSE ANGLE: of the gas station's shop doubling as an overnight convenience store. A youth, maybe sixteen to eighteen years of age sits behind the counter reading a textbook. He has a personal stereo plugged in his ears. He's dressed in a t-shirt and jeans. The youth doesn't appear to notice Keller pass by the windows.

Keller walks around the side of the gas station's shop to where a 'panelled' phone booth is attached to the wall. He picks up the receiver, wedges it between his ear and left shoulder, plucks his wallet out from an inside pocket.

Keller searches through his wallet's contents and quickly realises something: he's got no money. His wallet has been cleaned out.

### **KELLER**

(to himself)

Bitch! Only when you need it...

Keller slams the receiver into its cradle.

He walks around to the Kiosk window.

Keller's P.O.V. of his ghostly reflection in the pane in FOREGROUND--the youth, still sat behind the counter reading his textbook and listening to his walkman in the BACKGROUND. (The youth's name is Joel.)

Keller raps his 'caked with dried blood' fist against the Kiosk window.

**KELLER**

Hey, kid!

Goozed, Joel snaps up from his textbook, gets out of his chair and removes his earphones.

(CONTINUED)

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He regards Keller with a measure of uncertainty-- he tentatively approaches the Kiosk window.

(Joel is well meaning, naive seventeen-year-old boy. No match for this man.)

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

--You got a telephone in there I can use?

**JOEL**

There's a...there's a payphone on the wall round the corner here, sir.

**KELLER**

Yeah, I know. (pause) I got no bucket change...

**JOEL**

Well, I could give you some change outta the register, if you-'

**KELLER**

(interrupts him)

-That's a nice offer...but I got no bills either.

**JOEL**

-Oh...err-'

**KELLER**

Listen, kid, just open the door and let me in. Okay, all I wanna do is use the phone and then I'll be outta your hair. I'm heading for Salt Lake City so...when I get there I'll err...I'll wire you the money back I owe ya' for the call.

**JOEL**

That's not...that's not the problem, sir. It's not the money. The problem is I'm...I'm not allowed to let customers in here after nine. It's against the rules.

**KELLER**

Says who?

**JOEL**

My boss!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

Where's your boss?

**JOEL**

On holiday in Mexico!

**KELLER**

Then you've got no problem whatsoever. I'm certainly not gonna tell your boss that you let me in there---are you? My lips are sealed, kid. Swear to Christ!

SOUND OFF: From the Cadillac's trunk comes a progression of HEFTY THUDS!

Joel frowns, his attention drifts between Keller and the Cadillac.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

What's it gonna be, kid? You gonna let me in or what?

Joel stares at Keller. SOUND OFF: more THUDS hit the trunk's lid. Keller doesn't so much as flinch. He acts real casual, keeps his gaze on Joel and nothing else. Joel's expression says it all: 'Something creepy about this guy—and his car! I'm not letting him in here with me.'

Joel shakes his head "No".

**JOEL**

I can't let you in here, sir. I'm sorry. I'll get into heaps of trouble. I wanna help you but—'

Keller is not pleased, his eyes turn steely.

**KELLER**

(interrupts him)

-Anybody else in there I can talk to?

**JOEL**

Not really!

**KELLER**

You're on your own then, huh? Got the place all to your self?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

Not exactly!

**KELLER**

So who else is in there with ya'?

**JOEL**

The night supervisor!

**KELLER**

Really! Go and get him?!

**JOEL**

(squirms)

He's in the back office...he's err...he's busy...

**KELLER**

(doesn't believe a word)

If you're gonna tell a lie, kid, may as well tell a bunch...

LONG PAUSE. They stare at each other for a few moments. Keller takes a step toward the Kiosk. Joel instinctively takes a step back.

**KELLER**

You're all on your own, aren't ya'? Of course you are! You know what I would do if I was you? I'd open that door and stop bullshitting me. Cause I'm starting to lose my patience with you, and believe me, the last thing

in the world that you want *is for me* to become impatient with you...

SOUND OFF: THREE POWERFUL BLOWS resound against the trunk's underside.

Both Keller and Joel look at the Cadillac.

Joel peers around Keller. Keller quickly glances over his shoulder then fixes his gaze back on Joel.

**KELLER**

(*sternly*)

What's it gonna be? Are you gonna open that door for me... kid?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

Look, I can't help you. I'm really sorry. I can't let you in here, my boss would freak out if he knew I'd let you in. I'll lose my job, sir. I'll get fired--'

Keller sighs, lowers his head, turns away from the Kiosk, slips his right hand underneath the left side of his jacket, unsnaps the strap across the butt of a sidearm and-as fast as lightning--withdraws a well-oiled, 586'4 Smith & Wesson Revolver.

Keller spins back to face Joel. He places the gun's barrel flush against the pane, aiming right between Joel's eyes. Joel immediately stops talking and freezes.

**KELLER**

That's right. Now stand still! Don't you even dare think about making a fuckin' move! You make one move in there that I don't like, or make a sound that I'm not too keen on--

Keller thumbs the cocking hammer back. CLICK!

**KELLER**

--Then I'm afraid I'm gonna have to pull the trigger on this thing, and the next bullet to come out the end of this gun'll punch straight through the glass, and bury

itself in your stupid fuckin' melon head. And don't you think for a minute that I won't do it. Because I will have no hesitation! I've killed people far younger and far more intelligent than you.

Do you understand what I'm saying...kid?

Joel nods his head "Yes." He's frozen stiff, tears well up in his eyes.

**KELLER**

Are you clear?

Joel nods "Yes."

**KELLER**

Crystal?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Joel nods "Yes." He shakes with fear and starts to cry.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Good! Now, here's what we're gonna do: you do exactly what I say when I say it. Yes? (Joel nods "Yes.") Gooood! You're starting to get the hang of this already. You listen to me, and you listen to me very carefully. I have a problem out here that I need to resolve as soon as possible, and one of the ways you can help me do that is by letting me in there to use the phone. Yeah? You understand that?!

Joel nods "Yes."

**KELLER**

Okay. Where are the keys for that door?

Keller motions towards the entrance door.

**JOEL**

*(chokes back the tears)*

In a...in a drawer here... Underneath the...err...the counter...

**KELLER**

Get 'em! Really, really slowly...and then when I say, you move to the door-'

**JOEL**

(*blurts it out*)

--I don't have a lot of money in the register, mister. I...I don't wanna open the door... You're gonna...you're gonna ...kill me I know it...

**KELLER**

(*angry*)

I'm not gonna kill ya', for Christ's sake. I just wanna use the phone! Kid...Hey!-'

**JOEL**

(*hysterical; overlapping*)

---Bullshit! I've seen your face! I've seen your face! You're gonna kill me, I know it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

Kid, will you calm the fuck down. Just calm down! I'm not gonna do anything to you. Listen to me: I just need to use the phone, and that's it! I promise that I won't touch a hair on your head. Kid, hey, look at me, the sooner you let me in there the sooner I'll be gone. And the sooner this situation will be over for you. You can go back to reading your physics books and whacking yourself off to Penthouse magazine...(*Keller shrugs*)...whatever you want. (pause) I just need you to open that door.

**JOEL**

(*trembling voice*)

You won't...you won't hurt me?

**KELLER**

I give you my word.

**JOEL**

You promise?

**KELLER**

(*pissed off, feigning casualness*)

Yes, I promise. I also promise you that if you don't get that door open in the next five seconds, then I'll be forced to have to shoot you through the fuckin' glass. Now move!

For emphasis, KELLER SLAMS the barrel of the gun against the Kiosk window. CLINK!

Joel pulls a drawer open under the counter and fetches out a bunch of keys.

Keller motions with the gun.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Move to the door. Come on. Nice and easy.

Joel opens the counter's pass-through and walks to the glass entrance door.

OUTSIDE: Keller follows Joel, shadowing him; he keeps his gun trained on the teenager every step of the way.

Both men stare at each other from either side of the glass partition.

Joel falters, he starts crying in floods of tears, clear snot pours from his nose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

You're not...you're not gonna hurt me are you mister?

**KELLER**

I gave you my word didn't I!

**JOEL**

I let you in here...you're not...you're not gonna go back on it?

**KELLER**

No! I'm not gonna go back on my fuckin' word. Now open the door!

SOUND OFF: of a volley of POWERFUL THUDS come into earshot from the Cadillac's trunk.

CLOSE SHOT: of the girth of the trunk's lid, right at the moment a GROUP of THUMPS hit its underside with such ferocity that the smooth metal surface bends upwards...

Keller spins around and quickly scans the car's rear (keeps the gun aimed at Joel), he then swings back to face the entrance door.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

What are you waiting for, kid--Thanksgiving? Come on!

Joel tentatively unlocks the entrance door, pulls it open, and steps back. Keller immediately relaxes, allowing his right arm--along with the gun--to drop slack by his side.

After a moments hesitation Keller strides into the gas station's convenience shop.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME  
 Teenage boy and the gun wielding contract killer size each other up. The pneumatic elbow pushes the entrance door closed behind Keller. As soon as the door closes Keller reaches around and pulls on the keys left in the door lock and duly places them in his inside jacket pocket, his glare never leaves Joel as he does this.

SUDDENLY--like a striking Cobra, Keller charges forwards and grabs hold of Joel around his throat with his left hand and throws him up against a magazine rack. With his right hand, he brings the Smith & Wesson up and presses its barrel against Joel's left eyeball.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

Don't you ever fuckin' do that to me again!

Joel squeezes his eyes shut, tears run in lakes from under the lids and down his cheeks.

**JOEL**

(hardly audible)

I let you in...

**KELLER**

Yes, you did! But only after I withdrew my piece, and only after a bout of you bullshitting me! If you had just done as I asked in the first place, then none of this would've had to happen.

Keller yanks Joel forwards a step then throws him violently backwards, SMASHES his head against the magazine rack. Keller grips Joel around his neck, fingers digging into flesh.

Keller keeps the gun pressed against Joel's left eye. Joel keeps repeating 'You promised' over and over and blubbing unintelligible words.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(angry)

What? What are you saying? I can't...I can't understand a fuckin' word you're saying! STOP CRYING AND SPEAK UP!

**JOEL**

(whimpers)

You promised...

**KELLER**

--And from here on out it really does depend on you as to whether I keep my promise.

Keller whips around and scans the convenience stores opposite end. Irritated, he swings back to face Joel.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Where's the phone?

**JOEL**

It's behind the counter.

**KELLER**

Walk! Move!

(CONTINUED)

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Keller grabs the front of Joel's t-shirt and balls it up in his fist and yanks the teenager forwards.

Both gun-yielding hired killer and teenage boy meander across the convenience store, moving as fast as they are able. Keller keeps his gun pushed into Joel's face every single step.

They reach the counter and bash their hips against its side.

Keller takes his eyes off Joel for a second and scans the counter area for the phone. Looks back at Joel and locks on to him with an intense glare.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Where is it?

**JOEL***(tentatively points)*

Underneath the counter...under here...the phone-'

Keller lets go of Joel (keeping his firearm in the teenager's face, ready to spit) and reaches down behind the counter...

CLOSE SHOT: of Keller's hand feverishly snaking through a collection of objects underneath the counter. His hand SMASHES aside a stapler, a tube of pens and pencils, piles of notes-- before finding what he's searching for: the phone.

Keller grabs the phone and brings it up on top of the counter.

Joel looks as if he'll collapse at any moment. Keller pushes the Smith & Wesson further into Joel's face...

**KELLER**

Come on, kid, don't you fuckin' pass out on me.  
You stay standing! Stand just like that!

Keller rips the receiver from the cradle and wedges it between his ear and shoulder blade. He punches a number. Phone begins to ring...

...After five rings his call is answered by an answering machine.

(CONTINUED)

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**ANSWER MACHINE VOICE V/O***(from phone's ear-piece, filtered)*

Thank you for calling Rivera Shipping and Storage. Unfortunately, there is no one here at the moment to take your call. But if you'd like to leave your name and your number, we'll get back to you as soon as we can. Please speak after the beep

LOUD BEEP sounds.

**KELLER***(into phone)*

It's Keller. Intercepted your client... Different! Dangerous! Not what I expected. I now have your bullshit problem residing in the trunk of my car. I'm

not too happy about that. (a long pregnant pause) We need to talk. The situation's changed. I just wanna talk to Blascoe this time, nobody else. And in the words of your mother-tongue, my friend, Esto no es para mi! So, do me a favour because I'm super fly fuckin' pissed here! Call me back just as soon as possible on the following number. Which is-'

Keller pushes his gun further into Joel's eyeball, bending his head back at a sharp, uncomfortable angle.

**JOEL**

775-

**KELLER**

(repeats)

-775

**JOEL**

527-

**KELLER**

(repeats)

-527

**JOEL**

7190-

**KELLER**

(repeats)

-7190

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller hangs up.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(*sighs, speaks in a conversational tone of voice*)  
Kid, what's your name?

**JOEL**

It's err, Joel.

**KELLER**

Joel what?

**JOEL**

Joel Montelli.

**KELLER**

Well, Joel Montelli, looks like you and I are gonna have to spend some unscheduled time with each other. My name's Mr. Keller. I wish we could've met under better circumstances but (*he shrugs*)...here we are. It would seem I'm left waiting on a return call from my paymaster.  
*(pause)* You know what I really wanna do right now, Joel?

Joel shakes his head: "No."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

I wanna re-holster my gun. I don't wanna stand here with this pistol stuck in your face for half the night. And I don't think that you want *my gun stuck in your face* for half the night, either, do ya? So, here's the thing, I put away my gun, and you don't give me any reason...you don't give me any 'just cause' to un-holster it again tonight---yes?

Joel nods his head "Yes."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Excellent! From here on end, no fuck ups, Joel. No shit. No funny business. No lies. Nothing! Anybody arrives at this gas station while I'm still here; you behave perfectly natural towards them! Your life depends on it, Joel. If I get the slightest inclination that you're up to no good, if I suspect for minute that you're not trying hard enough...

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CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Then I'll withdraw my piece for the second time tonight, and second time around I'll start shooting and the blood'll start flying. Do you understand, Joel?

Joel nods "Yes."

**JOEL**

(*after a heavy swallow*)

Crystal.

**KELLER**

Fabulous! You can stop crying now. Cause you have nothing to cry about. I'm keeping my promise.

Keller slowly takes the gun away from Joel's face.

He gently clicks the cocking hammer back with his thumb.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

I'm not gonna shoot ya'. See.

Keller takes a step away from Joel and slowly holsters his revolver.

OUTSIDE--SOUND OFF: several loud THUDS hit the trunk's underside.

Keller turns to look out through the picture windows. He regards his stricken car for a second, then turns back to Joel.

Joel wipes the tears and snot from his face with the heel of his hand.

They stare at each other for a few moments.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

You got any coffee here, Joel?

Joel gives Keller a dubious look mixed with a frown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

EXT. GAS STATION FORECOURT NIGHT---LATER  
The Cadillac shakes and bounces slightly on its suspension.

SOUND OFF: of movement within the trunk. It sounds like a giant bar of soap is being pushed across a piece of sandpaper.

That sound suddenly stops. SOUND OFF: of a faint HISSING NOISE emanating (like a pressurised air hose) from inside the trunk

CLOSE SHOT: below the rear fender--as intense, ferocious scratching sounds start up.

A hairline crack splits the chassis open and opaque black fluid begins to pour through, slowly at first, then faster and faster.

CRANE DOWN TO LOW ANGLE: of the CRUDE OIL-LIKE LIQUID forming a thick black puddle on the forecourt's white cement floor.

INT. STAFF KITCHEN GAS STATION NIGHT-SAMETIME  
Joel fetches a mug down from inside a cupboard, fighting the tears, with shaky hands he sets to fixing Keller a cup of coffee.

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT-SAMETIME  
Keller stands, half in and half out of an oblong corridor.

His back is pressed against a doorjamb. Keller has positioned himself in the doorway that leads out to the convenience store

There are two doors situated along the corridor's left hand wall. One is open (that door leads into the Staff Kitchen) the other is closed. At the opposite end of the corridor is a set of double doors with reinforced glass panels in them.

SOUND OFF: of Joel clattering around in the Staff Kitchen.

Keller continually flips the lid open on his Zippo-lighter, snatches the flint, illuminates the flame then snaps the lighter's lid closed.

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After a few moments Keller pockets his Zippo and decides to make conversation.

**KELLER**

How long you worked here, Joel?

**JOEL V/O**

I started in the summer. A couple of months ago...

**KELLER**

Are you at college?

**JOEL V/O**

No. Not yet, but I'm planning on going as soon as I finish up at school.

**KELLER**

Good for you. What're gonna study?

**JOEL V/O**

I'm sorry?

**KELLER**

(*raises his voice*)

I said: what are you gonna study?

**JOEL V/O**

I wanna be a Construction Engineer. Design bridges, that kinda stuff.

**KELLER**

Uhmm-hmm... Sounds good to me! You live near here, Joel?

Keller ambles up to the double doors at the end of the oblong corridor—as he goes—

INT. STAFF KITCHEN GAS STATION NIGHT—SAMETIME  
--Keller quickly peers in at Joel through the open kitchen door (Joel has his back to Keller, he doesn't see him pass by)

**JOEL**

Not far. Just in the town down the way from here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT—SAMETIME  
Keller reaches the double doorway and peers through one of the narrow panes.

**KELLER**

What's through these doors, Joel?

**JOEL V/O**

That's the Tool Shop...it's closed and locked over the weekend...I err...I don't have any keys...

**KELLER**

*(sotto, to himself)*

Who said anything about keys? *(pause)* What's that...looks like you've got a flashy car under the tarpaulin way down there?

Joel emerges from the Staff Kitchen.

He walks up behind Keller with a cup of steaming coffee in his hand.

**JOEL**

That's the boss's pride and joy.

Keller turns around to face Joel.

**JOEL**

It's a Jaguar sports car.

**KELLER**

Judging from the shape...I'd say it's an E-Type, yeah?

**JOEL**

I think so.

**KELLER**

*(motions to the cup)*

Is that for me?

**JOEL**

This is for you.

**KELLER**

Thank you.

Keller relinquishes the mug of coffee from Joel. As he does so Joel flinches back a step.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

You don't have to be afraid of me. I'm not gonna hurt ya'.

Keller sips his drink.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Not unless you make me.

Joel nods 'Yes.' His gaze rolls down on to Keller's WOUNDED lower abdomen.

**JOEL**

(indicates to Keller's wound)

What happened?

**KELLER**

(lying)

I got into a fight with my girlfriend. (decides to tell the truth) I was thrown through a plate glass window earlier this evening.

Joel stares at Keller, uncertainly.

SOUND OFF: out on the two-way comes the drone of a car approaching, engine slowing.

Keller and Joel break off from their staring at one another and focus on the noise of the vehicle.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Sounds like a paying customer.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME  
A brand new 1984 black Ford Mustang Convertible speeds on to gas station's forecourt and screeches to a halt beside the Kiosk window---

The driver, maybe a little older than Joel, switches off the engine and leaps out. He's wearing a pair of black trousers, a heavy padded jacket, and a bandanna over his head. A blonde haired girl exits from the vehicle's passenger side. She looks to be maybe seventeen, eighteen years of age--she's very PRETTY.

The couple make their way toward the Kiosk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

(The guy's name is Baterman. The girl's name is Annabelle.)

**BATERMAN**

(*shouts up*)

Hey, Joel! Hey, Joel...you in there?

Baterman raps his knuckles against the Kiosk window.

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT—SAMETIME

**JOEL**

(*worried*)

Oh no.

**KELLER**

(*concerned*)

What? Who is that?

**BATERMAN V/O**

(*shouting*)

Come on. Come on, Montelli. My lady friend and I require a little service out here! (pause)

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT—NIGHT—SAMETIME

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

--Joel come on, man!

Baterman bangs on the Kiosk window again.

Annabelle takes an interest in the Cadillac.

**ANNABELLE**

(*distracted*)

Maybe he's using the rest room.

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT—SAMETIME

Keller glares at Joel, places his index finger over his lips, motioning for Joel to keep his voice down.

**KELLER**

(*quietly, angry*)

You know these people?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

Yeah. It's Phil Baterman. We know each other from school.

**BATERMAN V/O**

(yelling)

--Joel, what're doing...taking a dump or what? Come on, man!

**KELLER**

Tell him you'll be right out.

**JOEL**

(shouts out; panicky)

I'll be...I'll be right out. Just give me a second here.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME

**BATERMAN**

(yells back)

About time! What the fuck are you doing? I thought you were gonna leave us stuck out here all night, Montelli.

Baterman remains positioned by the Kiosk window.

Annabelle takes a few steps towards the Cadillac. Annabelle's P.O.V. of the parked vehicle--whatever inhabits the trunk remains quiet and motionless for now! Annabelle's gaze drops to the twin streaks of BLACK CRUDE OIL-LIKE LIQUID running along the ground towards the gas station--two long black snake trials staining the cement.

Annabelle frowns and then walks back to the Kiosk.

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT-SAMETIME

**JOEL**

(speaks in a whisper) Mr. Keller, they'll just buy a few things and leave. I know it. If you just let me ser-'

Joel turns away, Keller steps forwards and grabs Joel's forearm, yanks him around on his heels to face him. In his haste Keller drops his mug of Coffee...

LOW ANGLE: of the mug hitting the floor and shattering apart--splashing coffee over the tiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

I want them gone, Joel! In the next five minutes.

**BATERMAN V/O (CONT'D)**

*(shouts up)*

What was that?

Keller pulls Joel really close so they're almost nose-to-nose.

**KELLER**

Are you still crystal? I want them *gone!* Just get rid of them! Don't mention me.

Joel, once again, is half scared to death.  
He nods "Yes."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Because if they're not gone in the next five minutes-  
(his right hand feeds underneath his left lapel)-then you know what will happen. Don't fuck up, Joel! Your life and the lives of your friends depend entirely on you now.

**BATERMAN V/O**

*(shouts out)*

Montelli! Hurry it up a little why don'tcha?

**KELLER**

Five minutes.

Joel breaths shallow courtesy of his 'new-found' abstract fear. He nods his head "Yes."

**BATERMAN V/O (CONT'D)**

*(yells)*

Joel?

**KELLER**

Set your watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN V/O (CONT'D)**

(yells)

Come on! What are we waiting for?

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

You get rid of them...or I will! (pause) Go!

Keller releases his grip of Joel's forearm.  
Frightened and dazed, Joel lumbers his way down the corridor like a man taking a slow walk along death row.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME  
Joel slowly enters the convenience shop, closing the door behind him. He looks terrible, his eyes blood-shot and his cheeks blotchy.

Joel comes to a standstill, staring at Baterman and his girlfriend like a zombie.

Baterman and Annabelle peer at him through the Kiosk window.

**BATERMAN**

Heeey...Here he is! About time! Jesus Christ, Montelli, you trying to get yourself fired or what?! What the hell were you doing-' (he clocks Joel's lack of poise)  
Joel, what the hell's the matter with you?

**JOEL**

Nothing!

