

TREBIZOND

FADE IN:

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT ROAD - AFTERNOON

Wisps of clouds streak across crystal blue skies. Below are arid, brown mountains with rock falls at their bases. The road makes switchbacks as it moves up the side of the mountains.

An RV with a bright fractal painted design - streaks of blues and purples - swooshes of neon pink - CHUGS up the road. Tires CRUNCH on the shoulder of the narrow asphalt.

The big pusher engine REVS to pull its weight and the ATV riding on an attached carrier. Four seats are covered with a large roll bar on the neon yellow frame with oversized off-road tires.

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

NEIL, 60s, a CEO on vacation, wears days-old stubble, a loud t-shirt with the logo "OLD GUYS RULE" in plain view, and a pair of jeans. He drives at the helm of his dream RV, at once steering as he views the road, and at another time hitting the brakes or jamming the accelerator.

Behind him on a sofa with her feet up is MONA, 40s, his foxy companion. She has on a halter top and shorts. Her striking good looks peer out from under her straight blonde highlights. She tenses as Neil steers along the road.

In the salon near her, are ANNA, 20s, coquettish, brunette, in t-shirt and shorts, and JEFF, 20s, a rock climber's build in t-shirt, jeans, and sweat-stained ball cap. They play a hand of poker as the RV lurches along the road.

MONA

Are you sure this is the right road?

NEIL

G-P-S doesn't lie. Right on course.

MONA

How much farther?

NEIL

We reach the top of the grade to Dead Man's Pass. Then it's only a few miles to the town. We'll probably see it at the pass.

EXT. RV

The RV rolls up the road. Sunlight beams off the bright paint.

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN

From a peak not far from the road, the flash of the RV's paint in the sunlight reveals it is the only vehicle on the switchbacks.

INT. RV

Jeff lays his cards on the table in front of Anna.

JEFF

Two pair, Anna. Aces and eights. I call.

Anna looks at her cards and then him.

ANNA

You're always such a weasel. I've only got one pair - Jacks. At least mine are more handsome than yours.

She throws her cards down in a tired motion.

ANNA

Are we almost there? I want to get out and stretch.

JEFF

(to Neil)

How about it, Dad? Is it much farther?

Jeff rises from the salon table and steps to the front of the RV where Neil drives.

MONA

I've been asking him the same question.

JEFF

Looks like we're getting to the top of something.

Neil presses the accelerator.

NEIL
We're at Dead Man's Pass ... right
... now.

The RV levels off the ascending road.

Neil and Jeff stare through the windshield.

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The single asphalt enters a narrow valley on top of the mountain. On either side of the road is crusty desert bordered by mountain walls, After several hundred yards, the valley opens into a plateau that extends to the other side of the mountain.

In the distance about a mile away are the remains of a mining town. Shabby grey-brown wooden structures jut from the landscape like dolls houses.

INT. RV

Mona and Anna have joined Jeff with Neil at the front of the RV.

JEFF
(mystified)
So that's Trebizond.

NEIL
The broken remains of it.

MONA
What men will do for a silver
strike. Way the heck up here.

ANNA
Had to live like Spartans from the
looks of it.

NEIL
Let's get closer.

He presses the accelerator and they move forward.

EXT. TREBIZOND - MOMENTS LATER

The asphalt has given way to a dirt road that leads into the middle of the town. On one flat side of it are abandoned wooden structures: stores, hotels, and dwellings.

On the hillside part, rusted hulks of rock crushing machines, conveyor belts, and the rusted frame of the main building stand out as empty reminders of the boom times.

The RV pulls to a stop in front of the old hotel.

EXT. RV

The cabin door opens with a swoosh. Neil steps down onto the dry, powdery road. The others follow and stand in awe at the devastation around them.

MONA
What did they do for water?

Neil points to a wrecked down water tank on the hillside.

NEIL
They had wells and pumped the water up there for pressure. Fed it back down through pipes.

JEFF
Are we allowed to go into the mine?

Neil shakes his head ruefully.

NEIL
Wouldn't try it, son. You wanted to find some rocks to climb. So take your pick.

Jeff makes a three sixty to take in his surroundings.

Anna tries her cell phone for a signal.

ANNA
No service. What if we have an emergency or something?

NEIL
We've got the satellite phone inside. And we can set up our link once we make camp.

JEFF
Look over there. Are those caves?

He points to some dark holes in the side of the mountain.

NEIL

Might have been some test mines.
Could be caves. The map doesn't
really say.

He puts his hands on his hips and swaggers a couple of steps.