**BATERMAN**

(he repeats)

Nothing? Whatdda mean: nothing! Look at you! You look like you've been crying.

**JOEL**

I haven't been crying. I just got some cleaning chemical in my eyes, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN**

Yeah! Well, I got a Rhino's dick, Montelli! You fuckin' liar.

Bateman starts to laugh. Annabelle playfully hits his shoulder.

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

Can we get some service...please? That is, after all what you're here for, ain't it?

Joel nods "Yes." He moves in between the pass-through, closes it, and walks up to the Kiosk window.

**JOEL**

(deadly serious)

What do you want, Bateman?

All signs of sarcastic humour disappear from Bateman's face. Anger and resentment stretch across his features instead, now he really glares at Joel.

**BATERMAN**

What do I want?! A pack of Pall Malls would be good for a start off, Montelli. And you better be quicker serving me my smokes than you were getting up to this window.

(pause) Here...pansy-boy!

Bateman, indignantly, throws a couple of dollars down on the pass tray and flicks the money underneath the Kiosk window. The bills coasts across the tray's steel smooth surface--

Joel relinquishes the money, turns about face and grabs a packet of cigarettes, pushes the Pall Malls through to Bateman. After staring at Joel for a long moment, Bateman picks up his cigarettes.

Joel turns away from the Kiosk and begins to work the cash register. Annabelle looks over at the Cadillac...

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME

**ANNABELLE**

Whose is the Caddy, Joel?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

It's just a customer's. He dropped it off here earlier.

**BATERMAN**

What's wrong with it?

**JOEL**

*(flustered, he snaps at Baterman)*

I don't know! It got left here for the guys in the Tool Shop to look at on Monday morning. That's all I know!

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP-SAMETIME

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

What the hell is the matter with you?

**JOEL**

Nothing's wrong with me.

**BATERMAN**

Yes, there is! You look like shit, Joel! You look like somebody pushed you through a ringer--

**JOEL**

--Nothing's wrong with me! I just don't feel too good that's all. Now, if you've purchased everything you're gonna...I really need for you two to go-'

**BATERMAN**

--Go fuck yourself, Montelli! You don't tell me what to do! Besides, we're not going anywhere until you tell me what's going on around here!

At that very moment, the door leading out into the corridor opens slightly, just an inch or so from the jamb.

Joel spins about face and stares fearfully at the door. Beads of sweat form on his forehead. He's half scared to death now.

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

Oh Christ!

Joel swings back to face Baterman and Annabelle. He quickly glances at his watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

You gotta go now! You have to go right now! Please...

**BATERMAN**

No way! There's something fuckin'-A loony about all this! I already told ya': I'm not going anywhere until-'

AT THAT VERY MOMENT: SOUND OFF: from the Cadillac's trunk come a couple of harsh POUNDS, bending the metal with real ferociousness.

Baterman immediately stops talking and turns to look at the Cadillac. Annabelle, shocked, turns and stares at the Cadillac, too.

Joel looking ready to have a heart attack stands on tiptoe and peers-over their shoulders at the black Seville beyond.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME  
The Cadillac's rear slowly bounces up and down and shifts to some extent from side to side. Something that sounds like 'dead weight' moves around inside the vehicle's trunk. Whatever is in there suddenly stops moving. The Cadillac falls silent and motionless.

Baterman, Annabelle and Joel stare avidly with their mouths agape.

**BATERMAN**

*(unbelievingly, to himself)*

You gotta be shitting me! (to Annabelle) Did you fuckin' see that?

**ANNABELLE**

(worried, curious)

Oh my God! There's somebody in there. I swear to Christ. There's someone shut in the trunk.

**BATERMAN**

What the fuck is this, Montelli?! Is this somekinda gangland thing or something?! Who owns that fuckin' car, man?

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN V/O (CONT'D)**

Did they leave the keys? Cause if they did, we gotta open up the trunk.

SOUND OFF: of the door leading out from the convenience store as the hinges squeak.

Joel swings around and clocks this, and fully realises its implications, he looks as if every single one of his nerves will snap at any second.

Joel wheels around to look back on the forecourt.

Both Baterman and Annabelle are slowly, cautiously approaching the Cadillac.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT—SAMETIME  
Annabelle's gaze drops to the ground.

**ANNABELLE**

What is that? Is that oil leaking outta there?

**BATERMAN**

That's not oil! Oil's in the engine. That's at the front of the car, not the back--

**ANNABELLE**

--Well, I don't know. Am just asking is all--

**BATERMAN**

-It doesn't even look like gasoline. What the fuck is that stuff?

Baterman's P.O.V. of the jet-black fluid streaking in thin strips across the floor, it glistens in the light cast from the overhead fluorescent lamps.

Baterman takes a wary couple of steps toward the car.

NEXT SECOND—

A BOMBARDMENT OF THUDS smack against the trunk's underside! The Cadillac's back end violently kangaroos up and down...

Startled and scared, Baterman and Annabelle back up a few steps.

**BATERMAN**

(almost hysterical)

Holy fuckin' shit! (yells to Joel) Did you fuckin' see that, Montelli?! We gotta call the cops! There's somebody in there!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

Somebody trapped in the trunk, I swear to fuckin' Christ! We gotta get 'em the fuck out or they're gonna suffocate!

Baterman makes for the Cadillac's trunk. Annabelle moves behind him, grabbing hold of his jacket and trying to pull him back. She's full of anxious panic.

Joel stares out the Kiosk window at them, eyes wide, he's trembling, his face pale. He's desperate to resolve this situation before Mr. Keller does.

**JOEL**

(screams out)

DON'T TOUCH THE FUCKING CAR!! Don't touch it!! Don't go anywhere near it! Just move away, Baterman! Just move the fuck away from the car, please.

Baterman and Annabelle freeze in mid action.

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

(calms down a little, enunciates every word)

Just...move away from it...

Baterman, for the moment, loses all interest in the Seville with the noisy trunk; he stands rigid, glaring angrily at Joel.

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

(tears flood from his eyes)

Baterman, just you and Annabelle get out of here-right now!

Baterman struts up to the Kiosk window.  
Annabelle follows.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP-SAMETIME  
On reaching the Kiosk window Baterman slams the palms of his hands against it. BANG! He points an accusing finger at Joel

**BATERMAN**  
(*furious*)

Where the fuck do you get off talking to me like that, numbnuts?! (*bashes his hand against the Kiosk window again*) Huh? Who the fuck do you think you are? King of your shitty-little gas station here earning dog-shit money, doing the graveyard shift! You're nothing! You're a piece of shit, Montelli!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

My family's got money--lots of it too. More than your 'fat-ass' parents will ever be capable of earning. You'll still probably be working in this shit-hole when you're thirty years old--'

**JOEL**

(*voice weak, pleading*)

--Please... You gotta go. I'm sorry but--

**BATERMAN**

--Don't give me that shit! I don't wanna hear it! Not now! I just wanna--'

AT THAT MOMENT:

The telephone, rested on top of the counter, where Mr. Keller left it, begins to ring.  
Joel spins around and stares at the telephone, wide-eyed, he then shifts his gaze to the door leading out into the corridor.  
Everyone falls silent for a couple of seconds.  
Joel drops his eyes back to the ringing telephone.  
What to do now?

**BATERMAN V/O**

You gonna answer that, fucknuts?!

Joel turns around to face Baterman.

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

--or are you gonna stand there and stare at it for next ten minutes? (pause) Well...?

**JOEL**

You promise not to go anywhere near the Caddy if I do?

**BATERMAN**

Fuck you, Montelli! I'll do what the hell I like-'

**JOEL**

(anxiety levels explode)

-I gotta answer this phone, Baterman! You can't touch that car! If you touch the car, we're all fuckin' dead and that's it!

**BATERMAN**

You threatening me, shit-face!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

No! I'm not threatening you. I just need to answer the phone-'

**BATERMAN**

--Well, answer the fuckin' phone, Joel! I'm not stopping ya'...

**JOEL**

Okay. Okay! Just...just stay there. Don't move.

Joel snatches at the receiver and brings it to his ear.

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

(speaks into mouth piece)

Hello.

**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

(speaks with an Hispanic accent)

Who is this?

**JOEL**

I'm Joel Montelli, sir.

**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

Where's Mr. Keller?

**JOEL**

He's erh...He's temporarily unable to come to the phone right now. Can I take a message or get him to call you back?

Long Pause...

**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

You tell Mr. Keller that if he doesn't return this phone call within the next minute--whatever his situation--then all dealings between him and us are over!

LOUD CLICK! Dial tone!

A look of dread passes over Joel's facial features. He slowly replaces the receiver and turns to look through the Kiosk window.

Bateman and Annabelle stare right back at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL (CONT'D)**

You have to get the hell out of here now, Bateman. While you still can...you hang around here, you're a dead man.

Bateman stares at Joel with dagger eyes.

**BATERMAN**

Is that so?!

**JOEL**

Yes! That's so. So just...leave, while you still can. Right now!

**BATERMAN**

*(defiant to the last)*

Fuck you! I'm not going anywhere. I want-'

**ANNABELLE**

---I wanna go! I don't wanna stay here. (*she looks towards the Cadillac*) That car gives me the creeps... I wanna go home...I just wanna forget about this and go...

**BATERMAN**

--Fine! We'll leave...no problem. (*to Annabelle*) Get in the car. (*to Joel*) But...this, *this* attitude going on between you and me, this is far from fuckin' over, Montelli I'll be coming back here, with the Calvary, to check over *that* car. So screw you!

Annabelle and Baterman climb back into the Convertible. He fires the engine...

**BATERMAN (CONT'D)**

I'll see ya later, Joel. Speak to you when you get done here, fuckhead. I'm gonna teach you a lesson you won't forget in a hurry.

Baterman drops the gear stick, revs the engine to a roar, the Convertible's rear tires squeal on cement. The Mustang tears out from the forecourt, swings onto the road, and speeds away.

(CONTINUED)

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**JOEL (CONT'D)**

(*watches the departing tail lights, sotto to himself*) I just saved your life, asshole.

IMMEDIATELY-- BEHIND JOEL...

The door leading into the corridor bursts open and out marches Mr Keller. He looks real angry; he strides across the convenience store, heading for the picture windows...

**KELLER**

Nice timing, Joel! Could you cut it any closer, huh?!

**JOEL**

(*fearful*)

There's some black stuff leaking out from the back of your car.

**KELLER**

No shit! (*points at the phone*) What did *they* say?

**JOEL**

You got less than a minute to phone them back or else all deals between you and *them* are off!

Keller reaches the windows, leans over the sweet rack and stares outside at his car for a second...

**KELLER**

Oh Christ!

Keller spins on his heels, makes for the counter, grabs the phone's receiver—he glares at Joel as he dials.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

You better hope and pray that someone answers this call. (*he grits his teeth*) Otherwise...you can forget about building all those bridges.

Keller holds the receiver in his left hand, slips his right hand underneath the lapel of his jacket's left side, fingers curling around the revolver's grip handle.

Joel looks all most delirious. After six rings Keller's phone call is answered. Joel breathes a noticeable sigh of relief.

(CONTINUED)

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**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

(*same voice as last time*)

Yes.

Keller releases his grip on the gun.

**KELLER**

(*speaks into phone*)

It's Keller.

**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

I'd almost given up on you, Mr. Keller.

**KELLER**

(*his anger percolates*)

Yeah?! Well, not until the fat lady... (pause) Am I speaking to the assistant manager or the shop steward?

**MALE VOICE FROM PHONE'S EAR PIECE V/O**

You're speaking to the shop steward, Mr Keller, as you requested. (pause) Don't concern yourself. You can say whatever's on your mind. This is a washed line. No bugs. Nobody's listening in.

**KELLER**

I suppose I'm just gonna have to take your word on that. (sarcastically) We're still in business, yes? And you wanna hear about my situation? (pause)  
You must be Blascoe, right? From the sound of your voice...you gotta be him!

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
 LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

Mr. Blascoe, grinning to him self, sits behind a hefty mahogany desk in a 'high-backed' reclining chair, on the phone. He's dressed impeccably in a perfect suit. His private quarters are luxurious, spacious, exquisitely decorated. Art pictures adorn the walls. Blascoe's quarters are shaped like an L. Where the L's tail joins with the stick sits his desk. Adjacent to the desk is a set of huge panelled wooden doors. Set out in the L's tail are beautiful sculptures and glass cabinets filled with pieces of rare art.

(CONTINUED)

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Behind Blascoe's desk are rows of giant-sized rectangle 'floor-to-ceiling' windows. The windows overlook almost the entire city of Las Vegas.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

(speaks into receiver's mouthpiece)

The same... (calmly) What's happened, Mr Keller? What do you need to tell me?

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME  
 As Keller talks he wanders towards the merchandise aisles (there are three of them). Keller moves in between the glass fronted beer coolers and the aisle at the very back of the store. Joel remains behind the counter watching Keller with frightened eyes, occasionally staring out at the Cadillac.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

What? Aside from the fact that you and your lady-partner are, as far as I'm concerned, nothing more than a couple of  *fucking lying bastards!* You mean aside from me having to tell you that--what do I have to tell you?! Is that what you just asked me? You lying pieces of shit!! Do you hav-'

**BLASCOE V/O**

(getting angry)

--Mr Keller, may I remind you of whom your-'

**KELLER**

--Fuck that! And while we're there and on the subject: fuck you too! From where I'm standing you need me right now a hell of a lot more than I need you. Do you have any idea what *I've* been through tonight? Have you got the slightest fuckin' understanding as to what the hell's going on out here?

**BLASCOE**

I have a feeling you're about to tell me.

**KELLER**

Oh yeah! Are you people ready for this? You truly need me to enlighten you over the current state of affairs? Okay. Here goes... (pause) Listen up: *I have* never in my entire sweet life seen anything like the shape-shifting deity I now have residing in the trunk of *my fuckin'* car. What the fuck is that thing?! Really, what... what the hell is it?!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE V/O (CONT'D)**

--Mr Keller, I can empathise with you but I can offer you no sympathy. You're a professional...an icy opportunist... Paid worthy for your task... And in answer to your question, I don't know what it is. I've personally never seen it and I don't-'

SOUND OFF: OUTSIDE: From the trunk comes a series of iron THUMPS that strike against its steel-lid in a flurry.

**KELLER**

--Well, I've seen it, up close and very personal and here's your newsflash: I'm afraid to report that *it is not of this earth*—it's not a local inhabitant. If you can possibly grasp that concept! You don't have to be a

scientist, or a physiologist to know that that thing out there *is not* human! *It's nasty!* I almost got my head ripped off...threw me around like a rag-doll. *It* almost cut me in half! Not to mention the fact that I almost got denied, for the rest of my days of being a pistol packing pussy-cat courtesy of your fucked up, 'God in heaven only knows what the hell it is' client. (pause)

Keller takes a slow walk along the aisle, tugs at the phone's cord as he goes.

Joel immediately steps forwards and pays out some 'phone-line' slack.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

The bitch with the blue eyes fed me a line of bullshit. There never was any black guy who needed a fourth breathing hole blasted into his head in Baker, was there? This was all just a rouse to get me in Nevada... (pause)

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

As Blascoe listens on the phone, in the f.g., in b.g., between the windows and his desk, an attractive looking blonde woman passes by.

**KELLER V/O (CONT'D)**

On-top of that, you don't have to be a 'crank' to figure out there's a hidden agenda going on...and I'd like to know what that hidden agenda is. Because whatever's out there in the trunk of my car-I can't kill it! Plain and simple! No matter what calibre of shot, no matter how many bullets you pump into it *it* just gets livelier and more *pissed off*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP-SAMETIME

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

And for a man of my occupation, for a *professional* such as my self that's a real fucking worrying problem. So, let's just cut the B n S.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

**BLASCOE**

(not understanding)

The B n S? I don't follow...

The blonde lady comes around to the front of Blascoe's desk and draws to a halt. She helps herself to a cigar from a box crammed full of them, waits for something.

**KELLER V/O (CONT'D)**

The bullshit!

Blascoe glances up at the woman stood before him.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

I honestly don't know what that blue-eyed bitch was so concerned about. She musta known I was walking into what can only be described as a fuckin' death-trap tonight.  
(pause)

**BLASCOE V/O**

--If it eases your mind, Mr Keller, my self and Octavia are not partners. Never have been! I can assure you we're far from it...she's one untrustworthy Senorita, wouldn't you agree? A lady of a double-faced nature... And to add to our problems, I believe I can side with you by telling you, Mr Keller, that she truly represents a *real problem* for the both of us. Yes?

SOUND OFF: OUTSIDE: From the Cadillac's trunk emanates a periodic cycle of THUMPS and SCRATCHES.  
Keller peers out through the picture-window at his stricken car for a moment, a slight look of concern crosses his face.

(CONTINUED)

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**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Okay. Sale. I don't know why I believe you, but I do. If you're not connected to her...if she's not a collaborator to you people...then you got a serious problem going on here. (pause) Blascoe, 'whatever it is' I've caught out there has been shut in the trunk of my car since six o' clock this evening and I kinda get the

impression that it wants out. And it's gonna get out... sooner or later...and when then that happens, I most likely, am gonna have to take care of it. But I am not gonna be able to *take care of Jack-shit* with the current lack of information. Try to understand something: it has no head, no arms; no legs—nothing!

I can't put it down! (pause) Now you tell me 'man with a price on his head', how the fuck am I gonna kill it? Because when it gets outta my trunk it's gonna take care of me, then, I'm pretty sure it's gonna come knocking on your door. (pause) Am willing to bet that Octavia has some insight, some rhyme and reason as to what on God's earth that monstrosity out there really is. And am also willing to bet that she's there...right now-- with you!

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

Oh she's here. Would you like to talk to her?

**KELLER V/O**

Not particularly. I think she's fucked around enough with me already.

**BLASCOE**

As I understand it.

Blasco's eyes are fixed on—

REVERSE ANGLE: The lady stood in front of his desk, she exudes masses amounts of confidence and sexual magnetism. This is Octavia! She's startlingly attractive! She looks between twenty and twenty-five years of age. She's dressed all in black.

She surveys Blascoe coolly as she places the cigar (the wrong way around) between her lips. Her hands are clad in a pair of skin-tie black leather gloves.

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As Blascoe talks he wedges the receiver between his ear and shoulder, reaches inside a desk draw and withdraws a butterfly knife which he skims across the desk to Octavia.

She grabs the knife and with a couple of quick flicks of her hand and wrist she produces the weapon's blade—with equal fast precision she cuts the end off the cigar.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

Mr Keller, if you're looking for a plausible explanation to all of this, then I'm sorry I can't supply you with one. All I can do is return the favour and tell you what I know for sure, and what I know for sure is: is that whatever you have in the trunk of your car it wants to erase me, permanently. And whoever the people are in New York, they want to erase you permanently, too. Courtesy of your new found friend. There is a second interested party involved in all of this--

Octavia starts away from the desk.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

--Give me a second, Mr Keller.

Balscoe jabs at the console, placing Keller on hold. He glares at Octavia as he reaches across his desk.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

(to Octavia)

I want the knife back. On the desk!

Octavia stops and slowly approaches, staring at Blascoe with look of humorous contempt.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

Can I tell him, the whole truth...everything?

Octavia stops at the edge of the desk and withdraws the butterfly knife from her trouser pocket. She holds it at arms length and drops it, blade first, so the knife sticks upright in the desktop.

**OCTAVIA**

(smirks)

Why not!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Blascoe glares at her, then strains forwards and pulls the knife from the desk and puts it away. He hits a button on the console and then hits another button, leans back in his chair.

**BLASCOE**

Sorry to keep you waiting, Mr Keller. I've put you on the speaker-phone...therefore we can all join in with the

conversation. Everybody gets to hear what it is everyone else has to say.

As Blascoe talks---

REVERSE ANGLE: Octavia sets herself down on a large three-seat leather sofa. She stretches her legs, resting the heels of her bare feet on a nearby glass coffee table. She picks up a Zippo-lighter and snaps the lid open.

Near to the quarter's entrance doors, sat on another leather sofa is a middle-aged bald man, dressed in a white shirt and black trousers. This man permeates a menacing atmosphere--he's known only as Mick.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

Mr Keller, who do you suppose has gone out of their way to dig a couple of graves in my name?

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP-SAMETIME

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

At a guess I'd say it was Octavia. Do you know the reason why?

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO. LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

**BLASCOE**

Oh she refuses to tell me the reason *why*. All I know is is I am cursed man. A man with an Albatross hung around his neck. The reason being for some past deed I must pay recompense...

Blascoe glances at Octavia.

Octavia glares back at him, she brings the lighter level with the cigar's tip and cranks the flint wheel---LOUD CRUNCH and the flame illuminates.

FLASH BACK TO:

EXT. PRAIRIE HOUSE. DECKER'S HOUSEHOLD DAY  
It's perhaps the mid-nineteen seventies on a beautiful hot summer's day. Parked on the driveway of a modest sized 'two-storey' household (the property boasts casual luxury) is a box -standard station wagon.

A couple--probably in their early thirties--are seated inside the vehicle. The lady sat in the passenger seat is classically beautiful; the man sat in the driver's seat is very handsome: they look like a couple of movie stars, Hollywood Royalty. Smiling, laughing, talking, they both beckon to someone standing by the vehicle's near-side.

REVERSE ANGLE: of a young girl with long auburn hair, she's between eight or ten years of age, dressed in a stripy t-shirt and bell-bottomed jeans. She's about ten yards away from the car. She starts towards the station wagon, smiling.

INSIDE THE STATION WAGON:

EXTREME CLOSE UP: as the ignition key is twisted---  
--ANGLE: looking out through the windshield as the hood, with a THUNDEROUS ROAR, is ripped off its hinges and sent up into the heavens by a ball of RISING FIRE---the inferno lashes clean through the windshield and engulfs the car's occupants---

OUTSIDE THE CAR:

--HIGH and WIDE of the explosion as the station wagon's front-end lifts clean off the floor.

A second chain of detonations rip through the car causing sheets of fire to tear out from the tailgate, spewing a couple of FLAMING suitcases onto the driveway.

A SUPER HEATED PRESSURE WAVE BLASTS all of the windows on the Prairie property's façade to nothingness --

--The fully ABLAZE Station wagon's front-end SMASHES back to earth and bounces to a gradual stand-still.

HIGH and WIDE as columns of fire and smoke surge skyward-

END FLASHBACK.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.

LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-PRESENT TIME

On Octavia: she SNAPS the lighter's lid shut and turns away from Blascoe, begins to smoke her cigar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

--for men of our standing, Mr Keller, haven't you ever considered the fact that if you push long enough and hard enough, something will inevitably push back.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME

**KELLER**

Can't say as I've ever thought about it... I just do what I do. Moral values, guilt and people's feelings don't factor in this for me. (pause) Who are the people in New York?

**BLASCOE V/O**

We don't know. All our leads to try and find them end in nothing... They're well informed and well protected and they seem to know everything about us-

**KELLER**

--Blascoe, I don't know anybody in the Big Apple.

**BLASCOE V/O**

--Well, *they* know you!

As Keller talks on the phone, Joel stares out the picture windows—he suddenly goes rigid, his face contorts with worry and fear at whatever it is he sees.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.

LAS VEGAS--NIGHT—SAMETIME

Octavia looks over at Blascoe, feathering smoke from her nostrils.

**OCTAVIA**

Jack, tell us, I'd really like to know: how did you manage to constringe the Kobalos in your car? I'll bet that was no mean feat. *It* doesn't like to be cooped up.

**KELLER V/O**

(sardonically)

Oh lady, you sound like you're enquiring after a pet.

**OCTAVIA**

(smiles)

Maybe I am.

**KELLER V/O**

Well, for your information, honey, all I did was blow the windows shooting at the goddamn thing.--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

The blinds hit the deck and your pet dove in the trunk of my car---the rest is history. What can I tell ya. (angry) And what the *fuck* is a Kobalos, anyhow?

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT—SAMETIME

**OCTAVIA**

That's the elementals name. It likes the dark but it doesn't like to be incarcerated, spends a lot of its time imprisoned. I suspect its going stir crazy right now... desperately trying to find a way out.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP—SAMETIME

**KELLER**

You're not wrong sister! It has been hammering the shit outta my Caddy all night and I think tha-'

Keller turns on his heels and notices Joel's frightened demeanour. Keller frowns, covers the phone's mouthpiece and mouths the words, 'What's wrong?'

Joel motions with a cock of his head to the Cadillac outside.

Keller looks out the picture window and sees—Keller's POV of his Caddy, which at this precise moment is enshrouded in a thick bank of WHITE, SWIRLING FOG. The fog clings close to the contours of the vehicle, becoming denser around the car's rear end.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(to himself, unnerved)

What the Christ is going on? (to Octavia, numbly) What is it? Octavia, what the hell is that thing?

Keller slowly ambles towards the picture windows. OUTSIDE ON THE FORECOURT: LATERAL MOVE over the Cadillac, the unearthly fog coils and eddies around the vehicle's body work—INSIDE THE CAR—the fog has filled the interior level with the window ledges, but it goes no further. The vapour looks like a thick blanket of cumulus clouds. The creature in the trunk remains silent—for now. Octavia narrates these visuals for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**OCTAVIA V/O (CONT'D)**

The Kobalos allegedly emerged from the Peruvian desert over five hundred years ago; its origins are not fully understood. It is rumoured to be some kind of ETI, but those rumours remain unfounded. The Kobalos is a remarkable predator, Jack. It hunts via stealth and cunning, it feasts on men. *It is a true creature of the night---just like a vampire!*

**KELLER**

Oh bullshit lady! You expect me to believe that that thing out there is a goddamn vampire!

**OCTAVIA V/O**

No. I don't expect you to believe anything. All I said was *it's like a vampire I didn't say it actually is one.* You asked the question, I'm giving you the answer: *you* need to know that the elemental in your car has certain Incubi qualities. And there, perhaps, lies your real problem.

Keller turns away from the windows and approaches the counter.

**KELLER**

Meaning?

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

**OCTAVIA**

--The secret to its longevity: just like a vampire, Jack, it bites. And once you've been bitten and you're unlucky enough to survive...over a three day period you mutate into the new Kobalos. Every part of your body liquefies; only the teeth left in your head remain solid and intact, and even *they* mutate into a set of very sharp fangs. You see, Jack, to *you* the Kobalos is an indestructible monster; an unstoppable advisory. To *me* it is the Genie from the lamp. And she who possesses the lamp controls the Genie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER V/O (CONT'D)**

It carries out your bidding? (more sarcasm) It does whatever you--or whoever tells it to do?

**OCTAVIA**

In a manner of speaking!

**KELLER V/O**

So call it off.

**OCTAVIA**

I'm sorry I can't do that.

**KELLER V/O**

So tell me, lady, does your fucked-up slimy Genie have an Achilles heel?

**OCTAVIA**

(smiles)

Question you need to ask, Jack, is not *how do I kill it*. The question you should be asking is: can- it- be-killed? Answer, no! You're comparable to a sparrow threatening an eagle. Nobody can stop it...it has been allowed to run its course...to complete its undertaking. So go and meet your destiny, Jack Keller...

**BLASCOE**

Mr Keller, do you know of a man called Bobby Nalder?

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP-SAMETIME

**KELLER**

Bob Nalder? Sure. He's one of the best in the business.

**BLASCOE V/O**

He was! Unfortunately, he was killed two weeks ago in Rapid City. Nalder...regretfully, is one of your predecessors.

**KELLER**

(growing worried)

Predecessors?! Blascoe, how many others have you sent out after this thing?

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

Three! You're number four. Nalder threw the only worthwhile piece of information our way with regards to that *creature*. He seemed to think that sunlight hurts it; burns of its skin. Nalder was convinced that if he could've exposed it to the full light of day, Mr Keller--he stood a good chance of actually killing it.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME

**KELLER**

No shit! Is that a fact?! (he stares out at his Cadillac for a moment, churning thoughts over in his head) Okay. Okay, tell you what: I'm gonna Saint George your dragon for ya. I'm gonna succeed where my three predecessors failed. I am gonna succeed and I'm gonna piss that blue-eyed, genie controlling bitch you got sitting there in front of you clean off! But if we're raising the stakes then I wanna raise the wager. I want twelve big ones, no questions asked...

**BLASCOE V/O**

You want that much?

**KELLER**

I said no questions asked. Tell me something, Senor Blascoe, how much is your life worth? I'll tell you what your life is worth: it's priceless. Let's put some of that money you got stashed downstairs in the vault to good use.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

**BLASCOE**

Very well, Mr Keller, I'll amend your payment. Have you stopped to think and consider what happens if sunlight does not vanquish this...thing?

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME

**KELLER**

Yeah. I'm a dead man! So are you, probably. The money stays put and Octavia will wind up being a very happy lady; she'll get to put her genie back in its bottle.  
 (pause)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Look I'll call you in the morning with a full progress report...I got a lot to do here... Either *that*: or no news is bad news. You savvy? I'll speak to you people later.

Keller hangs up.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
 LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

SOUND OF: FROM THE SPEAKERPHONE: Dial tone.  
 Blascoe switches off the speakerphone. He stares at Octavia for a moment, shifts his gaze to Mick.  
 Mick remains seated, slumped forwards, reading a magazine. Mick looks up and stares back at Blascoe, after a moment, he leans back and starts to smile, his gaze flickers to Octavia.  
 Octavia glares at Blascoe with a mixture of contempt and lewd amusement. She takes a long draw on her cigar, exhales; long tentacles of smoke swirl. Eventually Octavia lowers her piercing blue eyes to the floor.

**CUT TO:**

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME  
 Keller SLAMS the phone down on-top of the counter. He bows his head and leans forwards, staring down at the tiles. Joel stands adjacent, silent and nervous.

**KELLER**

(never looks up when he speaks)  
 What's preying on your mind, Joel?

**JOEL**

What are you gonna do now?

Keller straightens up. He stares out the window and seems to zone out for a moment.

**KELLER**

What time does the sun come up?

**JOEL**

I don't...I don't know, there's a desk diary around here some place. I think it has sunrise and sunset times written it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Find it will ya'?

Keller comes to and un-holsters his Smith & Wesson. Fearfully, Joel looks at Keller—and the pistol.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Don't worry. (gestures with the gun) It's not for you. I'm going out to my car. Grab some stuff. You stay here and keep looking for that diary.

Joel nods "Yes." He then begins to search under the counter.

Keller heads for the door.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT—NIGHT

Keller exits the store and cagily approaches his 'fog-enshrouded' car. The trunk remains silent and motionless. As Keller closes in he aims his revolver at the Caddy, thumbs back the cocking hammer.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT—SAMETIME

Joel glances out the picture windows and sees that Keller's back is turned; he's not looking at Joel. Joel decides to take a chance and make a phone call. He grabs the receiver and starts to dial.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT—NIGHT

Keller turns and sees what Joel is doing. He immediately swings around and FIRES at the Kiosk window.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT—SAMETIME

The fired slug BLASTS the sheet of glass to a FROSTED PANE. Projectile pieces ricochet off the shelves. Screaming, Joel drops the receiver and ducks down under the counter.

**KELLER V/O**

*JOEL!*

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT

Keller keeps his pistol aimed at the store's façade.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

*I ASKED YOU TO FIND A DIARY IN THERE. NOT MAKE ANY PHONE CALLS.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME  
Joel rises, trembling and crying, his hands in the air.

**JOEL**

*I'm sorry. I'M FUCKIN' SORRY!*

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT

**KELLER**

You will be! Don't you pull any of that shit with me now!

AT THAT MOMENT: a fusillade of HEAVY BLOWS pound away inside the Cadillac's trunk.

The sudden eruption of noise jumps the hell out of Keller. He whips around and aims his gun at the car. The iron glove THUMPS cease. Breathy silence...

**KELLER**

*Shit! (to the Kabalos) You're starting to get frustrated in there, huh? You want out don'tcha?*

In slow measured steps Keller moves towards his Cadillac. The unearthly MIST swirls in a sluggish motion all around his legs and waist. Keller draws the revolver in close to his chest and reaches out with his left hand toward the rear passenger door handle.

CLOSE SHOT: of Keller's fingers curling under the door handle. He pulls on it and carefully opens the door.

A thick blanket of MIST flows out from the vehicle's interior and eddies around Keller's body.

Keller crouches forwards, coughing, covering his mouth, wafting at the fog with his left hand. He surveys the car's interior.

Keller's POV of the backseat: FOG billows out from the backrest like steam from a boiling caldron. The leather upholstery looks coated with a JET-BLACK FLUID.

Keller slowly places the palm of his hand against the backrest, pulls it away. His hand is smothered with a black slimy fluid. He wrinkles his nose and rubs his palm on the back of his trousers.

Keller then takes hold of the BIG GEAR-BAG'S grab handles and hauls the heavy holder out from the car.

He KICKS the car door shut. SLAM!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT—SAMETIME CLOSE UP: SLAM! as Keller drops the gear-bag on top of the counter. He re-holsters the Smith & Wesson, grabs the zippers situated at opposite ends of the carrier and unzips them, the holder falls wide open. REVEALING: the gear-bag is packed full of weaponry and ammunition.

Joel stands frozen on the other side of the counter. He stares down at the armoury with fear and wonder.

**JOEL**

Holy shit! Are you gonna start a war?

**KELLER**

I might be. Come on, Joel, you're not naïve enough to believe that my guns would be registered with the federals, huh? (pause) How's your head?

As they talk, Keller takes off his jacket, loosens his tie, rolls up his shirt sleeves, from the gear-bag he withdraws a Franchi SPAS 12 pump action shotgun and a Bandolier of 12 gauge shells. He starts to slide shells into the shotgun's under-slung magazine chamber.

**JOEL**

I've been better. Jesus Christ! You could've killed me.

**KELLER**

If I wanted to kill you, Joel, you wouldn't be talking to me right now—you'd be dead already.

Like I said earlier---no fuck ups! The rules haven't changed. Did you find that diary?  
(Joel nods "Yes.") So what time is sun up?

**JOEL**

Seven twenty-five.

**KELLER**

(glances at his watch)  
Jesus! We got hell'va of a wait.

**JOEL**

We got hell of a wait for what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller finishes up loading the shotgun. He props the rifle against the counter and grabs a shoulder-holster with a Desert Eagle firearm inside.

He un-holsters the gun, ejects the weapon's magazine and starts to load .357 bullets into it.

**KELLER**

It would seem that our nemesis out there in my car has an aversion to daylight. Sunlight to it is like kryptonite to Superman. So, we dig in until dawn, and at first light we're gonna go out there and we fry its ass in the ultra-violet rays of the sun. Are you picking up what I'm putting down, Joel?

Keller SLAMS the magazine into the Desert Eagle's grip handle.

He then pulls a Colt Special from the gear-bag and proceeds to eject and check its magazine.

**JOEL**

Mr Keller, I can't stay here until dawn. Besides, I gotta lock this place up just before midnight. I don't know what's going on here. And I don't understand any of this! And I don't wanna have anything to do with it-'.

**KELLER**

--You've already got something to do with it.

**JOEL**

I don't wanna get involved!

**KELLER**

You're already involved.

**JOEL**

Look, Mr Keller, you can have the keys to the whole place. I'll just leave, you don't need me. I'll just-'

**KELLER**

--You're not going anywhere.

**JOEL**

(he starts to cry)

Mr Keller, please...you don't need me. I'm in so much trouble here as it is. My parents will be sick with worry if I don't show up at home; they'll come out here looking for me... I won't tell anybody about this, I swear to-'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

--Bullshit! The only way to keep a yank's mouth closed is to nail it shut. (pause) Now, just out of interest, who were you gonna phone before I shot at you?

**JOEL**

Cops!

**KELLER**

The cops?! (smiles) You tried to phone the cops instead of your folks? It would have taken you over an hour to convince some 'fat bitch' on a police switchboard as to what is going on... Now, your folks would've picked up the fear in your voice straight away. (pause) Maybe you're nothing more than a burden to your parents, Joel. Maybe they consider you to be one of the biggest mistakes they ever made.

Keller's words hurt Joel's feelings, tears spill down his cheeks. Keller loops the holster with the Desert Eagle around his right shoulder; he dons two firearms now, the revolver under his left arm-pit, the .357 under his right.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

How much is this boss of yours who's holidaying in Mexico paying you?

**JOEL**

Two-sixty-five an hour.

**KELLER**

Two-sixty five an hour? How would you like to make a hundred and fifty grand? Now! Tonight... Well, first thing in the morning.

**JOEL**

(guarded)

What do I have to do?

**KELLER**

It's real simple. You lay low with me, for the rest of night, and come the dawn you and I walk out there and you pop the trunk open on my car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

(hardly believes what he just heard)

And that's it?!

**KELLER**

That's it! I'll take care of the rest. Business is dirty, Joel, and money is shit. But I'm offering you a shitload of it, and all you gotta do, at first-light, is open a Cadillac's trunk. And in the meantime don't do nothing stupid and keep your mouth shut. Are you in or are you out?

Despite his miserable fear Joel comes around to the idea. He nods "Yes."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Good for you, Joel. You made the right choice. You're gonna make more money in one morning than your asshole buddy Baterman would know what to do with for a greater portion of *his miserable life*. You can get the fuck outta here and start to live the American dream.

**JOEL**

Mr Keller, why do you need me to unlock your trunk?

**KELLER**

Because I need both hands free to ready my guns, Joel. I gotta get that bastard to hold still long enough for the sunlight to hit him.

**JOEL**

But you told the man on the phone that bullets don't kill it.

**KELLER**

They don't! Gunshots slow it down. Fuck it up!  
Disorientate it. Occupy its mind for a second... (pause,  
he stares out the window) I just hope my trunk holds out  
till morning.

**JOEL**

And what if it doesn't?

**KELLER**

(he gives Joel a steely look)  
Let's cross that bridge when we come to it. What time do  
you close shop?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

Eleven thirty.

**KELLER**

Then what's the procedure?

**JOEL**

I have to shut the pumps down, knock all the lights off  
and lock up.

**KELLER**

Is anybody liable to turn up here in the morning?

**JOEL**

(shrugs)

Linda comes on for the early shift at seven o' clock.

**KELLER**

Shit! That's gonna be awkward. Why didn't you say  
something about this before?

**JOEL**

Because I didn't think it was that important before.

As he talks, Keller straps the Bandolier around his torso, he then picks up the shotgun and lays it to rest over his right shoulder. He saunters down the middle aisle.

**KELLER**

All right, Joel, I want you to leave the lights on over the forecourt. So if-'

**JOEL**

-I'm supposed to switch *all* the lights off, Mr Keller.

**KELLER**

Leave 'em on, Joel! I wanna keep the Caddy well lit. You knock out the pumps and turn off all the house lights in here. We flip the close sign, if anybody comes calling thinking this place is still open, we just keep outta sight and ignore them until they go away.  
Comprendo?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller turns on his heel and kicks a foot stool down the aisle's length, it bashes to a stop against a magazine rack.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

If any shit goes down I wanna get out there pronto. Hence, we leave the doors unlocked and the lights on. I'll take first watch, you get some sleep, you're probably gonna need it. If you should start asking yourself any deeply searching questions, Joel, then you just start thinking about the money. I'll wake you up if anything happens.

Keller takes a seat on the stool, rests the shotgun on his lap.

Joel, preoccupied and frightened, glances out the windows —after a moment he turns his gaze to Keller.

OUTSIDE: SOUND OFF: of the Kobalos POUNDING and SCRATCHING. A timed rhythmic hammering emanates from the trunk.

**JOEL**

Mr...Mr Keller, what is this all about?

**KELLER**

*This?!* (laughs at himself) This is all about me getting fucked over. (he stares out the windows at his car) I went to bed with a beautiful woman two weeks ago, Joel. Afterwards she offered me a client and pay cheque I couldn't refuse. Except for the fact, as it turns out, (sardonically) I'm the client and that's the assassin. (motions to his car) *Deceitful bitch!* She played me, Joel...for all I'm worth. And I fell for it, hook, line and sinker. Women! Can't live with 'em, can't trust 'em---don't get around to kill 'em when you should.

**JOEL**

(nods at the car)

Can you kill *it*?

**KELLER**

(blasé)

If killing is an art then I'm getting pretty good at it. (he nods "Yes.") I just staked a very rich man in Las Vegas a lot of money to say that *I can*. Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

What's in there? Mr Keller, what's in the trunk of your car?

**KELLER**

Who knows...maybe its Mickey Mouse's' long lost cousin. Halloween come early; how the hell should I know. I don't believe in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy, Joel. But I'm willing to acknowledge there's some strange shit in the world...I think you and I about to meet a big chunk of it sometime around first-light...

**JOEL**

Well, where's the mist coming from? I don't understand where-'

**KELLER**

(irritated)

--Shut up, Joel! Just give it a rest why don'tcha.

Joel gives up and slouches back in his seat.

Keller looks out through the glass entrance door.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME  
 DOLLY OVER THE FORECOURT, away from the store front and  
 PULL BACK over the Cadillac's trunk. Inside, the Kobalos  
 STRIKES the lid, regularly, rippling the metal.  
 The mysterious fog bank has now gathered around the  
 vehicle's trunk--it has disappeared completely from the  
 panels and doors.

HIGH and WIDE of the gas station appearing small and  
 insignificant against the endless desert. A FULL MOON  
 roams out from behind an assembly of wave-clouds.

**TIME CUT**

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-LATER  
 Joel is fast asleep behind the counter.  
 Keller approaches and comes to a stop adjacent. He brings  
 his fist down on the counter top. *WHAM!*  
 Joel wakes with a start...

**KELLER**

Joel. It's your turn to take watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

What time is it?

**KELLER**

It's past the witching hour... You're gonna close shop,  
 yeah?

Joel nods "Yes." He makes his way through the hatch,  
 switches off banks of lights as he goes, heads for the  
 door and spins the sign. Keller walks up the middle  
 aisle, throws his jacket on the floor and bundles it into  
 a makeshift pillow.

**JOEL**

What's been going on out there, Mr Keller?

**KELLER**

Nothing! It hasn't made a peep in over an hour. Where are you gonna perch?

**JOEL**

(points in the direction of the counter)  
Over there!

**KELLER**

Don't fall asleep, Joel. You stay awake. Keep your eyes and your ears peeled.

**JOEL**

I will!

**KELLER**

You'd better.

Keller drops to the floor, out of sight.  
Joel ranges back behind the counter and takes a seat.  
Occasionally, nervously, he glances outside. Both men can see each other from their different vantage points.  
Keller tries to get comfortable on the hard tiles; he has his shotgun lying right alongside him. He peeks at Joel.

**KELLER**

Keep your fuckin' hands to yourself, Joel. Don't touch my guns...none of 'em are loaded anyhow. And don't you dare think about making any phone calls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Don't try and leave neither!  
I'm a light sleeper, Joel. If I wake up and catch you walking out through that door, I'll blow your fucking head off before you make five steps!

**JOEL**

(croaks, whispery)

I'm not going anywhere.

**KELLER**

See to it that you don't.

Keller rests his head on his jacket, closes his eyes and drifts off to a delicate sleep.

Joel gazes out at the Cadillac, worried.

**TIME FADE**

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-LATER

LOW ANGLE: of the PORTICO towering above the gas pumps, halos of bugs dart around the fluorescent lights.

SOUND OFF: of a steady, timed metallic CREAKING NOISE.

TILT DOWNWARDS to reveal the Cadillac, the vehicle's rear-end is Kangarooing like crazy. The MACABRE MIST has totally vanished now.

INT PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME.

Joel has fallen fast asleep behind the counter.  
Keller remains asleep on the floor.

EXT. GAS STATION FORECOURT. NIGHT-SAMETIME  
The Cadillac suddenly stops BUCKING. Silence for moment.  
The vehicle's rear-end begins to dip towards the ground.  
The independent suspension rods start to SCREAM and GRIND via the maltreatment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

It looks as if an invisible giant has placed his boot-heel on the car's trunk and is gradually applying pressure.

CLOSE SHOT: of the rear wheel arches inching closer and closer to the rubber-tops of the tires.

SOUND OFF: of metal tearing apart.

LOW ANGLE: as the gas tank is RIPPED IN HALF, amber gasoline RUSHES out over the forecourts cement floor—quickly followed by a GUSH of THICK TAR-LIKE LIQUID.

The BLACK SUBSTANCE cascades out and forms a semi-circle, its surface rages like a stormy ocean. It then actually takes a direction and surges forwards, streaking toward the store.

As the last of the OILY LIQUID disengages from the trunk, the Cadillac's suspension SCREECHES OUT and returns the chassis back to its proper position.

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVENIENCE SHOP. NIGHT—SAMETIME  
LOW ANGLE: Keller's eyes snap open.

SOUND OFF: OUTSIDE: of a noise that sounds like a fast flowing river...

Keller sits bolt upright, grabs the shotgun.

**KELLER**

*JOEL?*

Joel stirs, shakes the cobwebs out of his head and rises up off the counter.

**JOEL**

(half-asleep)

What...what's going on?

**KELLER**

My question exactly! (testing) What time is it?

**JOEL**

I...I don't know... I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

(angry)

Did you fall asleep?

**JOEL**

(apprehensive)

No.

SOUND OFF: OUTSIDE: of some 'sharp object' SLAMMING into a sheet of corrugated steel and then cutting through it like TEETH on a GIANT saw, all the teeth scoring in one direction at once.

No sooner than the sound starts it stops.

**KELLER**

(really angry)

You fucking liar! You did fall asleep.

Keller jumps to his feet and stares out the picture windows.

Joel lingers behind the counter, indecisive and fearful. He rises out of his chair and he too gazes out the windows.

OUTSIDE: the night remains almost silent.

Both men exchange glances.

Keller slowly moves to the entrance door, wrenches it wide open. Joel steps out from behind the counter.

**JOEL**

(frightened, speaks in a whisper)

Mr Keller, don't go out there. Please...