NEIL

Well, if anybody's game, let's take
the ATV for a spin around this
place.

Mona swigs from a water bottle. Jeff and Anna get excited.

JEFF

Let's go!

ANNA

I better get a hat and some sun
block.

NEIL

Put on some sturdier shoes. Mona,
that goes for you, too.

MONA

Ready in a jiffy, hon.

MOMENTS LATER

The group gathers around the ATV.

NEIL

Any place you want to go first?

Jeff picks up a loose rock and throws it at the old hotel.
The rock CRASHES into the decayed wood and leaves a hole.

JEFF

Use this place for target practice
later, huh?

NEIL

Stop being a juvenile, Jeff, and
get in.

He gets into the ATV with the others.

JEFF

You gonna let me drive?

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

A shadowy figure in a turban and gossamer robe stands in the opening. ALEXIOS, ageless, but ancient, peers down at the ATV and its passengers.

His face is wrinkled and parched. He wears a grey beard. His eyes are pale and clear. He raises his arms as though he summons the elements. He raises his eyes to the sky and MUTTERS.

ALEXIOS
Huhbuhduhmuhbuhduh
huhbuhmuhbuhduh....

EXT. TREBIZOND - CONTINUOUS

SERIES OF SHOTS

Neil drives the ATV up the sides of the hill. It crashes over rocks and old mining equipment.

Mona holds onto the ATV with delight.

Jeff and Anna bounce around in the back seat. They enjoy themselves immensely.

Neil drives to the abandoned buildings. He CRASHES through an old fence around a corral. He does donuts in the corral.

Neil, Mona, Jeff, and Anna squeal with excitement.

The ATV climbs the hillside toward the caves. The wheels kick up rocks that go TUMBLING DOWN to the town and CRASH into the old buildings. It stops about a hundred yards from the caves since the wall of the mountain is too steep.

END SERIES

EXT. ATV

Neil dismounts after he RATCHETS the parking brake. Mona remains seated. Jeff gets out to stand by Neil. They gaze up at the caves and the rim of the mountain.

JEFF
Think I could make it to the top?

NEIL
You'd have to be careful. Really careful. These rocks are pretty loose.

He kicks at the ground. More rocks ROLL down the hillside.

Anna stands with a pair of binoculars to scan the town and the hillside. Her view takes her to the cave entrance where Alexios stands.

ANNA

Hey! Wait! I think I see somebody!

Neil goes to her. She gives him the binoculars. He scans the cave entrance.

ANNA

He's right up there.

NEIL

I don't see anything. Must have been a shadow.

Anna shrugs.

ANNA

I could swear.

A WIND comes up. It GUSTS them hard. Dust KICKS up.

They wipe sand from their faces.

Another GUST and more DUST.

NEIL

Oh great. Just what we need. A dust storm. We'd better get back to the RV.

Anna, Jeff, and Neil climb back into the vehicle. He releases the brake and STARTS the motor. They set off for the RV, once more sending rocks TUMBLING and CRASHING.

INT. RV - SUNSET

The quartet sit around the salon table for their meal. The RV shimmies in the high winds that batter it. Dust BRUSHES against the sides of the vehicle and the windshield.

MONA

This didn't show in any of the forecasts we looked at, Neil.

Neil sits quietly munching a bite.

A GUST hits the RV and jolts it. The WIND resumes.

NEIL

Good thing I anchored this baby.
It's getting pretty rough. I'll
check the forecast again. Maybe
it's just a freak storm.

He gets up from the table and goes to the front of the RV where the navigation station is set up. He boots up the equipment.

ANNA

Are we going to get any sleep
tonight? It's just unnerving.

JEFF

Put some cotton in your ears.

They sit back to wait for Neil's results.

EXT. TREBIZOND STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Alexios stands in the dusty street several hundred feet away. He peers at the lights beaming from inside the RV. Dust SWIRLS around him as it collides with the RV.

INT. RV

Neil checks on Jeff and Anna in their bedrooms. They settle into their bunks. He walks to his bedroom.

Mona wears her flimsy pajamas that accent her breasts. She reclines invitingly to him when he enters.

MONA

This will be a first for me.

NEIL

How so?

MONA

Making love in a dust storm.

She puffs a joint and perks a smile. He takes a puff and returns her smile. He undresses to his underwear.

EXT. TREBIZOND STREET

Alexios summons more of his power.

ALEXIOS
Huuuhh! HUUUUHH! Huhduhmuhduhbuh
.... Huhmuhduhmuhduh ...