Keller gives Joel a look, cocks his head to one side and ventures out.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT-NIGHT-SAMETIME

Keller stares at his car for a second, eyes drop to the ground and he frowns.

Keller raises the shotgun and lowers himself on his haunches.

Keller's POV of the busted gas tank, metal torn outwards, gelatinous fluid hangs/drips from the ragged steel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller's eyes follow the metre in width SLIMY SNAIL TRAIL of BLACK OILY liquid that has snaked out from under his Cadillac and has travelled around the plinths of pumps 1 and 2. It then leads up to the first (in a set of three) roller doors situated at the front of the Tool Shop. There, the SLIMY GLISTENING TRAIL disappears out of sight.

The corrugated door's base is damaged, its centre curls inwards.

Joel drifts up to the entrance door, pushes it open.

**JOEL**

(voice quivery)

What's happened? Has it...has it got out?

Keller turns and looks at Joel, his expression says it all, 'What kind of a stupid question is that?'

AT THAT MOMENT:-

SOUND OFF: of a LOUD ELECTRICAL THUMP!

LONG SHOT: of the gas station as the buildings lose power and plunge into darkness.

Joel intakes a shallow breath...

Keller rises up and marches towards the entrance doorway.

**KELLER**

Does that answer your question?

**JOEL**

*Oh God! It's knocked out the power. It's knocked out the power, hasn't it?*

Emergency lighting kicks on: two weak bulbs throw slender shafts of light down from the PORTICO and two bulbs switch on **inside** the convenience store.

A 'none too happy' Keller grips Joel's upper arm and bundles him back inside the store.

Joel starts kicking and flailing, trying to disentangle himself from Keller's hold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. PUMP STATION'S CONVIENCE SHOP. NIGHT-SAMETIME.

Keller drags a struggling Joel toward the counter.

The two of them reduced to mere silhouettes by the unevenly lit store.

**JOEL**

(near hysterical)

Get the fuck off me! You let me go! No, no, I wanna leave... I wanna leave, Mr Keller, please... *I JUST WANNA-*'

Keller hurls Joel up against a sweet rack and punches him straight in the mouth. With a pained grunt Joel slaps his hands over his bruised jaw.

Keller steps back and raises the shotgun, its bore in Joel's face.

**KELLER** (angry)

Are you finished?! You've fucked up for the last time, you miserable little bastard! I ought to fuckin' grease you right now. I ask you to do one simple-'

SOUND OFF: From the depths of the Tool Shop resonates a BOOMING CRASH followed by the noise of steel tools clattering across concrete.

Keller stops talking and spins around, listening. Joel's fear is now melting into sheer terror.

**JOEL**

Oh Jesus-fuckin-Christ! It's in the Tool Shop. (fights back the tears) Mr Keller, please can't we just run... Call the cops or some-'

**KELLER**

(turns to face Joel)

Nope. We can't! Do I have to remind you that there is a certain dollar value attached to that thing? We need to keep it here. We can't let it leave. Tomorrow morning we drive that son-of-a-bitch outside, we drag it out there, I don't fuckin' care how but we do it. We still stand to collect.

Keller swings the shotgun ceilingward, grabs Joel by the scruff of his neck and hauls him across the store. Keller then throws him up against one of the beer coolers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

It likes the darkness...so how about you and I throw some light on the subject? Huh?

Keller turns and starts to pull packs of torches from the merchandise aisle behind him. He tosses the torches to Joel.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Unpack these flashlights...all of em'. You got any batteries here?

**JOEL**

(can barely believe this is happening)  
I can't do this, Mr Keller. I'll get into so-'

**KELLER**

(mean and pissed)

--You'll get dead, Joel, if you fuck up again! Now, do what the hell I told ya'. Batteries?! Do you have any?

Joel nods "Yes." He starts to cry.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(indicates to the torches)

Light up as many of these suckers as you can carry. I got something might help...

Hands trembling, Joel goes to work tearing the torch packs apart.

Keller strides over to the counter, uses the flame of his Zippo to rummage inside his gear-bag. He withdraws what looks like a medical kit pouch.

CLOSE UP: of Keller's hand ripping the pouch's Velcro top open, it's packed with magnesium flares.

Joel finishes up loading the batteries into a handful of torches, switches them on. He holds a lit torch in one hand. He jostles two more into his trouser pockets.

Keller moves toward the door that leads to the corridor. Joel and Keller stare at each other.

**KELLER**

You ready?

With a fatalistic shrug Joel nods "Yes."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Then let's go and see what our friend has in mind.

Keller heaves the door wide open...

INT. OBLONG CORRIDOR. NIGHT—SAMETIME  
 The oblong corridor. Dark and foreboding.  
 (No emergency lighting here)

## CONVENIENCE STORE

Keller rests his back against the side of a beer cooler and bends forwards at the waist, leaning around the doorjamb, surveying the corridor's length. DARKNESS. He straightens up and signals for Joel to stay put.

**KELLER**

Stay there!

Keller strikes a flare, it pops and sizzles and bursts into illumination, casting a smoky CHERRY-RED coloured light.

Keller hurls the flare down the corridor—  
 OBLONG CORRIDOR

As the flare hits the double doors at the far end—  
 CONVENIENCE STORE

Keller raises the shotgun and chambers a round.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Okay. It looks clear down there...its nowhere near those doors. (psyches himself up) Let's go.

Keller pushes off from the beer cooler, motions for Joel to follow.

Joel trails him.

## INT. OBLONG CORRIDOR. NIGHT—SAMETIME

Keller cuts to the left, aims the shotgun from his hip. Joel keeps to the right. Together they advance on the double doors. Keller stops beside the second door down from the kitchen.

**KELLER**

(gesticulates towards the double door)  
 Where are the keys for those doors?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

In the boss's office...I think.

**KELLER**

(points at the door beside him)

And this is the boss's office? (pause) And I'm guessing the door's locked, yeah?!

Joel nods "Yes."

Keller nods "Yes."

Keller swings the shotgun around and aims at the door handle.

INT. BOSS'S OFFICE GAS STATION NIGHT—SAMETIME  
ONE SECOND LATER: A peppered shotgun BLAST tears the through the door, shattering the handle and blowing the back plate loose.

From the opposite side Keller BOOTS the door open and it CRASHES against the wall. Keller marches in, ejects the spent cartridge. He surveys the small windowless office. Joel wanders in after him. The boss's office is tiny, barely furnished: a desk, a chair, and a steel cabinet placed in the corner.

**KELLER**

(irritated)

Where?

**JOEL**

(voice shaky)

In the...in the cabinet...

Keller heads for the cabinet and pulls its doors open.  
INSIDE THE CABINET: it's full of numbered keys all hung on a pegboard.

**KELLER**

(even more irritated, turns to Joel)

Where? Which one? Which key, Joel?

**JOEL**

Hook 21.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller turns back and snatches key number 21, he notices something of interest, cocks his head and smiles.

CLOSE UP: of key number 17, written on the car-key fob, 'Boss's E-Type.'

Keller grabs the car-keys-

SOUND OFF: FROM THE TOOL SHOP: another BOOMING ERUPTION of noise echoes into earshot.

Joel twirls around, breathless and frightened.

Keller shoves the car-keys into his back pocket and leaves the frame empty.

**KELLER V/O**

Come on, Joel.

INT. CORRIDOR GAS STATION NIGHT-SAMETIME

CLOSE UP: of Keller's hand inserting the key into the Tool Shop's door lock, turns it, door unlocks.

**KELLER**

(nods to the ground)

Pick up the flare.

Joel scoops the burning flare off the floor

Keller tosses the kit-pouch to Joel.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Here...present for ya'. All right... You stay close... You stay behind me.

Keller hoists the shotgun and shoulders the doors open. Cautious and slow, our two monster hunters step over the threshold.

INT. TOOL SHOP GAS STATION NIGHT-SAMTIME

The Tool Shop is a huge, vault-like structure, filled with ominous shadows.

Directly above Keller and Joel's heads is a LARGE TIMBER BALCONY! It spans the Tool Shop's width and is perhaps twenty feet in length; a wooden stairway leads up to it. (The balcony is later revealed to be a 'rest-area' where employees take breaks.)

Keller activates a MAG-TORCH attached underneath the rifle's barrel; everywhere he looks he trains the shotgun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller's POV: as he plays the circular beam of light over stacks of tires shelved up a corner.

On Joel: he ambles along behind Keller, trying to look everywhere at once. He clutches the flare in one hand, shining it back and forth--in the other he holds a torch.

WIDE as they both emerge from under the balcony. Keller aims the rifle up at the roof towering above them. Keller's POV: of the MASSIVE roof that boasts grime coated skylights in places. The roof is criss-crossed with naked gantry beams, strip lights aplenty attached to them.

No monster to be seen---anywhere!

Keller and Joel stalk their way further into the Tool Shop.

Off to their left are rows of repair stalls (a four foot high cinder block wall separates each stall), workbenches surround the stalls' perimeters, all of them littered with auto-parts and dirt encrusted tools.

Some of the stalls are empty; others contain vehicles in varying states of repair.

Off to the right, THREE BIG ROLLER DOORS stand one after the other. The doors go to make up nearly the entire Tool Shop's façade.

An apprehensive Keller and Joel skirt around miscellaneous objects: trolley jacks, large barrels of oil, workbenches with engines atop of them. Light from the torches and the flare illuminate a particular workbench, the boards of which are coated with a CLEAR SLIMY LIQUID. Beside the bench, on the floor, lies a tool box on its side, all the tools spewed out, they glint in the light.

Every sound the two monster hunters make is amplified, echoing into the Tool Shop's deeper reaches.

Keller moves towards an elevated work ramp with an Oldsmobile parked on-top of it. He drops to one knee and shines the MAG-LIGHT upwards, light scoping the vehicles underneath.

Nothing!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Joel heads toward the first roller door, angles the flare at a line of heavy tubs and shelving—he's hyperventilating. He finds no monster!

From the opposite end of the Tool Shop sounds a SHARP CLATTER OF NOISE.

Keller rises up, his gaze riveted to the building's far end.

Horrified, Joel jerks up and starts to whimper.

REVERSE ANGLE: of the Tool Shop's opposite end: the cherished Jaguar is parked up there, its rear-end pointing toward the third and final roller door. Lines of benches rest against the wall, all of them rack up to an Observation Booth in the farthest corner.

(The Observation Booth is a small glass and wooden framed structure, flat roofed, three of its sides jetting off from the building's wall. It has been built for customers' to sit in and watch their cars get serviced, if they wish.)

Swirling, at knee-height, all around the tarpaulin covered Jaguar is what looks like GROUND FOG.

Keller raises the shotgun to his shoulder, glances at Joel, and moves on...

Joel stands firm, shivering and frightened, staring at the Jaguar sports car.

Keller closes in on the Jaguar. As he edges around the vehicle's rear, his eyes stare downwards.

Keller's POV: of a canister of lubricant lying on the floor. He kicks it and the canister rolls underneath the sports car and out of sight. CLUNK!

Keller cat-steps towards the benches, cocks his head-- Keller's POV: looking along the car's off-side, at the ground, which is littered with lubricant canisters,

possibly knocked from the bottom shelves of the benches adjacent.

Keller drops to his haunches and shines the MAG-LIGHT underneath the benches.

Keller's POV: of the dark nooks and crannies—nothing there! He rises up and moves on.

Keller turns to the Jaguar, squints at it. He tenses up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller readies the shotgun (as best he can) with one hand, with the other he grips the tarpaulin and RIPS the weighty drop cloth off the car.

No monster inside!

Keller exhales a breath of relief.

As does Joel!

Keller relaxes a little and cat steps towards the Observation Booth.

LOW ANGLE: of the SHADOWS under the workbenches as they BURST INTO LIFE—SOUNDLESSLY! The darkness suddenly takes on different shapes and curls and slithers around objects piled on the shelves.

Keller, in the FG, oblivious to the unheard/unnoticed movement behind him approaches the Observation Booth. Keller quickly studies its structure, grabs the door handle to the one and only door leading into the booth, and rattles it. Locked!

SOUND OFF: as Joel SCREAMS OUT!

Keller spins around...

Joel remains by the first roller door: he has just burned his hand with the magnesium flare and dropped it.

LOW ANGLE: as the flare hits the ground, lands in a slick puddle of water and SNUFFS OUT...

LONG SHOT: as the cavernous Tool Shop sinks into LOOMING blackness.

**JOEL**

(shouts over)

I burned my hand! (flustered and scared) I'm sorry...I...I didn't mean to—'

**KELLER**

(shouts back)

Just calm down and light another flare.

**JOEL**

How do I do that?

**KELLER**

(distracted)

Unscrew the cap off the bottom and strike the top.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller starts to back away from the Observation Booth.  
 His features say it all, 'Where the hell is that thing?!"

Joel does as he is asked. Using the torch he opens the kit-pouch, pulls out a flare, unscrews the base, strikes the top—the flare POPS and SIZZLES, burns brightly-- emitting a lavender coloured light.

Keller turns around...

AT THAT MOMENT:-

A MASSIVE ERUPTION OF NOISE! It sounds as if a ton of frozen French Fries has just been thrown into a vat of boiling oil.

In the bg, behind Keller, the workbenches with the Kobalos underneath TEAR AWAY (two in total) from the wall and slide across the floor with real speed. It looks as though the workbenches have been winched to the back of an invisible tow-truck.

Unnerved and awestruck, Keller tramps back a step...

The moving workbenches rush past the Jaguar's rear, missing it by a few feet before sliding a good ten feet further on... High demand tools shake and fall off the benches' tops as they get dragged in a supernatural way. SUDDENLY the workbenches skid to a halt.

Keller sprints to the Jaguar's off-side and aims the shotgun (over the vehicle's roof) at the workbenches.

On Joel: he's reduced to a hopeless, quivering mess.

A MOMENT OF UNEASY WEIRD STILLNESS. SOUND OF: the bench tops: the wooden slats CREAKING as if under immense pressure.

--AND THEN--

On the workbenches: A SUDDEN UPWARD BLAST OF MOVEMENT, as a HUGE, HISSING AND SNARLING JET-BLACK SHAPELESS MASS OF JELLO smashes up through the wooden slats.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The beast from the trunk sails upwards; it seems to hang in mid-air for a second, before gravity pushes it back to earth.

Keller keeps the rifle aimed at the monster, index finger curled around the trigger, but he's too stupefied, a little terrified to open fire right away.

On the Kobalos: as it unfurls its lower-half (like an oversized Octopus pushing out its legs) and HITS the floor with a jellified slap. The monster flattens itself, then rises up to the height of a fully grown man. The Kobalos moves as if it were underwater, like a Scholl of fish. Rafts of light shimmer over its liquid surface; it's like a sliver of dark ocean contaminated with crude oil, crude oil under intelligent and muscular control.

SOUND OF: Hollow clickety-clack noises.

Keller raises the riot gun's aim...

In the beam of the shotgun's MAG-LIGHT, under the creature's viscous skin, a set of teeth materialize. The fangs are comparable to those of a fossilized prehistoric monster. The teeth seem to streak up from deep inside the Kobalos, on reaching the surface of its skin the vicious array of mandibles CLICK together to form a set of LARGE, BEAR-TRAP JAWS.

The Kobalos is a true AMORPHOUS MONSTER: it has no limbs and no features.

Joel crouches low, driven to the borders of insanity. He allows the flare to slip from his shaky fingers, it lands at his feet.

The creature extends its newly constructed maw forwards until its fangs BREAK the surface of its skin. The Kobalos parts its glistening jaws with a bull alligator hiss and then GUSHES straight for Keller, going for him at Cheetah speed.

Keller reacts and opens FIRE...KABOOM!!

REVERSE ANGLE: of the monster as heated buckshot tears into its liquefied flesh, causing it to recoil and roar out in pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller lays down an awesome bombardment of 12 gauge buckshot. He ceaselessly jacks the weapon's stock, firing round after round...

The GUNSHOTS hold the Kobalos at bay; it finally withdraws and leaps upwards. CLOSE UP: of the monster's slimy back, THREE, MUSCULAR SILICON ARMS with long bony fingers morph into shape, thrust upwards and seize hold of an overhead gantry beam. The creature then swings through the air, negotiating its way from one gantry beam to another, like an HUGE ape using a jungle gym, moving nimbly and fast, heading in Joel's direction.

Keller cocks and fires the shotgun at the retreating creature, some shots strike home, some don't.

Keller shifts his aim slightly, eyes turn steely, depresses the trigger. KABOOM!

CLOSE UP: of a gantry beam the moment the fired shell BLASTS it to pieces. It's also the very same instant the Kobalos takes hold of the FIRED beam, it gives way and the monster plummets to the ground—and lands—not ten feet away from Joel.

Joel, freezes for a second--then goes berserk with terror, screaming and clawing at the wall behind him to get out.

The Kobalos turns its jaws toward Joel, slime drips from its fangs, and ROARS. (The monster is able to rotate its jaws a full 360 degrees) The creature appears to dislike the bright glow cast from the flare at Joel's feet. The Kobalos slowly slithers backwards toward the wreaths of shadow.

Keller primes the shotgun and sights the beast, pulls the trigger. CLICK! Keller's eyes go wide. He lets the rifle dangle off his shoulder on a strap, un-holsters the .357 and snaps the cocking slider.

**KELLER**

(yells)

*JOEL. JOEL! LIGHT ANOTHER FLARE! LIGHT ANOTHER FLARE FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!*

On Joel: too frightened by the monster's presence to do much of anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller opens fire as he jogs towards the creature, fingering the trigger continuously as he closes the distance.

The Kobalos ROARS in anger and pain as projectiles eat into its flesh.

The creature puts itself through a new metamorphosis: the watery flesh around its maw suddenly elongates into a tubular shaped head, fangs protrude from its end: the creature's DEATH'S HEAD.

LOW ANGLE: as the Kobalos develops lower limbs, muscular hindquarters, comparable to those of a Tyrannosaurus.

On Keller: the Desert Eagle locks open...empty. He holsters the weapon and withdraws the Colt from the back of his trousers, aims and opens fire.

On Kobalos: as bullets rake its form, the creature persists with its MORPHING. Its tubular head spreads into a huge fanning neck-frill, exactly like the ones seen on a Triceratops.

The monster pivots away from Joel and breaks into a loping canter, heading straight for the stairway leading up to the balcony.

Keller shoots at the beast, relentlessly, until the Colt is exhausted of ammunition. He halts, drops the gun and un-holsters the Smith & Wesson, opens fire and starts to run again... Keller scoops up the Colt at the last possible second.

The Kobalos flinches and roars as it sprints for the balcony--five fired bullets from the pistol hammer its body. The creature jumps up the stairway, vaults the balcony's parameter railing and drops to the floor.

On touch down, the monster issues a bestial ROAR as its MASS utterly dissipates and breaks apart like a surging ocean wave striking an outcrop of rocks.

LATERAL MOVE LOW ANGLE: of the turbulent BLACK WATER as it RUSHES forwards and bashes chairs and tables from its path. Some items of furniture leapfrog into the air, seemingly punched off the lip of the BLACK WAVE and thrown upwards as if bounced off the end of an uncoiled spring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

On Joel: curled up with his arms wrapped around his legs, head rested on his knees. Keller's hand reaches toward him and takes hold of his forearm. Joel jumps and screams out; Keller yanks him to his feet, pulls him forwards. Joel grabs the flare off the floor on route.

#### **KELLER V/O**

Move your ass, Joel!

LONG SHOT: as Joel and Keller run across the Tool Shop, heading for the repair stalls.

UP ON THE BALCONY, furniture flies through the air as the BLACK WAVE cascades against the far wall and then washes back over the balcony, rushing back the way it just came. Like a tidal wave the slimy water roils towards the staircase, but unlike a tidal wave it freezes in mid-curl.

The Kobalos begins a new metamorphosis: the waves start to rise upwards, higher and higher...

Joel and Keller charge into a repair stall containing a Camaro, they both scramble around to the front of the vehicle. Together they drop to their haunches and lean against the car's front fender.

Keller snaps the pistol's dead-lock, the cylinder opens and he shakes out the empty shells. He stares up at the balcony...

SOUND OFF: of the creature's ROARS and SHRIEKS.

UP ON THE BALCONY, the Kobalos rises up into full view, it has transformed back into the tubular headed-- Tyrannosaurus beast. The creature starts to pace around the balcony, footfalls thumping, it passes through shafts of white moonlight, raises its DEATH'S HEAD; jaws spin 360 degrees, open and close, rapidly.

Keller keeps an eye on the creature as he re-loads the pistol.

**JOEL**

(barely able to speak, scared witless)  
What...What the hell is it? What are we gonna-'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER** (speaks fast and works fast)  
Shut the fuck up and knock out the torch! And douse the flare! Do it, Joel, now...no arguments.

Joel switches off the torch and starts to stub out the flare.

PURE DARKNESS smoothers in from all sides!

Keller, with feverish precision, begins to feed shells into the shotgun.

As he does so, Keller keeps check on the Kobalos...

UP ON THE BALCONY, the creature continues to stomp from one side of the raised platform to the other. The MONSTER'S DEATH'S HEAD (despite having no eyes) turns from side-to-side, as if surveying its surroundings.

Keller slams a fresh magazine into the Colt and turns to Joel.

**KELLER**

(speaks in a whisper and fast)

Alright, Joel, I'm gonna see what's what with this thing.  
 See if we can drive it... Keep him on his toes. Stay  
 here!

Keller hunkers down low and skirts around the side of the Camaro. He moves to a workbench, stays on his haunches, un-holsters the Desert Eagle. Keller peers up at the creature.

Keller's POV: of the Kobalos, up on the balcony, still pacing, its watery body quivering with every step...

Keller reloads the .357 as quietly as possible, turns to Joel.

**KELLER**

(whispers)

Joel. Joel!

Joel stares around the side of the car.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Throw me a flare.

Joel pulls out a flare and rolls it along the dirt smeared concrete floor. Keller picks up the light-stick with his left hand, keeps the Desert Eagle gripped in his right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

(grits his teeth)

You get ready to move.

**JOEL**

(panicking)

What are you gonna do?

Keller straightens up, walks to the repair stall's opening and (boldly) takes aim at the beast.

The Kobalos is bent low, moving laterally. It halts, rises up and sees—or senses Keller. A moment of peace!  
 The creature stares and Keller stares back.

The Kobalos then ROARS out a kill-shriek, jumps up over the railings and hits the floor running...

Keller reacts by blasting round after round at the incoming beast.

The Kobalos' MASS breaks apart like a crashing wave as fired projectiles stitch its flesh. The watery cataclysm RACES forwards, its jaws separate and sink into the dark depths as it approaches...

Keller caps off four more shots, in a lightning set of moves he drops the .357 on top of a bench, ignites the flare, reclaims the Desert Eagle and takes aim...

...the Kobalos' POV LOW ANGLE: as it careers into the repair stall. Keller back steps and BLASTS two more rounds before lobbing the flare. The light stick twirls end-over-end and STRIKES the CURL of the FAST APPROACHING WAVE.

Hiss! Snuffs out!

**KELLER**

*SHIT! Joel. Run! Move!*

Keller sprints, grabs hold of Joel's wrist, together they leap up over the benches, over the partitioning wall and dive down into the adjoining stall...

HERE IT COMES...The Kobalos pursues them; a RAGING INKY BLACK TSUNAMI.

What follows is a bizarre chase sequence seen from various angles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The MONSTEROUS TIDAL WAVE sloshes under the Camaro, crashes against the cinderblock wall and IMMEDIATELY, in a parody of the Japanese art piece 'The Great Wave.', lunges upwards, hurling four workbenches off its crest. Multitudes of tools and components are flung every which way.

A horror-struck Joel and Keller streak from one stall to the next, hurdling over workbenches and partitioning walls. Running across the hoods of cars or weaving around them—they move as fast as they can.

BEHIND THEM: The MONSTER SURF SURGES in pursuit, gaining speed and momentum (why the creature choose to pursue our

two monster hunters through the repair stalls, we'll never know—it must just love the thrill of the hunt).

The streaming black surf travels faster, so fast now that when it GUSHES underneath the cars it causes the vehicles to Hydroplane sideways. Door and rocker panels slam against workbenches and brick walls with a metallic crunch.

Benches aplenty get detonated—spectacularly!—as the WATERY MONSTER swells up and over the partitioning walls and CRASHES down into the next stall.

A flying workbench comes down and SMASHES an Estate car's windshield to smithereens.

Joel and Keller tear around a Chevrolet truck with its engine block jacked up on axel stands. Joel's legs buckle out from under him and he drops to his knees, exhausted with fear. Keller grabs his upper arm and wrenches him to his feet. He hurls Joel up on top of a bench.

**KELLER**

*What the fuck are you doing?! Keep moving!!*

SOUND OFF: of the RUMBLING SURF, coming closer... Keller spins around, looks under the Chevrolet and sees—on the opposite side of the stall: the Kobalos TIDAL WAVE roar down onto the floor and RUSH straight for him. As the driven surf pitches below the truck it rocks like it's on a stormy sea but 'amazingly' does not fall off its stands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

In the bg, Keller dives over the wall and runs full pelt. In the fg, the MONSTER TSUNAMI punches the benches up in the air, and streams after him.

Keller and Joel bolt across the last 'empty' repair stall. Keller twists around at the waist, deftly raises the .357 and caps off three shots...

REVERSE ANGLE: of the RENEGADE WATERY MONSTER as it breasts the cinderblock wall, spewing a detritus of items upwards and outwards. THREE FIRED BULLET hits erupts geysers off its glassy surface.

The creature spreads its MASS over the floor and goes full throttle...

Keller whirls, holsters the .357 and pushes Joel ahead. The two of them sprint side-by-side, arms pumping, legs pounding.

LOW ANGLE: KOBALOS'S POV: as it charges forwards, effortlessly catching up with Keller and Joel's boot-heels.

The wave's forefront lifts up with shocking suddenness, rises eight feet high, as black as a moonless night.

SOUND OF: Clickety-clack noises as the creature nosily re-forms its jaws. The BEAR-TRAP MAW slashes through the membranous skin and Hisses.

Joel sneaks a glance over his shoulder and screams and wavers...

Keller snatches hold of Joel's arm and drags him onwards.

**KELLER**

(yells)

Don't you look at it!

They bound headlong—soon they'll have nowhere to run to. Keller scans the Tool Shop's far wall, looking for a way out. His eyes lock onto the Observation Booth, an idea takes hold. Keller keeps running, jacks a fresh round into the shotgun and fires from the hip.

REVERSE ANGLE: of the Observation Booth as the centre window EXPLODES.

**JOEL**

(desperate, terrified)

Where...where are we—'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

(bellows)

---Shut the fuck up and keep running!

Keller and Joel veer towards the Booth, sprinting flat out.

The MONSTER TIDAL WAVE remains in hot pursuit.

Teenager and hired killer dash up to the broken window and dive headlong straight through it.

INT. OBSERVATION BOOTH

They both HIT the floor face down, landing in a scattering of shattered glass.

ONE SECOND LATER: A TREMENDOUS THWACK! As the Kobalos SLAMS into the Booth with all the weight and fury of a one ton bull!

Keller flips himself over onto his back and hefts the shotgun, chambers a round...

The creature lunges its DEATH'S HEAD through the windowless cavity, jaws turn sideways and SNAP at Keller's legs.

Joel screams and crab-crawls towards the Booth's rear.

Keller shoves the shotgun's barrel between the monster's salivating fangs---

**KELLER**

*FUCK OFF!*

---and pulls the trigger. KABOOM!

The Kobalos recoils, ROARS in pain and vomits black bile.

Keller works the rifle's stock, incessantly cocking and firing the shotgun...

OUTSIDE THE BOOTH: The Kobalos WRITHES in pain as its body absorbs each BLAST. The heated buckshot pummels its fleshy skin, beating it back.

**KELLER**

(yells over the roar of the gun)

*JOEL! I'M RUNNING OUT OF SHELLS! LIGHT ANOTHER FLARE!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Joel is too petrified to do anything.

OUTSIDE THE BOOTH: the creature rushes forwards and batters the Observation Booth, windows crack, timber creaks as the watery monster churns and spreads over the structure's frontage. It then streams up onto the Booth's flat topped roof, out of sight.

Keller lies flat on his back, aims the shotgun at the ceiling and fires two rounds...

LOW ANGLE: of the Booth's ceiling the moment twin buck-shots pepper it, black sludge drips through the holes...

SOUND OFF: of a 'fast' coursing river noise, moving away from the Booth.

Keller listens, works the rifle's stock and pulls the trigger. Confirming what he already suspects. CLICK! The rifle's exhausted. He anxiously pulls a live cartridge from the Bandolier, cranks the stock which opens the ejection port and slips the shell inside. Keller aims at the Booth's one and only door and FIRES!

The buckshot rips the door from the jamb.

Keller gains his feet and yanks the door open...

Joel stays huddled on the floor, wrapped in total terror.

INT. TOOL SHOP

Keller marches out of the Booth--halts--looks up and sees...

Keller's POV: of the monster tidal wave travelling 'vertically' over the wall, heading for the ceiling.

Keller un-holsters the .357, ejects the spent clip, inserts a fresh one, works the cocking slider, aims and opens fire.

On the Kobalos: as heated rounds rake its watery form and tear shelves down off the wall.

The creature slithers underneath a large extractor fan housing (clamped about twenty feet off the ground on the wall) and gathers its bulk. The beast mutates into a giant bulbous shape, similar to a massive bees' nest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller drains the .357 of ammunition, tosses the firearm onto the Jaguar's extra long hood. He ranges forwards, circles around until he faces the extractor unit; he pulls out the Colt, works the slider and fires...

REVERSE ANGLE: as a constant volley of shots slam into the Kobalos' globular bundle. From its centre spurts an extra long SLIMY TENTACLE, the tentacle telescopes out, twenty feet or so, before U-turning back and FEEDING itself (between the fan blades) deep inside the unit. Each bullet hit causes the slimy umbilical to flinch and pulse, rounds ricochet off the metal. ANGLE: as the monster's bulbous mass reduces...

Keller knows this enigma is about to escape him. He fires the Colt dry; losing precious seconds, he re-loads and fires...

REVERSE ANGLE: as 'slick and fast' the last of the 'giant monstrous snake' detaches itself from the fan's underside and follows the remainder of its body up inside the extractor unit.

On Keller: as the Colt's slider locks back...empty! CLICK! He tosses the weapon to the floor and un-holsters the Smith & Wesson, aims and listens...

ANGLE: of a METAL PIPE that plugs into the extractor unit -inside: SOUND OFF: of THUMPS! CLANGS! TANGS! Keller opens fire, blasting all six rounds into the pipe. Black Jello squirts out through the newly formed bullet holes like water from a shot-up water barrel.

A moment...no more sounds of movement in the pipe.

Keller lowers the pistol, pulls the shotgun's jerry-strap off his shoulder and throws the rifle onto a nearby workbench. He retrieves the Desert Eagle, looks at Joel.

**KELLER**

(anxious)

I need to get outside, Joel. Real fast!

Joel stands in the Booth's doorway, trembling.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(points off)

Can I get out through that door over there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller re-loads the .357 as he walks towards Joel.

Joel peers over his shoulder...

ANGLE: of a grease stained door situated at the rear of the last repair stall.

Joel nods "Yes."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(points at a torch)

Give me one of those?! (Joel hands him a torch) I should imagine that *that* door's locked too...and you don't have any keys?!

Joel nods "Yes."

Keller nods "Yes."

EXT. JUNK YARD. NIGHT—SAMETIME

ONE SECOND LATER: from the opposing side of the stained door comes the SOUND of THUNDEROUS POP CORN GUNSHOTS. Fired slugs splinter the door around the handle like dark cat's eyes. Keller rips the door open and strides out, he steps into a 'run-to-riot' automobile junk yard. Keller raises his left arm, holds the torch in his left hand; crosses his wrists with his right hand holding the Desert Eagle. Everywhere he looks he shines the torch and aims the gun.

Keller moves amongst the wrecked cars, playing the flashlight's beam over the dusty ruined vehicles.

He ranges his way along a lane of junkers.

He approaches a huge pile of rusted auto-parts, trains the light over the mound of destroyed components.

Nothing!

SOUND OFF: of a THUD and CLINK noise. The sound emanates from the yards opposite side.

Keller spins around; freezes, listens.... Heads off...

ANGLE: Of torchlight drifting back and forth along the length of a wrecked 'Pinto.' The shaft of light decreases as Keller closes in.

SOUND OFF: from under the Pinto—comes the noise of 'something' moving around...

Keller stops, drops to all fours, peers under the car...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

..In the torchlight SUDDENLY----in blur of movement—a rabbit bolts out and tears past Keller and off into the night.

**KELLER**

(half scared to death)

*SHIT!* (calms down, sighs) Wabbits!

Keller rises up, leaves the frame empty.

HIGH ANGLE: of a large circular vent, grilled over with geometric meshing: the extractor fan's outlet. Torchlight illuminates the vent, built high into the wall. The column of light quickly drops downwards. Keller stares up at the side of the Tool Shop, searching for tell-tale slime trails---there isn't a single one.

SOUND OFF: of the drone of a car engine, rapidly approaching...

Keller listens, clicks off the torch and leaves the frame empty.

EXT. GAS STATION. FORECOURT. NIGHT—SAMETIME  
Baterman's Mustang speeds onto the forecourt, lights blazing, engine revving.

He parks the car in exactly the same place as last time and switches off the big V6 engine. A BEEFY, MUSCULAR GUY is sat in the passenger seat.

INT. TOOL SHOP NIGHT—SAMETIME

Keller stalks back inside the Tool Shop, rips off the bandolier and throws it on-top of a workbench in front of him.

**KELLER**

(talks fast and low)

Car has just pulled up outside, go see who it is.

Joel lingers in the Booth's doorway.

**JOEL**

(shuddering with fear)

Where...Where's that thing? Where is it?

**KELLER**

(angry)

I don't know, Joel! I don't know where the fuck it is!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

As he talks, Keller re-loads the pistol, walks towards Joel.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Well, what the fuck are you waiting for?! Go and see whose outside. NOW!

Joel reluctantly tracks his way towards the second roller door.

Keller picks up the Colt Special off the floor...

On reaching the roller door, Joel drops to his knees and peers out through one of three 'perspex glass' windows. Joel's POV: Of Baterman bailing out from his Mustang, he reaches down behind the driver's seat and comes up holding a baseball bat. From the passenger seat climbs Baterman's muscular companion. They both beat a path towards the convenience store's entrance door.

Joel spins around, looking like he's just been punched in the stomach.

**JOEL**

Oh God!

**KELLER**

What is it?

**JOEL**

It's Baterman! I think he's come back here to punch my lights out. He's got a baseball bat...and he's brought his big, older brother with him.

Keller stares at Joel impassively for a moment. He slams a fresh magazine into the Colt.

**KELLER**

(sighs)

I'll take care of 'em.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE NIGHT-SAMETIME  
Cu-of the entrance door seen from a side elevation...

**BATERMAN SENIOR V/O**  
(speaks in a whisper)

--He's not fucking well here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN JUNIOR V/O**

(whispers back)

He *is* here!

**BATERMAN SENIOR V/O**

--So why are all the lights off?! Am telling ya', he's long gone...

The tip of the baseball bat CLINKS against the door, beside the chrome handle; weight is applied to the bats opposite end. The entrance door coasts wide open and in steps Bateman, quickly followed by Bateman senior.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

So, why is the door open, huh? Fuck-head!

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

(sardonically)

Oh yeah. So, why is the Caddy over there so fuckin' quiet? You little asshole! I'll tell you why it's so fuckin' quiet: 'cause there ain't nothing *in it* that's why! And there never was 'anything' *in it* in the first place.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

Yes there was! Look, I'm telling ya' there was somebody in the goddamn trunk of that car. I heard 'em! I'm not making this shit up.

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

Well, you're not making a fucking believer outta me. I ain't here for my health, bro, start stirring it up a little...while we're young, huh? Make it easy on yourself...

Bateman senior pushes his younger brother towards the aisle near to the picture windows, while he starts along the centre aisle. Bateman junior raises the bat, parting the air with the fat end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

(yells out)

*HEY MONTELLI! WHERE THE FUCK'RE YOU AT? COME ON OUT,  
WHEREVER YOU ARE, PANSY-BOY! MONTELLI!! COME ON OUT  
HERE, I GOT SOMETHING FOR YA'!*

Baterman junior reaches the counter, stops and surveys the bullet blasted Kiosk window.

Baterman senior glances at the shot-through pane-- then his gaze falls on to Keller's gear-bag...

**BATERMAN JUNIOR (CONT'D)**

What the fuck happened to that? Montelli musta pissed off a customer or something...

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

(preoccupied for a second)

Something... (he comes to) Check the bag.

Baterman junior moves to the counter.

Baterman senior makes for the door leading out to the corridor, its wide open, the corridor beyond swathed in shadowy blackness...

Baterman senior is about to step through the doorway when, from the darkness---

--Keller's fist ZOOMS OUT and punches him in his Adam's apple. The elder Baterman brother is sent reeling, clawing at his throat...

Keller advances on him and delivers a devastating scissor kick to his chest. Baterman senior flies backwards and SMASHES against the merchandise shelving behind him. He then drops down on his ass, choking, knocked half way to unconsciousness.

Baterman junior races forwards and pivots, prepares to take a swing at Keller via the baseball bat.

Keller steps towards him and raises his right arm, levelling the Colt with Baterman junior's face.

**KELLER**

*STOP!*

Baterman the younger freezes, stares down the firearms bore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Drop the bat!

He does and Keller places his foot on it and backheels the bat across the tiles. It rolls to a stop against the beer cooler's base.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Come here... *you* piece of shit-'

Keller grips Baterman junior by the scruff of his neck and hurls him up against one of the beer coolers.

Keller pushes the Colt's barrel underneath Baterman junior's chin.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

You're a very persistent little puppy aren't ya'! What the fuck are you doing back here anyhow? Thought you'd drop by and kick the shit outta Joel, huh? Didn't count on him having company...

Joel gingerly wanders into the store.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

(voice high and quivery)

You touch me, or my brother again and you're a fucking dead man.

**KELLER**

Really! That's a rich threat coming from a boy with loaded gun stuck against his neck.

Baterman senior, coughing, clutching at his throat, tries to make to his feet.

Keller, in series of fast movements, turns around at the waist, whips out the Desert Eagle and blasts a shot at

him. (Keeps the Colt pressed against the younger brother's neck.) *BLAM!*

The fired slug ploughs into a row of canned goods right beside Baterman senior's head, torn cans splatter their contents everywhere— Baterman Senior freezes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(casually)

What are you doing? You stay on the floor! I like you down there...you look good down there. Keep your ass on the ground and your hands where I can see 'em. Joel?

**JOEL**

(flinches)

Yes sir.

**KELLER**

Go grab my jacket, get the keys outta the pocket and lock the front door. Do it now.

Joel nods "Yes." He meanders up the centre aisle, picks up Keller's jacket.

Baterman junior glares at Joel.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

Who the fuck is this limey prick, Joel?

**KELLER**

Hey! Hey! Sunshine, maybe you'd better watch your fuckin' mouth! You and your brother are lucky to still be breathing here. And seeing how the jury is still out on what I'm actually gonna do with you two, I suggest you watch your Ps and Qs. Joel?

Joel locks the door and heads back to the end aisle, nods "Yes."

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Go look in my gear-bag and find and fetch for me a set of handcuffs, will ya'?

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

(worried)

What the fuck is this shit?

**KELLER**

It's a stick-up! And you and your brother just got yourselves made.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

We'll get the cops to bust you, man! I swear to fucking Christ! People will come out here looking for us, plenty of people, and that'll fuck up your shitty little get together... You can't get away with this, I don't give a fuck who you are-'

By the counter, Joel starts to rifle through the contents of the gear-bag, withdraws a set of handcuffs.

**KELLER**

--I'm not interested in what I can and can't do, big guy. Besides, I'm doing this for your protection; Joel and I are on safari, trying to earn ourselves some extra money... and we can't allow either of you two to fuck that up for us. There's something far worse than me hanging around here...someplace. Eency weency spider crawled up the spout earlier and we're waiting on daylight to flush him out. Let's hurry it up with those cuffs, Joel.

**JOEL**

(holds the cuffs in the air)

Are these the ones you want?

**KELLER**

Those are the ones I want. Now, you take 'em and you slap on 'big guy's' wrists here.

Joel approaches Baterman senior and falters-- he's trying to work the restraint's latch locks, trying 'in vain' to open them...

Baterman senior stubbornly keeps his hands on his head.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(slams the side of his head with the hand cannon)  
Put your fucking hands behind your back. *Do it!*

Trembling, the elder brother complies...

Joel doesn't look too sure about what he's doing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

Don't put those cuffs on my brother, Joel. This sick bastard is going kill us all and you know it!

**KELLER**

Oh, yeah?! So what exactly were you and happy bear here gonna do when you arrived not five minutes ago? Kiss Joel all over! I don't think so. You came here to fuck him up, so shut your goddamn mouth! (angry) What's going on with those cuffs, Joel?

**JOEL**

(flustered)

I don't know how to work these.

**KELLER**

Yes, you do know how to work those. You've seen 'em use a set of cuffs on the TV cop shows a million, trillion times. Now quit stalling and put those things on him. Come on! Use the little key attached to the cuffs to open 'em, see where the lock is? Come on, Joel. Some time this week... You can do it.

Joel squats down and 'amazingly' with the little key he manages to unlock the cuffs. Joel then zzzips the cuff's locks shut around the older brother's wrists. Once done, he rises up and backs away.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

There! Wasn't that hard now was it? Okay. (to Baterman senior) Get on your feet, big boy. Let's move.

**BATERMAN SENIOR**

Fuck you, man! You're not gonna get away with this you fucking asshole!

**KELLER**

I'm sorry, excuse me, I already *am* getting away with this...

A full scale row erupts between the Baterman brothers and Mr Keller.

The argument saps their attention from any goings-on in the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Joel backs his way towards the door leading out to the corridor. He senses something is wrong and slowly turns around...

Joel's POV: of the open doorway, a bank of that UNEARTHLY GROUND MIST floats into the convenience store.

SOUND OF: off to Joel's right, a pitter-patter noise, like fingers tapping a beat on cellophane. Joel spins on his heels and sees---SPLATTERS of BLACK SLUDGE dripping down from above. The sludge hits a stack of wrapped pastry.

Joel, shivering, lifts his eyes to the ceiling...

LOW ANGLE: of the suspended ceiling tiles, undulating as some great weight transverses over them (puddles of black slime leaks out from the sides of tiles and oozes down to the floor in long rods), heading toward where--directly below--the arguing trio yell and shout at each other...

**JOEL**

(his gaze stays fixed to the ceiling, terrified whisper)  
Mr Keller.

The guys just keep on arguing, oblivious to the creature closing in overhead.

**JOEL**

(speaks louder)

Mr Keller.

ANGLE: of the ceiling tiles sagging under the weight of Kobalos as it draws to a halt, right above where the guys just keep on trading insults.

Joel, with his fear running into overdrive, tears trickling down his face, starts to back away.

SOUND OFF: FROM INSIDE THE CRAWL-SPACE: Clickety-clack noises...

**JOEL**

(screams his lungs out)

*Oh God!! MR KELLER!*

Keller turns around...

**KELLER**

(annoyed and distracted)

*WHAT JOEL? What the fuck is-'*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

He clocks Joel's poise, his anger fades away; concern and worry fills his face instead. Keller's eyes lift to the ceiling...

**KELLER**

*Oh shit!*

Before anyone can move a muscle---total pandemonium--the slumped ceiling tiles EXPLODE DOWNWARDS, chunks of broken chipboard and shattered metal braces rain over the three men below...

The KOBALOS drops through with the confetti shower. Its body transformed into the monster with the cigar-shaped head. Long slimy arms shoot forwards and reach for... Baterman senior.

Just like a teeter-totter, Keller hits the deck, while Baterman senior jumps to his feet. The creature then takes hold of Baterman senior by his jacket lapels, he screams for everything he's worth as he's hoisted off his feet (with his hands restrained behind his back he can't do a lot anything else).

A petrified Baterman junior streaks down toward the magazine racks.

Joel turns and runs for the counter and dives over the top of it...

His chest catches Keller's gear-bag as he breasts the counter; both Joel and gear-bag SMASH down on the opposite side... ANGLE: as the gear-bag lands upside down, spewing a mound of guns and ammunition... PUSH IN with a solitarily Hand Grenade that skids across the tiles and CLUMPS to a stop against the wall. LOW ANGLE: past the grenade on Joel, he gulps air, staring at the explosive.

ON THE KOBALOS: the moment its JAWS SNAP SHUT around the sides of the older brother's head. Blood spurts in gouts. Baterman senior's muffled screams intensify, his legs kick wildly...

ANGLE: Looking out from inside a darkened beer cooler as the elder brother's booted foot KICKS OUT the GLASS, cans and bottles churn out...

The Kobalos hovers at head height above the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The remainder of its body stays up inside the crawl-space, only a portion bores down through the fissure of its own making: an upside down glacier of black roiling water.

Keller flips over onto his back, straightens his arms, with both pistols clutched in each hand he aligns the sights with his eyes and opens fire...

REVERSE ANGLE: of the Kobalos as fired bullets rip into its watery flesh. The creature's FANGS rend Baterman senior's head apart, blood spouts in a grisly shower. The monster spins its JAWS 180 degrees and shreds all the flesh from the elder brother's face in one fluid move.

Baterman junior screams out, trying to wrench the entrance door open. He starts to dry retch on seeing his brother get his face ripped off.

On the Kobalos: feasting on the bloodied flesh. The DEATH'S HEAD GLARES DOWN at Keller and ROARS... A stray bullet rips through the meat on Baterman senior's shoulder, his bonelessly limp corpse jerks...