His raised arms circle in the air, dust, and wind.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE

From inside the cave, STIRRING NOISES. FLAPPING WINGS, and SCREECHES. The STIRRING CRESCENDOES until:

A HUGE SWARM of bats flies out. Millions and millions of bats in a seemingly endless stream rise up in the night sky in this FLYING CLOUD, wings FLAPPING, voices SCREECHING.

The swarm reaches a peak and then descends on the town in a RUSH.

EXT. TREBIZOND STREET - CONTINUOUS

Alexios stands when the swarm flies past him, thousands of bat bodies, FLAPPING wings, SCREECHING. They aim for the RV.

CLOSE ON BATS

Countless bats, with rabid teeth and mouths drooling saliva, with blind eyes, pointy ears, and deranged destruction for their mission, HURTLE toward the RV.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. RV - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Light beams through the windows in the dusty wind. The bats SMASH into the RV by the thousands.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Hundreds of bats SMASH the windshield, sacrificing their bodies to break the Plexiglas.

Another swarm of hundreds BATTER the sides around the windows. Their bodies splatter as they create huge dents in the aluminum skin.

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Neil and Mona leap out of bed. Neil turns on the light.

NEIL
What the hell is that?

SCREECHING and FLAPPING O.S.

Bat bodies SLAM into the sides and windows. Their window SHATTERS.

Mona rushes to put on her jeans and a jacket.

MONA
Must be a rock slide. We've got to get out of here, Neil!

Neil goes to the window. More bats SLAM into the window. A dead bat body falls at his feet.

NEIL
Rock slide nothing! We're being attacked by bats!

The window completely SHATTERS. The side of the RV folds inward from the onslaught of bats.

Mona SCREAMS.

Neil rushes to put on pants and boots.

Jeff and Anna hurry into the room.

JEFF
Dad! There are thousands of bats slamming into us!

Anna buttons up a denim jacket and puts on a ATV crash helmet.

ANNA
Tell us what to do, Dad!

The BATTERING INTENSIFIES, The RV shakes from it. Bats fly in through the broken window.

The group fights off the bats. They flail at the tormenting intruders.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Neil knocks down a bat that flies at his face. He brushes off another that claws at a shoulder.

Mona SCREAMS as a bat lands on her head and claws at her hair. She tugs at the bat but it bites her hand. The pain of the bite makes her jerk the bat off her.

Jeff swings at the bats when several of them buzz around him. He manages to keep them at bay.

Anna has more trouble fending them off. Two bats dig their claws into her denim jacket and bite at it. She SCREAMS. Jeff comes to her rescue and pulls them off her.

END SERIES

Neil herds the other three out of the bedroom and into the salon.

The salon has almost collapsed inward from the POUNDING ONSLAUGHT of bat bodies.

NEIL

We've got to get to the ATV! Grab your helmets! I'll get the shotgun!

He reaches into a closet and pulls out a shotgun. He also grabs a box of shells and stuffs it into his jacket.

Helmets on, Neil leads them to the front door.

The CLOUD of bats has completely destroyed the front windshield and invaded the RV.

The four of them flail to brush off the attackers.

NEIL

Ready! Come on!

He lets go a SHOTGUN BLAST through the front door. It blows a temporary hole in the cloud of bats outside.

They rush toward the ATV.

EXT. RV - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The quartet runs towards the ATV. Neil lets go several SHOTGUN BLASTS to lead the way.

They reach the ATV through the holes he blasted, but the bats regroup around them.

SCREECHING and FLAPPING, they assemble for another attack.

EXT. ATV - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Once inside the ATV, Neil hands the shotgun to Jeff. Neil turns over the motor. It SPUTTERS. Again. He STARTS the ATV, He drives off with Jeff FIRING BLASTS behind them.

The swarm leaves them alone and turns its attention to the RV.

They drive off towards the road through the valley.

EXT. RV - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The bat swarm continues its attack on the RV until it BURSTS into FLAMES.

Alexios approaches the burning RV wreck, Fire and flames illuminate him in the dust and the bat swarm.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Neil and the others have reached the road that brought them to the town. He brakes to a stop.

INT. ATV

They look back at the EXPLODING HULK of their RV.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Neil, with cuts and scrapes and dirty face, looks on in defeat.

Mona, her hair in tangles and bloody scrapes on her face, fights back a tear.

Jeff, in similar shape, looks aghast.

Anna cries and pats her scrapes with a hanky.

FADE TO:

EXT. TREBIZOND - MORNING

The devastated ghost town surrounds the burnt out wreck of the RV.

All is quiet now.

FADE OUT.

THE END