Keller drains the handguns of ammunition; sliders rocket back and lock open. He rolls onto his stomach, ejects the spent clips, scrambles to his feet, spins around to face the creature...

The Kobalos morphs an all-new silicon arm and delivers a powerful under arm punch straight into Keller's nose. With pile-driver force Keller's nose splits apart and he flips up 'bodily' in the air, hits the ceiling and comes down, face first, in the centre aisle.  
 ANGLE: of the Desert Eagle, struck from Keller's grip is sent spinning butt-to-barrel across the floor...the firearm comes to rest against the baseball bat. *CLUNK!*

The Kobalos' DEATH'S HEAD turns and stares at Baterman junior. With a ROAR the DEATH'S HEAD telescopes out on an extra long 'Diplodocus neck', hovering over the shelves, heading straight for him.  
 Fuelled with fear, Baterman junior crouches low and runs towards the counter. ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

On reaching the corner of the aisle his trainers skid and he careers into the counter, rebounds, breaks into a sprint

The Kobalos tries to head him off at the door giving way to the corridor. It arches its extended neck down toward Baterman junior as he streaks out through the door, BEAR-TRAP JAWS yawn open and MASH shut bare inches from the nape of his neck. Baterman junior plunges underneath the DEATH'S HEAD and races out into the corridor...  
 The Kobalos ROARS and SNARLS after him, rotates its JAWS 360 degrees and turns its sightless maw to regard...

Joel! Staring over the top of the counter...  
 The Kobalos ROARS at him.

Joel screams out and dives down, out of sight.

INT. OBLONG CORRIDOR NIGHT—SAMETIME  
 Running 'mongoose fast' Baterman junior is about to burst through the double doors and into the Tool Shop when his soles screech and slide in Keller's spilt coffee, his feet fly out from under him and he SMASHES the back of his head on the solid floor with a hollow THOCK!

Baterman junior rolls on his side and curls up into a ball.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE NIGHT—SAMETIME

ANGLE: of the creature smothering Baterman senior's corpse with a rip-tide of black sludge, the corpse is sucked up inside the Kobalos' innards and pushed up through the aperture in ceiling, via muscular contractions.

The creature's DEATH'S HEAD remains on the end of its Diplodocus neck, watching the body disappear. It then manoeuvres toward the picture windows.

The sightless jaws seem to be scrutinizing Joel, undulating from side-to-side.

On Joel: numbed with terror and shock, staring over the brow of the counter, keeping the creature in sight.

The Kobalos starts forwards...

Joel screams out and drops back behind the counter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

He vehemently pulls out a flare from the pouch and lights it, the flare casts a brilliant green ethereal glow...  
He rises up and lobs the light-stick...

ANGLE: of the burning flare as it HITS THE FLOOR rolls along--CRANE UP ONTO—the DEATH'S HEAD, it HALTS, CURVES ITS NECK and SNARLS at the flare, moves towards the counter...

Joel sees this and near as good shits himself, he drops back behind the counter for the third time. Breathing in rapid breaths, Joel starts to forage through the mound of guns searching for a suitable weapon, trying to find one with a fully loaded magazine.

He selects a .45 chrome automatic, ejects the clip, checks it. Full to the brim! Joel slams the clip back into the pistol and works the slider.

Once done, staying on his haunches, he peers over the top of the counter.

Joel's POV: of the convenience store: the Kobalos has mysteriously vanished.

Joel rises up and vigilantly steps out to the store side, sighting the .45 everywhere he looks. He pads up the first aisle and picks up the flare, moves around to the second aisle.

Joel's POV: of Keller prone and unconscious in a pool of his own blood.

**JOEL**

(scared, whispers)

Mr Keller. Mr Keller, sir?

No answer. Keller is knocked out cold.

Joel starts around to the third aisle. He stops and stares.

Joel's POV of the third aisle, it's a gore soaked mess. The aisle has been turned into a knacker's shop. A pond of blood, black as ink in the green glow cast from the flare washes along the floor, blood streaks the merchandise on one side of the aisle. Vomit-splattered voids of blood coat the beer coolers' glass fronts on the other.

Joel raises his gaze to the ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Joel's POV of the ceiling—BLACK RODS OF SHINY JELLO drip to the floor from the edges of the jagged hole smashed through the ceiling tiles.

Joel closes his eyes for a moment, fear and revulsion crawling all over him—

SOUND OFF: From the Tool Shop: METALLIC BANG followed by a steel rattle. It becomes a rhythmic, consistent sound...

A panicky Joel listens for a couple of seconds and moves off...

INT. TOOL SHOP NIGHT—SAMETIME

Joel edges into the Tool Shop, raises the flare like spelunker who's just wandered into a dark cave, aims the firearm at...

--Baterman junior! Who is busy flinging himself continuously against the first roller door like a man possessed! BANG! RATTLE!

**JOEL**

(barely able to speak)

Baterman... (yells) *BATERMAN!*

Baterman spins around...

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

(clocks the gun, delirious with terror, crying)  
 Oh, that's just fuckin' great! You pointing a fucking gun, at me?! Oh you're on that limey bastard's side, aren't ya'?! I knew it!! I fucking knew it! You bastard Joel! Did you see what that thing did, it fucking killed my brother. It ripped his Goddamn face off!! What the hell is it?!! *WHAT THE HELL IS IT?!! WE GOTTA GET THE FUCK OUT! WE HAVE TO... WE HAVE TO... OH FOR CHRIST'S SAKE ...AND NOW YOU'RE GONNA SHOOT ME, YOU FUCKSTICK, MONTELLI. YOU'RE GONNA SHOOT AND I-'*

Joel can't stand it a minute longer, he grimaces and BLASTS one shot at Baterman junior.

REVERSE ANGLE: the FIRED SLUG RUSHES PAST Baterman junior's head and TEARS into the roller door behind him. The youngest Baterman brother is 'struck dumb' and falls perfectly silent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

(calm and stern, keeps the gun aimed at him)  
 Baterman! I need for you to shut up and listen to me. I'm sorry about your brother, but that wasn't my fault. That guy...Mr Keller, he was here when you showed earlier with Annabelle: he was gonna kill us all. That's why I was so desperate to get rid of you. He put a gun in my face, too. The Caddy outside is his, and that thing was in the trunk when he pulled up, and now it's burrowed its way out and its running loose... We can't stop it! If we stay here, Baterman, it'll kill us for sure. Now, I have the keys in my pocket to open the front door so we can get the hell outta here. You drive us back to town and we get some help... Whatdya say?

Bateman junior breaths easy, thinks it over, nods "Yes."

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

(calms down)

Okay. Okay, Montelli, you're on. You open the front door and I'll drive us outta here.

He goes over to Joel.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR (CONT'D)**

(uncertain)

You're not gonna shoot me, are ya'?

**JOEL**

I'm not gonna shoot ya'. I just wanna go home, Bateman.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

Makes two of us! Let's get gone, Montelli... (fearful swallow) Where's that thing...the thing that killed my brother?

**JOEL**

It's not in the store anymore. I don't know where it is...

Bateman snatches the flare from Joel and marches ahead, making for the double doors.

Joel starts forwards and freezes, he looks confused and then his confusion gives way to terror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

Bateman...wait up.

Bateman pulls the double doors open and is about to step through into the corridor, looks over his shoulder at Joel and frowns.

**BATERMAN JUNIOR**

What's the problem, Joel? Let's get the hell outta-'

Light from the flare ripples over the shadows beyond...

In front of Baterman the DARK is OILY and WATERY.--Which can only mean one thing--

The DARKNESS BURSTS INTO LIFE, it's the Kobalos!

The monster has filled the width of the corridor-- it PLUNGES FORWARDS like water RUSHING OUT from a bombed dam. The creature WASHES over a screaming, limbs flagging, Baterman junior.

CLOSE UP: of Baterman sinking fast into the Kobalos' gooey innards, THICK LIQUID as black as cough syrup rapidly smothers his body and fills his screaming mouth. The flare 'white-knuckled' in his hand snuffs out the moment the CRUDE OIL slithers over it.

Joel whirls around and sprints away...

THE Kobalos BARGES into the Tool Shop, MORPHS into a GIGAINTIC SNAKE and goes after Joel at EXPRESS TRAIN SPEED...

Joel makes a sudden lurch to his right and barrels down the steps leading into an INSPECTION PIT...

#### INT. INSPECTION PIT

It's as DARK as a mining shaft in here; Joel races along the length of the narrow trench, reaches the end wall, slams his back against it. He pulls a torch from his trouser pocket, switches it on and shines its beam while aiming the .45 at the cement steps leading down into the pit at the opposite end. He waits. Listens.

SOUND OFF: HEFTY RUSH OF WATER noise, drawing near--then, the CLUMP of weighty footfalls...

Joel looks upwards, terrified.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

#### INT. TOOL SHOP

LATERAL MOVE: with the Kobalos' muscular hindquarters, stomping over the top the inspection pit. Wooden slat boards COVER the pit's 'rectangular opening' (the planks run directly between the creature's LION-LIKE PAWS) they vibrate with each of the monster's steps...

The Kobalos halts and lowers its DEATH'S HEAD, gelatinous soaked teeth motor open with a reptilian hiss: it knows Joel is down there!

INSIDE THE PIT: Joel tracks the creature above with the torch and the gun—he knows the monster is directly overhead—he PSYCHES himself up and FIRES THREE ROUNDS...  
 LOW ANGLE: as the FIRED PROJECTILES RIP through the wooden slats... SOUND OFF: of the monster ROARING in pain... A moment...

Blood trickles trough the bullet holes...  
 CLOSE UP: of a crimson bead striking Joel's cheek. He reacts, wipes it away, sees its blood, falters...  
 ONE SECOND LATER: LOW ANGLE: WITH A BANSHEE ROAR THE MONSTER OVERHEAD TEARS several planks up and hurls them away...

Joel screams out, keeps low, scurries forwards; stops, spins around in time to see...

FROM ABOVE: BATERMAN JUNIOR'S CORPSE DROPS (disembowelled and coated in a glistening tar) and SLAPS down into the pit---lands where Joel was crouching only seconds before...

Joel's knee-jerk reaction is to fire two shots: one rips a chunk from the cement wall with a spiral of powdered dust, the other cuts through Baterman junior's body.

### **JOEL**

(hyperventilates at the sight of the corpse)  
 Oh God! Baterman...

NEXT SECOND: FALLING straight through the GAP in the planks dives the DEATH'S HEAD. It's EXTENDED on the end of the 'Brontosaurus neck.' The DEATH'S HEAD telescopes forwards and its JAWS SNAP shut a bare inch from Joel's nose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

He screams and pads backwards turns on his heels and runs for the steps...

NEXT MOMENT: The monster SMASHES DOWN onto the pit's stairs like tonnes of water hitting the rocks at the base of Niagara Falls...

Joel screams out, skids to a halt, aims the .45 and opens fire...

REVERSE ANGLE: as the salvo of bullets eat into the creature's watery hide. The CRASHING INKY WAVES swell and fill the narrow pit on both sides, gliding forwards...

Joel drains the .45 of ammunition. CLICK! He tosses the weapon and the torch to the floor, turns and runs, and jumps up towards the gap in the slats. Joel takes hold of the pit's edge and attempts to shiny his way out. ANGLE: of the soles of his trainers sliding against the smooth concrete wall, he can't get a foothold...

ANGLE: of the KOBALOS' JAWS (illuminated by the flashlight) surging sedately through its watery form, the jaws puncture the surface with a HUGE SPRAY and emit a bull-alligator HISS...

The creature is quickly coming in for the kill...

On Joel: he screams and claws at the wall...

FROM ABOVE: a bloodied hand reaches down and seizes Joel's forearm...

His screams escalate for a second. He looks up and sees--

--Keller bent at the waist, nose broke, front of his shirt a bib of blood. He stares down at Joel with a humourless grin.

#### **KELLER**

*Come on outta there, Joel.*

Keller heaves Joel out from the inspection pit, pushes him away and steps back toward the opening. Keller hefts an MP5 Automatic Machine gun, attached to his right arm via a shoulder-strap. He WRACKS THE BOLT on the firearm and aims at the nightmare rising upwards...almost POINT BLANK at its JAWS and depresses the trigger...

ANGLE: A LIGHTNING STREAK OF HIGH-VELOCITY ROUNDS drive the creature back into the depths of the inspection pit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The Kobalos SCREECHES from the very bottom of the trench...

Keller fires the automatic rifle dry. CLICK! Hurriedly, he disentangles the firearm from his shoulder and flings

it into the pit, turns, grabs Joel and together they break into a 'hundred yard dash in two seconds' run.

THEY LEAVE THE FRAME EMPTY-NEXT SECOND: From the bowels of the inspection pit, the Kobalos leaps up in one MASSIVE ASCENDING FORCE, like a sprung Jack-in-the-box, ROARING all the way.

The ASCENDING creature scatters timber slats in every direction...

The Kobalos sails over the top of a gantry beam and PLUNGES downwards... It HITS the ground in rolling waves of ferocious twists and contortions...

Keller and Joel run side-by-side heading for the repair stalls...

The creature ROARS OUT (jaws split apart and sink under the monster's murky flesh), FLATTENS ITS MASS and gives chase...

TIGHT ON Keller and Joel, RUNNING for their lives...

**JOEL**

(tremors of fear in his voice)

*WHERE...WHERE DO WE GO?*

**KELLER**

*Head for the truck! (motions ahead) The truck!*

Keller and Joel's POV: they race towards the 'jacked-up' Chevrolet van.

LOW ANGLE: of the Kobalos streaming across the floor, MEGA-FAST, closing the distance on its quarry. It begins to hump UPWARDS like a TIDAL WAVE...

Keller and Joel reach the Chevrolet-- Keller wrenches the rear doors open and heave Joel inside. Keller glances over his shoulder and then he too leaps into the truck, slamming the doors closed behind him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

ONE SECOND LATER: THUNDEROUS BANG! As the Kobalos pile-drives into the Chevrolet's back-end! The monster's inky

swell CRASHES AND WASHES against the vehicle with all the power of a STORM-RIDDEN SURF.

The twin axle-stands under the truck's engine give-way and the vehicle plummets to the floor, SMASHING down on to its brake discs...

INSIDE THE CHEVROLET: Keller and Joel are thrown violently forwards into the bulkhead...

They clamber to their feet.

Keller re-loads the Desert Eagle.

Joel pulls a torch from his pocket and switches it on, shines the beam at...

...the truck's rear windows—at the very moment the Kobalos' DEATH'S HEAD rises up 'King Cobra' style and leers in at them through the left pane...

**JOEL**

(panic struck)

What...what the hell's it doing?

**KELLER**

I don't know and I don't really care!

ANGLE: of the DEATH'S HEAD as it roves over to the right pane, CLINKS its FANGS against the glass. The monster ROARS and GUSHES backwards in an ULTRA-FAST RETREAT...

INT. TOOL SHOP

The Kobalos STREAKS across the Tool Shop's width until its posterior SMASHES into the base of the second roller door with a CLATTERING BANG! The creature bounces forwards and HALTS. The WATERY CATALYSM then performs a series of fast transformations through a menagerie of nightmarish guises: it elongates into a MONSTEROUS CENTIPEDE-TYPE CREATURE, A GIANT MAMMAL/REPTILE BEAST, complemented with a massive SCORPION-SHAPED TAIL. ROARING and SHRIEKING it then grafts itself into a HULKING CRUSTACEAN... The monster finishes off MORPHING into the CIGAR-SHAPED HEAD, TYRANNOSAURUS LIMBED BEAST...

It takes off at a run, going FLAT OUT...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INSIDE THE CHEVROLET: through the rear windows, stood on tip-toe, Keller and Joel can see it coming...

**KELLER**

(knows this is going to be bad)  
Grab a hold of something, Joel.

OUTSIDE THE CHEVROLET: The monster HITS the truck's rear with a FULL-BORE CHARGE, jolting the vehicle forwards in a shower of sparks from the brake discs.

The renegade beast RAMS the entire truck into the repair stall's back wall. The Chevrolet's front-end mangles as it CRUSHES up against the workbenches with a metallic screech of gored metal on wood---and then *CRUNCHES!* straight into solid concrete. The truck lurches to a sudden 'violent' standstill.

INSIDE THE CHEVROLET: Keller and Joel are 'once again' flung against the bulkhead. Keller gambols to his feet, pulls Joel up with him. Keller looks off to his right and sees...

The truck boasts a side-loading door...

OUTSIDE THE TRUCK: the creature launches itself 'repeatedly' at the vehicle's side panels, denting them.

**KELLER**

(an idea takes hold)

Swap places...

Keller grabs Joel's arm and moves him to where he was stood.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

Joel, get ready to jump ship. When I tell ya' pull that door open (gestures to the side door) and bail out.

**JOEL**

(scared to death)

What are you gonna do?

**KELLER**

Whatddya think? I'm letting it in here!

Keller sights the Desert Eagle at the rear windows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**JOEL**

(barely believe his own ears)

*YOU'RE WHAT? YOU'RE GONNA DO WHAT?*

On Keller: he tenses up and OPENS FIRE...

The right-hand side window BLASTS to smithereens and the rounds impact with the Kobalos' DEATH'S HEAD, joggling it backwards. The monster's JAWS disassemble and sink as it RUSHES forwards and POURS itself through the windowless cavity.

The creature's OILY EFFLUENT washes across the truck's loading bed, following the bed's canter, making straight for...

ANGLE: Keller and Joel as Joel staggers back and screams. Keller pushes him towards the side door...

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(yells)

*OUT! GET OUT NOW!*

Joel attempts to tear the side door open but he's struggling, the door weighs twice the weight it should because of the truck's angle...

Keller starts to squeeze off a torrent of rounds.

REVERSE ANGLE: the watery monstrosity strains upwards, like DEATH HIMSELF, bullets hollow the creature's FORM... Keller helps Joel with the door, they yank it open and Joel leaps out...

INT. TOOL SHOP

...Joel arcs out from the truck and lands heavily on his hands and knees.

INT. CHEVORLET

Keller JAMS his foot in the doorjamb, bracing the sliding door, keeps on firing the .357.

With SUDDEN HIDEOUS AGILITY the Kobalos lunges straight for him...

Keller heaves the door open and throws himself out...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. TOOL SHOP

Keller's feet strike the floor and he spins around to see the side-door roll shut on its tracks—the second it is about to SLAM closed—A MUSCULAR LIQUID ARM hove's through the gap, a hand with talon fingers reaches for Keller... He dances back, HEFTS the Desert Eagle and FIRES the weapon dry at the SILICON ARM. The tar-like limb shudders and DISSOLVES to nothingness... ANGLE of the side-loading door slamming shut...

Keller whirls around, tosses the .357 onto a workbench and marches around to the Chevrolet's rear.

He extracts a hand grenade from his trouser pocket, places the safety-pin between his teeth, yanks his head back, spits the pin out. Keller then releases his grip on the safety spoon and lobs the grenade through the vehicle's right-side BUSTED WINDOW...

**KELLER**

(to the Kobalos)

Stitch this!

INT. CHEVROLET

ANGLE: the primed grenade drops and hits the loading bed with a METALLIC CLANG! The explosive starts to RATTLE and ROLL, following the truck's 30 degree cant towards the bulkhead.

INT. TOOL SHOP

Keller is about to run for his life when he notices Joel stood frozen, trembling, unable to move by himself... He grabs the teenager by the scruff of his neck...

**KELLER**

(yells)

For Christ's sake, Joel! MOVE IT!

Together they dash across the Tool Shop.

INT. CHEVROLET

The Kobalos' DEATH'S HEAD watches the grenade ROLL in its direction...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INT. TOOL SHOP

Keller and Joel race up to the Jaguar and both dive onto the hood and hurl themselves down the vehicle's off-side to land in a heap on the floor.

INT. CHEVROLET

ANGLE: the scant second the grenade CLINKS against the bulkhead. The Kobalos rises upwards and SNARLS FEROCIOUSLY. It knows that whatever is about to happen next will do it no favours whatsoever.

INT. TOOL SHOP

LONG SHOT: of the Chevrolet as it OBLITERATES courtesy of a THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION.

The roof peels back like a sardine can and the rear doors get torn off their hinges. BLACK BLOOD squirts out from the BLAST as if ejected from thousands of broken arteries...

TIGHT ON THE VISCOUS LIQUID AS IT SPRAYS DOWN over the walls, cars, floors and workbenches.

GLASS RAINS DOWN from the shattered skylights.

The TOOL SHOP falls momentarily quiet...

LOW ANGLE: over the breadth of the Jaguar's hood as Keller and Joel slowly rise up and see...

The BLOWN APART CHEVROLET VAN!

SOUND OFF: of BOILING MUD-PIT NOISES.

Keller scowls as his eyes lower to the floor-

LOW ANGLE: of pools of GLUTINOUS SLUSH writhing and undulating, ribbons stream across the floor, the current TOWS FANGS (some of them shattered) along with it. The monster quickly reforms its JAWS, teeth unite CLICK! CLACK!

Keller un-holsters the Colt and works the weapon's slider.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER**

(grimly)

There's just no putting this bastard down, is there?!

The Tool Shop starts to brighten...dawn!

Keller looks upwards. Keller's POV: of an overhead skylight framing the purple and orange glow of the early morning sun. He glances off to his left. BRIGHT DUSTY COLUMNS of SUNLIGHT spike through the roller doors' rectangular windows. Keller stares at the Kobalos with a slantwise grin.

**KELLER**

We gotta get those doors open, Joel. (points at the roller doors) We gotta drive that fucker outside...

**JOEL**

How do you even know sunlight will kill it?

Keller considers that possible fact and then jogs toward the repair stalls, stops, bends at the waist and cups his hands around a piece of the creature's BLACK SLUDGE.

Keller 'like he's tickled a Salmon from a river' flings the blob through the air...

ANGLE: *SPLAT!* As the darksome sliver of jelly hits the ground 'dead centre' in a rectangle of sunlight...

It begins to SMOKE and BURN!

With a maniacal grin, Keller glares at the Kobalos...

**KELLER**

We just hit pay-dirt, Joel...

The AMORPHOUS MONSTER (its MASS totally re-assembled, many of its FANGS missing or cracked) HISSING and SNARLING GUSHES UPWARDS and charges backwards into an empty repair stall, keeping to the shadows. Little by little, it starts to rove from one stall to the next.

The creature seems to sense it's in a dangerous situation now.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(turns to the roller doors)

Let's crack these fuckin' doors open. Stay in the sunlight, Joel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTIUNED

Together they pad up to the second roller door.

CLOSE UP: Of Keller's hand grabbing hold of a brass Padlock hooked through a steel hasp, securing the door.

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(to himself, angry)

Every door in this place... locked! What a surprise!

Keller steps back aims the Colt and FIRES...

ANGLE: of projectiles striking the Padlock causing it to jerk and sparks to fly... It BREAKS... Keller grabs the Padlock and throws it away, moves to the interlinked pulley chain and begins to feed the chain hand over hand... LOW ANGLE: as the roller door rises like a huge window shade; a SOLID BAR of HOT SUNLIGHT FLOODS in, widening across the cement floor...

SOUND OFF: of the creatures high-pitched ROARING and SHRIEKING.

Panicked, Joel glances over to regard the Kobalos...

The WATERY CATACLYSM is going berserk, attempting to flatten itself against the far wall, it keeps to the shadows. The monster MUTATES, MIMICING a giant OCTOPUS. The DEATH'S HEAD rises up from the forest of threshing tentacles on the end of an extra long Brachiosaurus-neck.

ANGLE: of the roller door SLAMMING against the STEEL JOIST above the doorway: CHUNKS of SHRAPNEL imbedded in the door prevent it from opening any more than half-way...

**KELLER**

(yanks on the pulley chain frantically)

*Shit! I don't fucking believe this...*

The Kobalos SUDDENLY SURGES FORWARDS and with SLICK AGILITY SPIRALS a TENTACLE towards Joel.

Joel screams out, cowers, and tries to run out through the open doorway...

LOW ANGLE: of the TENTACLE coiling around Joel's ankle. The glistening umbilicus then WHIPS backwards, causing Joel to fall prone. He gets dragged along the floor, screaming all the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

In a rapid set of moves the Kobalos spouts back towards the repair stalls, hauling Joel off the floor and hanging him upside down. It SUDDENLY lurches to a standstill.

Keller advances on the monster, his Colt sighted on the DEATH'S HEAD.

**KELLER**

*YOU PUT HIM DOWN! YOU PUT HIM THE FUCK DOWN!*

The Kobalos' response is to allow the DEATH'S HEAD to loom up close beside Joel's head. It deliberately BRUSHES its DRIZZLING FANGS against the side of his face and SNARLS at Keller--waiting for him to make a decision... Creature and human assassin stare each other down for a moment.

**KELLER**

(never looks at Joel as he speaks calmly to him)  
I think I know what it wants.  
I think I know what it wants to do. He isn't just gonna let us walk outta here, Joel... He wants one of us to be the undertaker's best friend... And as for the other-- (his eyes flicker to Joel)--to carry on where ever he leaves off...

On Joel: UPSIDE DOWN. He whimpers and cries and flails.

On the Kobalos: the creature ROARS impatiently at Keller.

**KELLER**

I'm sorry, Joel. I'm so fuckin' sorry. (to the Kobalos)  
Ah fuck you and whatever horse you rode in on!

Keller FIRES a succession of SHOTS at the monster...

The creature withdraws, screeching in fury, as fired slugs rip through its DEATH'S HEAD.

CLOSE UP: of the DEATH'S HEAD heaving forwards, opening like a CLAMB-SHELL and SNAPPING SHUT around Joel's shoulder-blade. He SCREAMS the Tool Shop down...  
The creature JERKS its FANGS out from his bloodied shoulder and then pitches him through the air...

LOW ANGLE: as airborne Joel sails down, lands on his butt and slides to a stop in the middle of a rectangle of HARSH SUNLIGHT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Keller SCREAMS NOOOoooo! And BLASTS away with the Colt until, the weapon's slider CLACKS back...empty!

The Kobalos slinks into the shadows...

Keller moves over to Joel. He sits upright, clutching his bleeding shoulder, crying. Joel looks up at Keller.

**JOEL**

He bit me! Mr Keller, it bit me...why did it-'

**WOMAN'S VOICE v/o**

Joel! What the hell's going on?

They both swivel their heads and see...

OUTSIDE ON THE FORECOURT:

Linda (the lady who's due to start the early shift), she's twenty years-old, good-looking, she's crouched down with her butt between her legs, peering under the part raised door.

**JOEL**

(voice a rusty croak)

Linda... I couldn't stop him...I...I

Keller bends down and grabs Joel's forearms and roughly lifts him to his 'not quite steady feet'.

**KELLER**

Joel, you get out of here. You and your friend... *YOU RUN!* And you keep running!

Keller pushes him towards the half-open roller door. Joel STUMBLES and stoops low under the door and exits. Keller re-loads the Colt, turns to face the Kobalos...

The monster waits in the gloom of an empty stall... Keller straight-arms the pistol...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KELLER (CONT'D)**

(full of hatred)

I'm gonna finish you off, you miserable bastard!

He FIRES the gun.

EXT. GAS STATION FORECOURT—MORNING—SAMETIME  
Linda aids a 'shocked and bleeding' Joel across the forecourt. She has his left arm draped around her shoulders. She's asking him what happened in the Tool Shop.

SOUND OFF: of GUNSHOTS and the CREATURE'S ROARS echoing from inside the Tool Shop.

Linda and Joel break into a loping run...

INT. TOOL SHOP---SAMETIME

Keller hunts his way down towards the Jaguar. He keeps to the pools of sunlight.

He punctuates each gunshot with a verbal outburst.

The Kobalos resides in the shadows of the repair stalls, screeching each time a fired projectile eats into its flesh. The creature keeps pace with Keller...

**KELLER**

*COME ON OUTTA THERE!* (he fires the Colt) *COME ON!* (he fires the Colt again) *SHOW ME WHAT YOU'VE GOT, YOU MOTHERFUCKER!* *COME ON!* (he fires three more shots)

Keller runs up to the Jaguar, inserts the key, unlocks the driver's side-door and wrenches it open... He BLASTS TWO more shots at the Kobalos.

The MONSTER LAUNCHES itself to the mouth of an adjacent stall and stops dead, it lunches forwards a bit, pulsing, twitching...

**KELLER (CONT'D)**  
(gloating)

Let's take this outside!

Keller dives into the E-Type, jams the keys in the ignition and starts the engine.

The Kobalos goes apeshit, ROARING and SNARLING, it RUSHES forwards, morphs two arms and grips an overhead gantry beam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The monster swings itself 'CHIMP-STYLE' onto a beam above the Jaguar and drops...

ANGLE: of the Kobalos as it SMASHES down onto the E-Type's trunk and then PUNCHES in through the HORIZONTAL rear windshield...

INSIDE THE JAGUAR: as the WATERY CATAclysm thunders straight at Keller. He screams in terror and fury, aims the Colt over his right shoulder and FIRES OFF every last round the gun has to offer...

The creature HITS HIM with inexorable force that no volume of water should possess. Heaving swells of OILY SYRUP swirl up against the windscreen, quickly staining with blood...

LOW ANGLE: Of Keller's booted feet in the foot-well-- his right foot mashes the throttle-- his left foot lets up the clutch. BLACK BILE STREAMS down from above...

INT. TOOL SHOP—JAGUAR MORNING SAMETIME  
The Jaguar's revs reach a crescendo. Big sports tyres spin in a cloud of blue smoke, find purchase and the Jaguar accelerates in reverse, REAL FAST.

The E-Type RACES at high-speed toward the end roller door, COLLIDES WITH IT and TEARS the huge metal door clean off its winding bar...

EXT. GAS STATION FORECOURT—MORNING—SAMETIME  
The Jaguar BURSTS out from the Tool Shop like a ball shot from cannon. The E-Type fishtails viciously. The CRUMPLED roller door catches beneath the tyres and gets pulled off the vehicle's roof...

INT. JAGUAR—MOVING

The WRITHING KOBALOS is now fully exposed to the morning sunlight. With a BANSHEE ROAR its WAVELET SKIN catches fire like a lake filled with hundreds of gallons of petroleum...

EXT. GAS STATION FORECOURT—MORNING—SAMETIME  
ONE SECOND LATER: the Jaguar EXPLODES as if packed full of TNT. The vehicle's rear lifts off the ground and CRASHES back down, the entire car then heels around in a 180 degree turn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The FULLY ABLAZE E-Type streaks across the forecourt (a dying Keller somehow keeps his foot down) and PLOUGHS straight into the front of the Cadillac, the burning Jaguar then slews sideways, batter rams and sheers pumps 5 and 6 clean off their plinth.

LOW ANGLE: of amber gasoline surging up from the subterranean tank...

LONG SHOT: of the forecourt as a SEA OF FLAMES spread in every direction...

On Joel and Linda: a hundred yards away, arm in arm, scrambling along the roadside sandy verge. Linda starts to scream, she pulls at Joel.

#### **LINDA**

*JOEL!* Oh Jesus Christ... *JOEL.* MOVE! MOVE!

ON THE FORECOURT: CLOSE UP: of a filler pistol as it drops from its steel saddle.

LONG SHOT: as the fuel pumps EXPLODE one after another... BURNING GASOLINE VOMITS upwards like an erupting volcano, successive BLASTS RIP the PORTICO in half. INSIDE THE

CONVEINENCE STORE: the picture windows THUMP every time a CONCUSSION HEATWAVE HITS them.

The windows finally EXPLODE INWARD... The Ford Mustang detonates to kindling under a barrage of fire...

Joel and Linda collapse on their butts, screaming, hugging each other...

LONG SHOT: of the Gas Station as a CHAIN OF INCREDIBLY DESTRUCTIVE DETONATIONS tear through the store and the repair shop.

EXTREME LONG SHOT: of the Gas Station which now looks like a torpedoed fuel refinery, clouds of BLACK SMOKE lift from the burning wreckage and drift high into the morning's china blue sky.

**FADE TO BLACKNESS**

SOUND OFF: as several thunderous explosions finish off the gas station. Fade to silence.

**FADE UP ON**

EXT. CITY OF LAS VEGAS. NIGHT

HIGH ANGLE: LATERAL MOVE: of the dazzling lights and streets of Las Vegas City drifting past FAR BELOW.

Lines of cars drive the Vegas Strip. Multiples of tourists tramp the sidewalks.

Subtitles appear at the bottom of the screen:

**LAS VEGAS  
FOUR DAYS LATER**

EXT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO NIGHT. SAMETIME CRANE DOWNWARDS from off the building's zenith to the huge 'brightly lit' Porte Cochere, where a continual stream of holiday guests saunter in and out through the wide open entrance-way...

Beefy security doormen keep watch over the vacationing flock. Parking attendants collect claim checks and then scurry off to collect visitors' cars.

INT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO. SAMETIME

The casino's interior is gigantic! It is filled with hundreds of tourists all dressed in varying evening attire. Crowds make their way past the craps - tables and blackjack tables and roulette wheels, some stay to play; others head for the casino's showrooms. Players with substantial earnings with which to gamble wait for seats to open. Cocktail waitresses wander back and forth.

From this site of collected activity emerges Blascoe, tuxedoed clad; impeccably dressed, smiling and talking. He's surrounded by a small entourage of people: a couple of well-dressed executives; a silver haired attorney, all of them are accompanied by their wives.

The casino's manager, Harry Semel flanks Blascoe. Harry has a thin leather-bound file tucked underneath his arm.

Blascoe slows to a halt and starts to shake hands with the gentlemen surrounding him. He kisses their wives' cheeks in turn.

**BLASCOE**

---Please come and see us again soon. You all take care of yourselves. It's been an honour to have you here...my pleasure...really.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

The executives along with their wives begin to peel away and disappear among the throngs of people and the busy black jack tables. Waving. Smiling. Saying their goodbyes.

Only the attorney and his wife hang back for a few moments. The Attorney waits for the others to fall from earshot.

**ATTORNEY (CONT'D)**

--Mr Blascoe, I have to go to and see some friends staying at the Pyramid before we leave tomorrow. But I think-'

Blascoe glares at the attorney and feigns a look of hurt and anger.

**BLASCOE**

--You have friends staying at the Pyramid?! (*he suddenly smiles*) Next time they're in town...they stay here, with us! Not at the Pyramid. Not there...

Blascoe shakes hands with the attorney for the last time. They both smile at each other.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

I can't have that. You talk to them. (*he starts laughing*) You talk to those people...

**ATTORNEY**

(smiles back, friendly)

I'm sorry, Mr Blascoe. I'll persuade them to stay here next time. You have my word on it...

**BLASCOE**

--Don't err...don't worry about your artist...we'll discuss the issue some other time.

**ATTORNEY**

Yes. Of course! Of course...whenever is convenient with you.

The attorney steps back and his wife steps towards Blascoe, he takes her hand. She beams a great big smile at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**ATTORNEY'S WIFE**

Thank you for a lovely dinner, Mr. Blascoe.

**BLASCOE**

You're very welcome. A lovely dinner for a lovely lady!

Blascoe kisses her cheek and then kisses the back of her hand.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

(*to both of them*)

Goodnight. God bless. Take care.

The attorney and his wife start to head toward the exit, waving their final goodbyes.

Blascoe and Harry watch them depart. Once the couple are out of sight, Blascoe and his casino manager turn to each other. They begin to walk side-by-side.

**HARRY**

--Went well.

**BLASCOE**

As well as can be expected...

**HARRY**

...You think he'll do it?

**BLASCOE**

He's worried about the field office catching sight of his investment. (pause) He has some growing concerns over the one-stop-spook-shop. I've tried to reassure him...

He's worried they're gonna get wind of what he's doing.

(he shrugs) But, like I said, where else in America is someone gonna sink that kind of money without paying any state income tax.

**HARRY**

Only in Nevada!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE**

Exactly!

They both smile to one another and move out of frame.

**TIME CUT**

Blascoe and Harry weave their way among the craps tables, talking.

**BLASCOE**

--Couple of pointers I'd like to go over. What's the projection look like for the year ending?

Before Harry can answer, a fat man (who's a little drunk), smoking a cigar, a drink in hand, dressed in a suit leaps up from a black jack table and stands in front of Blascoe.

**WELL-DRESSED FAT MAN**

(he smiles and shakes Blascoe's hand)

Mr. Blascoe, so good to see you! Come and have a drink with us? Stay and have a drink...

**BLASCOE**

Hello, Francis... I can't stop right now. I can't have a drink with you... Not right now, but soon, I promise...

(to the dealer) Is he winning or losing?

**DEALER**

(smiles)

He's losing!

**BLASCOE**

(sardonically)

Then, Francis, keep playing.

Everybody bursts into laughter around the table—including Francis.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

I'll speak to you soon. Enjoy yourself. Bye-bye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Harry and Blascoe start making tracks. As they walk away from the table, Blascoe leans in close to Harry.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

(under his breath)

Arrogant fat shit!

Harry smiles to himself and nods "Yes."

**TIME CUT**

Blascoe and Harry now range past row after row of slot machines. The clamour from the 'constantly in use' machines is almost deafening.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

(raises his voice, taps the leather file under Semel's arm)

---So let's review. *What does* the projection look like for the year ending?

**HARRY**

(raises his voice, too)

Hotel side, we're steady up to the holidays. After that in the new-year, we got bumper bookings. We're almost through the roof.

You asked me to make sure that the week before Christmas remains reasonably quiet, yes? Well, I've done that...

**BLASCOE**

--Good. Good! Now word is we can expect the senator to visit sometime before Christmas. I'd like to keep things to a low level; I personally get a feeling he's gonna be here the week before Christmas. You understand what I'm saying? (smiles and winks) A little birdy told me. (his demeanour changes, all business now) Speaking of which... (pause) Harry, ride up in the elevator with me, will ya? Something far more pressing I wanna discuss.

Harry smiles and nods "Yes."

They both exit frame.

**TIME CUT**

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT--NIGHT

HIGH ANGLE: of the elevator ascending.

Semel and Blascoe's voices echo from inside...

**BLASCOE V/O**

--Where's Kilian?

**HARRY V/O**

I spoke to him yesterday.

**BLASCOE V/O**

Well, where the hell is he?

INT. ELEVATOR--NIGHT

**HARRY (CONT'D)**

He flew out to Palm Springs.

**BLASCOE**

What's in Palm Springs?

**HARRY**

--He met a girl out there, been seeing her awhile. They're planning on getting married.

**BLASCOE**

(not happy)

That's just great. Piss on him! But why the fuck didn't he tell me where he was going? He was supposed to report straight back to me. I need to know what the fuck is going on out at that 'Schell Creek' place... Talk about a futile endeavour. Did anybody walk away?

Harry looks at Blascoe for a moment, expressionlessly.

**HARRY**

You don't have any further concerns with regards to that situation.--

**BLASCOE**

(challenging and hostile)

--So why don't I believe you?

**HARRY**

--Am not about to lie to you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE**

--In my experience when someone says they're not gonna tell me a lie, that means they're about to tell me the biggest fucking lie I ever heard.

**HARRY**

You want me to put my cards down on the table?

**BLASCOE**

Uh-huh.

The elevator stops. CLUNK! The doors slide open. The bell DINGS! Blascoe and Harry exit.

INT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO HALLWAY NIGHT—SAMETIME  
 Blascoe and Harry take a few steps 'side-by-side' along a luxury decorated corridor. There's no one else around. They both stop and face one another.

**BLASCOE**

Authenticate the facts, Harry.

**HARRY**

Listen up: Kilian didn't wanna talk to you in person because he knows how you feel about all of this and he knows how difficult---

**BLASCOE**

(angry)

--How the hell does he think I feel? I got my neck through a goddamn noose here, for Christ's sake! And he's off in Palm Springs somewhere screwing some bitch he only just met.

I think most of my options are gone if Keller didn't manage to knuckle my bruise, you know-'

**HARRY**

--He did! (pause) I can assure you he did. It cost him his life but he did his job...he fore filled his contract. That thing is dead. Forget about it! Forget about the whole deal. (pause) That gas station was blown clean off the map. The NSFU found three human remains...and nothing else! It's gone. It's finished. Nada! It was quemendo to a crisp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE**

(uncertain)

You're not feeding me a line of speculation, are ya? I don't need speculation, Harry. I need hard facts. I need to know for sure.

**HARRY**

We're sure. It's over! You should be pleased, not discontented. You should be celebrating, not despondent. Jack Keller did what nobody else could do, it cost him his life, but he nailed your bruise. And the best part is... nobody walked away... (smiles) Why don't you do yourself a favour and allow Mick to drive Miss White Witch in there (motions with his head towards a door behind him) out into the desert tomorrow morning...and not bother ever bringing her back.

**BLASCOE (CONT'D)**

--And who *the hell* is she? I'd love to know who she is and where she came from...

**HARRY**

--Miss blue-eyes is nobody. She's probably from some reformatory somewhere... Don't let her fill your head full of concrete and shit, or your gonna wind up not being able to think straight, see straight---kinda like how you are now.

**BLASCOE**

(sighs and eases up)

You're right, Harry. (laughs) The temperature between us just rose by about twenty degrees. If you're right then it's a goddamn load off... I find it too good to be true, almost hard to believe...

**HARRY**

Believe it! If anything was gonna happen here it would of happened by now.

**BLASCOE**

---And what about the people on the east-coast?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**HARRY**

*They don't even exist. They're ghosts. No City, no IRS, no State Police...no FBI...they're phantoms; nothing but a 'smoke and mirrors' act. They don't exist! (smiles) Everybody in Vegas is a winner. (pause) Am I gonna see you at Capital T's on Friday night, or not?*

Harry's pet-talk has succeeded in breaking the atmosphere of doom.

**BLASCOE**

(smiles back)

Of course! (pats Harry on the shoulder) I'll be there...

**HARRY**

Good. Am pleased to hear it... Let's forget about all this voodoo, supernatural bullshit and concentrate on business.

**BLASCOE**

Absolutely!

They regard each other for a moment, two trusting friends who probably have a lot more to say to each other but can't find the words.

Finally...

**BLASCOE**

Goodnight Harry. (extends his hand)

**HARRY**

(takes Blascoe's hand and shakes and bows his head slightly)

Goodnight Senor Blascoe.

Harry Semel is still smiling as Blascoe ranges towards a large Oak-panelled door, unlocks it, opens it and slips inside. The smile on Harry Semel's face quickly drains away...

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS--NIGHT-SAMETIME

Blascoe walks through his quarters, makes towards his desk.

SOUND OFF: of a TV set left on in the room adjacent to the quarters...

SOUND OFF: of a door lock LATCHING.

The door through which Blascoe just this second entered has just been 'locked'. Blascoe stops, turns and double-backs to the door. He tries the handle—it won't open. He then tries his key—it still won't open.

SOUND OFF: of a LOUD HEAVY THUMP!

Blascoe looks off in the direction of the noise and starts forward.

He stops, frowns, something within the quarters has caught his attention. He starts forwards again.

Blascoe's POV: of the leather sofa nearest to his desk: the upholsterer is riddled with bullet fissures.

Blascoe approaches the 'shot-up' leather sofa, suspicious, nervous, wondering what the hell's going on. His gaze shifts to the wall.

Blascoe's POV: of the panelled wall: throngs of fired bullets have stitched the mahogany finish.

Blascoe looks down at his feet...

LOW ANGLE: beneath the soles of his shoes the carpet is saturated with a SLIMY liquid, as dark as Indian ink.

FIREDED EMPTY METAL JACKETS litter the floor all around Blascoe's feet.

### **BLASCOE**

(uncertain)

Mick?

Blascoe advances towards his desk...

Blascoe's POV moving through the quarters...

Blascoe stops and looks across the quarter's tail at his collection of sculptures.

Blascoe's POV of the sculptures hidden in shadow and backlit via the thousands of points of light radiating in through the floor-to-ceiling windows, they appear like EERIE distorted shapes, silent sentinels, not so inviting to look at now

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Blascoe slowly turns on his heels to regard the partially open door behind him...

INT. BEDROOM

Blascoe steps into a beautifully furnished bedroom. A four-poster bed is positioned directly in front of him. The outline of a figure is evident underneath a thin bed sheet, covered from head to toe.

A BIG TV set, fixed inside a huge cabinet, facing the bed, is on and showing the movie, '*The Valley of Gwangi*.'

Blascoe crosses to the bed and with reservation pulls the sheet back...

Mick's lifeless body lays drenched in blood, his skeletal ribcage fully exposed. He's been brutally disembowelled.

Blascoe fast retreats from the bedroom.

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO.  
LAS VEGAS-NIGHT-SAMETIME

Blascoe staggers over to his desk and grabs the phone's receiver.

He starts to dial...

-NEXT SECOND-

--his very own butterfly knife cuts through the air and with a FLESHY WHACK its blade buries itself 'deep' into Blascoe's right forearm.

Blascoe SCREAMS, drops the receiver and collapses into his chair.

**OCTAVIA V/O**

I thought you might want your knife back.

Blascoe swivels his head and sees...

Octavia stood in the bedroom doorway. She casually lights a cigar nestled between her lips. The flame illuminates her features, she sports a purple bruise to her right cheek and her eye is bloodshot.

She's dressed in a long black trench coat and army-style boots. She's still wearing the black leather gloves.

Octavia locks her gaze on to Blascoe and enters the quarters proper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**BLASCOE***YOU FUCKIN' BITCH!***OCTAVIA**

Uhm hmm...

**BLASCOE***YOU FUCKING CRAZY BITCH!***OCTAVIA**

Crazy like a fox, honey!

Blascoe kicks off from his desk. His chair coasts rearwards until the backrest SLAMS against the huge windows. He attempts to throw weight to his feet.

Octavia reaches around her back, under her coat, and withdraws a MAC-10 machine gun. She straight arms the gun, aiming it at Blascoe.

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

Don'tcha get up on my account!

Blascoe freezes for a moment. Riddled in pain, he tries to pull the bloodied knife from his arm...

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

And don't pull the knife out. There'll be a lot more pain. (gestures with the gun) And a lot more blood.

**BLASCOE**

(defiant)

What the fuck do you want? Huh? I give up! I've grown tired of you. Who are you, lady, and what exactly is it that you want?

**OCTAVIA**

Who do you see when you look at my face?

**BLASCOE**

Nobody I recognise.

**OCTAVIA**

Do you wanna know who I see when I look at you? (pauses)  
I see the faces of Richard and Ventra Decker. My parents!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

I see their smiling faces the second before the bomb, you had placed in their car took them out of my life, back in the summer of '75. And from that moment on my whole world turned to blackness and silence...and hurting!

**BLASCOE**

*You! You're supposed to be Decker's daughter?! (snorts a laugh) BULLSHIT! Sally-Anne Decker was scraped up off the side-walk, nothing more than a burnt husk -- you cannot be her!*

**OCTAVIA**

(smiles)

Really, Senor Blascoe, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. Time...eventually heals all visible wounds...

Octavia places the cigar in-between her teeth, reaches inside her coat and extracts a necklace. She gestures with it and then hurls it onto the desk-top.

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

You procured it for my mother...as a token of your affection. My father knew you were trying to screw her. That's why he kindly stopped all those suitcases heading out west... Fucked up your business for a little while! We were leaving Orange County, Blascoe, never to return. You couldn't just let us go, could you? You had to destroy us...you miserable bastard.

Blascoe shuffles forwards and rests his injured right arm on the desk top, plucks the pendant off the desk with his left hand and clicks it open...

Blascoe slowly raises his gaze from the pendant to Octavia. Whatever he has seen inside the necklace has, stapled with Octavia's little speech, convinced him that the lady stood before him is who she says she is.

**BLASCOE**

Listen up, lady, I can get you-'

**OCTAVIA**

(casually, indifferent, overlaps him)

--Now, I'd love to stay and talk about old times, but time *really* is of the essence here; time to put the horns on the bull.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Octavia spits the cigar out, looks off to her left and gives a short whistle like she's calling a dog to heel.

From the DARKNESS of the quarter's tail area, in-amongst the sculptures a smoky mist creeps forwards.

It's tracked by a DARK-SHAPE that swells upwards and streams forwards, the watery beast lurches to an abrupt stop, keeping to the shadows...

At the sight of the Kobalos Blascoe tenses, his face beads with sweat...

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

(to the Kobalos, she speaks soothingly)

Come on out of the dark...pay no mind to the light. Come on. (to Blascoe) It's cautious of the light.

Fresh elementals usually are... You can tell it's an unsullied divinity: it has all thirty-two teeth in total... and there all for you, Senor Blascoe.

The Kobalos (a creature that was a seventeen year old boy working at a gas station not three days ago) FORMS its JAWS; HUGE FANGS race into view from its innards and shape together CLICKETY-CLACK! The vicious MAW BREAKS the LIQUID surface with a bull-alligator hiss...

Blascoe's face turns pale. He shivers uncontrollably.

**BLASCOE**

(pleading)

For God's sake! I'll get you anything you want to-'

**OCTAVIA**

I just want you dead!

**BLASCOE**

*THEN PULL THE FUCKIN' TRIGGER ON THAT THING!*

**OCTAVIA**

That would be too easy. Implicate myself as your killer? Why would I wanna do that? I've got him. (she tilts her head at the Kobalos) I've waited ten years for this moment... And as a man of Spanish descent, Blascoe, you should know the old proverb, 'Revenge is a dish best served cold.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Octavia winks at him and starts to back away. She withdraws a STONE VIAL (forged from igneous rock, ten inches long, the rock tapers to a sharp point at one end) from the inside of her coat. She holds the MAC-10 aloft...

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

You want this? (gestures with the gun) Call it a parting gift. See what good it'll do you.

She tosses the gun onto the desk-top and with the other hand she throws the vial to the Kobalos. The monster BURSTS INTO ANIMATION, it grabs the vial with a CLASPING HAND made up of vicious talons, pulls the stone into its cloudy depths.

**OCTAVIA (CONT'D)**

(to Kobalos, motions to Blascoe)

*HE'S ALL YOURS!*

The creature RACES straight for Blascoe like an UNSTOPPABLE JUGGERNAUT...

Blascoe vaults up out of his chair and grabs the MAC-10, driven insane with fear--and, regardless of his bleeding arm, manages the level the gun at Octavia...

The Kobalos, on route, RUSHES UP in front of Octavia (protecting her) and STREAMS for Blascoe: a WAVE OF DEATH...

He turns on his heels and OPENS FIRE at the MASSIVE window behind him...

...FIRED PROJECTILES riddle the giant pane with a galaxy of CRACKS. Blascoe shoots the MAC-10 dry CLICK! He runs at the window screaming like a man possessed, and shoulders his way clean through it...

EXT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO TOP FLOOR-NIGHT

MASSIVE EXPLOSION OF SHATTERED GLASS as Blascoe sails out into the night, arms and legs working like windmills...

ONE SECOND LATER: The Kobalos SOARS OUT after him, ramming the Blascoe's desk and chair aside. Once outside, the monster's MASS elongates into an ENORMOUS STREAKING COMET.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

ANGLE: of Blascoe falling to his death, screaming all the way. The Kobalos ROCKETS down after him and rapidly catches up, MORPHS TWO SILICON ARMS which seize hold of Blascoe. The creature's DEATH'S HEAD lunges and BITES at his waist. His SCREAMS INSTANTLY CEASE and in a blood fuming spray Blascoe's body splits in half... Monster and the two half's of Blascoe free fall towards the roof of the porte cochere...

The two pieces of Blascoe's corpse along with the watery beast SLAP DOWN at a hundred miles an hour onto the PORTE COCHERE'S flat topped roof...

LOW ANGLE: UNDERSIDE OF THE PORTE COCHERE: the moment Blascoe's lower half SMASHES through the roof with a BANG and a support OF ELECTRICAL THUMPS AND SIZZLES. ROWS OF LIGHTS puff out... His REMAINS crash down to the driveway below... Hosts of casino patrons scream and scatter like startled pigeons... A woman dressed in a white evening dress screams uncontrollably, she's reduced to a gore streaked mess... Beefy security men charge forwards and stare down at 'something' on the floor with fearful expressions...

HIGH ANGLE: of Blascoe's 'bitten in half cadaver', still clad in trousers and shoes, spinal column pokes out like a bony tail from his waistline---his lower extremities sprawled on the driveway in a pool of blood.

ANGLE ON THE ROOF OF THE PORTE COCHERE: tight on the creature's FANGS as they MELT, eaten down to nothing by UNCANNY, fast-acting volatile BACTERIA... *HISSSSS!*

ANGLE: tight on the creature's BLACK LIQUID splodges, they quickly evaporate to nothingness...

ANGLE: tight on the vial, small rivulets of CRUDE-OIL SLICK gather and bubble around the igneous rock and 'somehow' seeps in through its very pores...

INT. BLASCOE'S PRIVATE QUARTERS. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO--NIGHT-SAMETIME

Octavia moves toward the GAPPING HOLE that was once the floor-to-ceiling window. She peers down at the melee of hers and the Kobalos' making. Desert winds whip her long blonde hair from her shoulders.

After a moment she turns and casually walks in the direction of the bedroom...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

SOUND OFF: of the 'Doppler effect' of lots of approaching police sirens...

**TIME CUT**

INT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO LOBBY NIGHT

Octavia exits an elevator and strides calmly through the lobby--perhaps she's too calm! PANGLIDE BEHIND her as walks down an aisle of slot machines. The clamour of the lobby plays out all around her. Holiday guests and casino workers ROVE toward the main doorway, shouting and screaming--frightened and excited by the 'leaper' outside.

Octavia pays the crowds no attention and equally they pay her none in return. She just keeps on walking, cutting her way through the CROWDS. Her back straight, head up, eyes front...

EXT. TANNER'S HOTEL CASINO NIGHT. SAMETIME

Octavia exits the casino and shoulders her way through the assembled gawkers and screamers.

A couple of 'gorilla-sized' security men barge past her, they never even notice her. They tramp away inside the casino telling people to, 'Get the fuck outta the way!' Nobody seems to notice Octavia--it's as if she's invisible. She's not! But you'd think that she is!

Octavia comes to a standstill beneath the edge of the porte cochere. She extends her right hand, palm facing the heavens, and waits patiently for something...

ANGLE ON THE ROOF OF THE PORTE COCHERE: tight on the vial as it rolls off the roof as if pushed by an unseen hand...

The 'ice-pick' shaped vial drops end-over-end and lands...

...E.C.U. SMACK! Squarely in the palm of Octavia's hand! She smiles to herself and places the igneous rock in an inside coat pocket. Octavia takes one last discreet glance at the maelstrom all around her—nobody is watching.

She strolls away...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

EXT. PARKING LOT—NIGHT

Octavia walks across a badly-lit parking lot. She approaches a Limousine. The Chauffer activates the headlights, gets out and opens a rear-passenger door for her.

Octavia acknowledges the Chauffer with a smile and climbs inside the vehicle. The Chauffer shuts the door and makes for the driver's door, hops back in, fires the engine and manoeuvres the Limousine out from the lot and on to the Main road...

EXT. EAST TROPICANA AVENUE LAS VEGAS NIGHT LATER

The Limousine cruises along Tropicana Avenue heading towards Paradise. On the left is the MGM Grand and on the right is the Tropicana resort and casino.

INT. LIMOUSINE-MOVING NIGHT

Octavia sits cross-legged on the back seat, looking calm and collected.

SOUND OFF: of an electrical whine...

The tinted sheet of glass that separates the driver's cockpit from the passenger area slowly opens.

The Chauffer peers over his shoulder at Octavia.

**CHAUFFEUR**

Would you like to tell me how it went?

**OCTAVIA**

No. I wouldn't.

**CHAUFFEUR**

Fair enough. (he faces front and speaks to Octavia via the rear-view mirror) You'll make your flight. They're expecting you. You're flying out from Sky Harbour tonight, there's still major work going on at McCarran-I.A... (he indicates to the base of the passenger seat behind him) They've asked for you to put the vial into this case here... For safe keeping! Until you get back to New York...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

Octavia leans forwards and picks up a small, faded brown leather attaché case. She settles back into her seat and snaps the locks open. Inside the case is a perfect hollowed out shape for the vial, carved into thick, grey liquid clay packing. Octavia carefully places the vial inside and closes the lid.

EXT. EAST TROPICANA AVENUE LAS VEGAS NIGHT  
The Limousine drives through the night. The cities countless glittering lights and glowing fibrotic colours brighten the darkness.

**FADE TO DARKNESS**

**FADE UP ON**

EXT. NEW YORK CITY. MORNING  
DESCENDING through a misty storm ridden sky TO REVEAL:  
Manhattan Island!

EXT. NEW YORK AVENUE. NEW YORK CITY. MORNING  
A Limousine pulls up to the kerb. Octavia gets out, clutching the attaché case in her right hand. She heads up the stoop of a LARGE GEORGIAN-STYLE BUILDING. The premises' has a very classical appearance, like a HUGE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

INT. GEORGIAN BUILDING. LONG CORRIDOR NEW YORK-MORNING

Elevator doors pull apart and Octavia steps out into a long red-carpeted corridor. The corridor is lined with the occasional display cabinet filled with peculiar objects and works of art. The wall off to her right boasts a beautifully painted zoophorus.

Octavia passes several mahogany-panelled doors situated on either side of the corridor.

She selects a particular door, halts, and composes herself. She raps her knuckles against it...

The door is answered by the man who is, or was, Tanner's casino manager, Harry Semel. He stares at Octavia with a smile playing on his lips.

Octavia appears confounded by his presence...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**HARRY**

You look shocked.

**OCTAVIA**

I'm surprised. (pauses) From the chosen clique who were you?

**HARRY**

I was Harry Semel. The casino manager!

**OCTAVIA**

(smiles at him)

Clearly! (pauses) Thank you, Mr O'Brien.

**MR O'BRIEN**

(he opens the door wide and beckons)  
Please don't thank me. You should thank Mr Kurtzman.

Octavia steps inside...

Mr O'Brien closes the door.

INT. KURTZMAN'S OFFICE. GEORGIAN BUILDING- MORNING

They step inside a rather large, dark and gloomy office, strangely-lit by a peculiar indiscernible light source.

There are sizeable 'built-into-the-wall' glass display-cases at one end, track lighting underneath the shelves throw cones of low wattage light onto the unusual objects placed on show. An extra large OAKEN DESK stands on one side of the room, a plush high-backed chair positioned behind it.

Sat in that very chair 'in-profile' is a figure, backlit, almost a silhouette. He wears a pair of Ray Charles ray-bands, moves his head as a BLIND person would. His complexion is GHOSTLY PALE; he looks as if his skin has never been exposed to sunlight, tufts of hair sprout from his balding scalp.

He breathes like he's making use of an AQUA-LUNG.

Octavia seems unaffected by this man's appearance. She remains by the door.

Mr O'Brien moves up beside the desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

SOUND OF: lots of clocks ticking softly.

### **OCTAVIA**

Hello Kurtzman.

The man sat behind the desk shifts slightly in his seat and smiles. When he does smile it becomes clear that Kurtzman is obviously far from human. His pale skin is blasted with a thousand deep rends and around his cheeks and forehead it's translucent (as he smiles the Zygomaticus muscles, major facial muscles, can be seen flexing and straightening.)

### **KURTZMAN**

(speaks in a bizarre dialect, a strange vernacular)  
Hello Octavia.

### **OCTAVIA**

I believe I owe you a debut of gratitude for Mr O'Brien's presence in Nevada.

### **KURTZMAN**

We always help those who help us. (pauses) I allowed you to minister over the Kobalos... (She nods "Yes.") May I ask that you return it to me now?

Octavia steps forwards and places the attaché case on the desktop.

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

(to O'Brien)

Would you please do the honours, Mr O'Brien?

Mr O'Brien reaches for the attaché case...

**OCTAVIA**

Be careful... (O'Brien freezes) It bites!

**MR O'BRIEN**

(smiles)

One man's monster is another man's friend.

Mr O'Brien unlocks the latches and takes out the vial, offers it to Kurtzman.

Kurtzman admires and caresses the igneous rock with hands that are horribly wrinkled and misshapen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KURTZMAN**

Faithful and obedient to the last! Gone is the crucial essence of the unfortunate Assistant Attorney General, to be replaced by (he cocks his head, making use of a kind of psychometry)...a boy. A young boy! Seventeen years of age. A near perfect host... Imagine the rage and the frustration...the Kobalos will undoubtedly make a formidable opponent the next time its services are called upon.

Kurtzman gently places the vial back inside the attaché case.

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

(to the vial)

Rest my old friend. Mr O'Brien, can I ask you to be mindful of the money, please ensure that it is banked in the appropriate funds. And, more importantly, ensure that the Kobalos is returned safely to its rightful place in the Chamber of Curiosities.

**MR O'BRIEN**

Yes sir.

**KURTZMAN**

Thank you, Mr O'Brien. Can I respectfully request for you to leave us. I wish to speak with Octavia alone.

**MR O'BRIEN**

Yes. I'll be downstairs if you should need me.

O'Brien secures the lid on the attaché case, picks it up, bows to Kurtzman and Octavia and exits the room.

Kurtzman rises from his chair. Although he appears old he moves lithely, he seems to almost float with each step. Kurtzman acquires a weird gait. He walks with the aide of a STEEL CANE. He approaches Octavia.

**KURTZMAN**

(motions to her bruised cheek)

Sustained some damage? (she nods "Yes.") He hit you?

**OCTAVIA**

The Greek hit me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KURTZMAN**

(off hand)

Punitive! (pauses) It would have been vain of me to try and stop you from your chosen course of actions.

Understandable as they were... Your mind is filled with questions. Purpose and reason...

(he gets angry for a moment) I design the comminatory schematics and they are not for you, or anybody else to question. Your infiltration in Nevada was a dangerous exploit. You ran the risk of exposing us for everything we are. We, I, must remain unidentifiable, deceptive, unclear and evasive to acuity; that is how we keep ourselves pure...that is how we keep ourselves protected. Counteraction to a schematic is strictly forbidden.

The subjects from the chamber fulfil a deontology...you of all people understand that. I was discontented with the locating of yourself in Las Vegas, to dispatch a

'dissimilar' seemed the correct objective. (pauses) Did you think you could just walk out of there? You needed to be observed and cloaked. Hence, Mr O'Brien... And my elementals are not, under any circumstances, to be incarcerated ever again, in any way. Is that understood? Mr Keller should never have been allowed to imprison one of my most exceptional sentries... (his anger abates, his demeanour changes, he becomes serene) *The dissimilar process frightens you, doesn't it?*

**OCTAVIA**

--More than anything that I've seen...from your chamber...or otherwise...

**KURTZMAN**

--And everything contained within the chamber is yet to be revealed to the world. I remain heedful of your dilemma...

Kurtzman produces a driving licence between his index and middle finger with a simple snap of his wrist. He offers the licence to Octavia, she takes it.

Octavia's POV: The driving licence is that of Jack Keller's.

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

A keepsake! As you said, 'He was comparable to a sparrow threatening an Eagle.' Jack Keller, along with the others was removed for a reason, not whim. I don't expect you to question...there is no point in refute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

(pauses) He was not meant for you. Do not mourn his passing... Far more appropriate suitors will present themselves.

**OCTAVIA**

(smiles)

Kurtzman, you don't change.

**KURTZMAN**

(smiles back)

I don't suffer from the side-effects of evolution.

(pauses) Tell me something, Octavia, why is it that you

return to me---today of all days, with your aura darker than when you left?

Octavia stares at Kurtzman, she doesn't answer him. Her eyes swim with tears.

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

(motions to her hands)

Remove your gloves?

She does. Octavia raises her right hand. Her hand is mottled with thick patches of second-degree burns.

**KURTZMAN (CONT'D)**

Improving! In time all traces of your scarring will be gone. Just as Javier Blascoe is gone...along with Mr and Mrs Decker and their daughter... Let them go, Octavia. I can summon many acts, pass on hope and reinstate a destiny, but I cannot conjure the dead. I can only repair your physical damage, install new senses for you to hear and see the world. It is up to you to find a fresh compulsion in your life. Don't waste your second chance with a preoccupied mind and a perturbed heart.

Octavia wraps her arms around Kurtzman, rests her head in the hollow of his shoulder. Kurtzman slowly embraces her, gives Octavia a comforting parental hug.

**OCTAVIA**

Thank you for everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

**KURTZMAN**

--And everything a person could ask for is what you now have. (They pull apart) When you return to your apartment check in the fruit bowl on your dinning table, you'll find the keys to a gift... Go where you wish, do as you will. I'll make contact in due course...

**OCTAVIA**

And how will you know where I am?

**KURTZMAN**

I always know where you are, Octavia.

They regard each other for a moment. After a hesitant pause Octavia turns and exits the office.

Kurtzman stands solid, staring at the door Octavia just this second made her way out through. After a moment he slowly leans on his cane and bows his head.

CUT TO

INT. CHAMBER OF CURIOSITIES. DAY

The chamber is truly immense, gigantic pillared arches reach up to the ceiling. The entire chamber is laid out like some kind of subterranean museum. There are (of course) no windows. Endless rows of waist-high glass enclosed cabinets cover the floor.

A strange light pervades the chamber, a bright fiery glow similar to the setting sun.

SOUND OF: a key turns in a lock.

Mr O'Brien enters the chamber through a huge wooden door. He has the attaché case clasped in his hand. He makes his way through the chamber, footfalls clicking against the polished marble floor. He meanders past cabinets containing an array of unusual artefacts.

LATERAL MOVE: With O'Brien as he strides purposefully along the length of a GARGANTUAN AQUARIUM. It's an aquarium big enough to accommodate a couple of humpback whales if need be. It is from this colossal tank that the strange orange light emanates...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

INSIDE THE AQUARIUM: An extraordinary MARINE CREATURE rises up off the sandy bed in a cloud of slit. It swims in an undulating fashion towards the side of the aquarium as O'Brien strolls past. On reaching the glass border to its watery realm the mutated creature slows, back thrusts, swerves and glides, keeping pace with O'Brien. The monster's shape is parallel to a GIANT MANATEE, its size comparable to a right whale.

CLOSE UP: Of the marine monster's GROTESQUE HUMANIOD FEATURES. It boasts a MALIGANT FACE, HORRIBLE SQUINTED

EYES as black as a bird's, coarse slits for nostrils, streaming lines of bubbles. It has no mouth. A SECOND CREATURE joins the first, riding along effortlessly in its slipstream.

O'Brien ignores the monsters and heads down an aisle bordered by towering glazed cases on both sides...

O'Brien approaches a row of glass cabinets. He selects a particular section of one, inserts a key in a barrel lock, opens it and gently slides the pane aside. He carefully places the attaché case inside, slotting it back into a pre-designated place on the shelf.

CLOSE UP: Of a PLACARD positioned in front of the case, which reads:

Title: KOBALOS

Origin: UNKNOWN (POSSIBLE CRYSTALLINE ENTITY)

Characteristics: EXTREMELY HOSTILE--VORANT TOWARD LIVE

SUBJECTS—SEEKER—INTELLIGENT

Vulnerabilities: ULTRA-VIOLET LIGHT (Possession of gelatiniform)

From chemical level—to cellular level—to tissue level—to Organ level—to system level—to Organismic level following inducement of mechanism:

Subject's alleles activated by exposure to elements of carbon, hydrogen, protein, nitrogen, calcium, trace elements of potassium, cobalt, copper, sulphur, lithium and phosphorus... Oxygen contained in blood plasma (coagulation to have occurred; preferred temperature: ten degrees Celsius or minus for initial extraction of mineral compounds.

Formation of upper/lower mandible cavity: Cuspid subject extraction of host's Ca<sub>10</sub>(po<sub>4</sub>(oh)<sub>2</sub>) hydroxyapatite...etc...etc

(Obviously, there won't be enough screen time to read all of this.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

O'Brien closes the cabinet. As he paces away from the cabinet his ethereal retreating reflection can be seen in the display cases' panes.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Row after row of infinite glass display cases stretching back into the chamber's darkness.

Each cabinet contains several attaché cases of varying sizes and each case contains a different species of monster...

There has to be an inestimable number of elemental monsters stored down here...

At the very back of the chamber, in the blackness of lots of deep shadows, the GIANT OUTLINE of some MONSTEROUS-SIZED CREATURE paces back and forth within a truly COLOSSAL CAGE. The GIANT CREATURE lets out a series of THROATY GROWLS and its GROWLS VIBRATE AROUND THE WHOLE CHAMBER.

O'Brien quietly takes leave of this 'out of the ordinary' chamber.

SOUND OFF: Of his key turning in the door lock. CLACK! CLICK!

LONG SHOT: Of the Chamber of Curiosities vast interior.

**FADE TO BLACKNESS**

**THE END**











