

"THE FUTURE WILD"

Written
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT BASE - UTAH - NIGHT

In the middle of nowhere. Sprawling. BARBED WIRE FENCES. ARMED GUARDS will warn then blow any trespassers away. POWERFUL SEARCH LIGHTS ring the perimeter.

A LIVING SYMPHONY OF DESERT SOUNDS.
Insects, birds, reptiles, and mammals.

SUDDENLY - A LONG RESONANT ROAR. Too alien to belong to the desert or its inhabitants. It belongs to the base.

THE SYMPHONY OF DESERT LIFE DIES.

INT. DESERT BASE - TIMELAB CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A MASSIVE METAL DOOR the width of the corridor.
Two ROOKIE GUARDS warily enter view. Stare at it. Shaken.
A LOUD CRASH from behind it. MUFFLED GROWLS follow.

A VIOLENT SCREAM SOBERS THE ROOKIES INTO ACTION.

ROOKIE GUARD 1
Sound the alarm!

Rookie 2 rushes away.
THE ROAR THAT SHOULDN'T BE REAL SPIKES THE AIR AGAIN.

ROOKIE GUARD 1 (cont'd)
(into walkie)
R-Response force proceed to South 6-12,
immediately! I repeat -

A SCREAM and ROAR ERUPT and DIE together.
A THIN STREAM OF BLOOD FLOWS OUT from under the door.

ROOKIE GUARD 1 (cont'd)
Jesus...

A KLAXON BLARES SUDDENLY. CONTINUES INSISTENTLY.
Rookie 2 comes back running.

ROOKIE GUARD 1 (cont'd)
Listen to that...!

Rookie 1 leans close to the door. Ear nearly touching metal.

His WALKIE SPARKS to life. He jerks back slightly. Exhales.
Puts the walkie to his ear.

THE METAL BY HIS HEAD DISTENDS VIOLENTLY. A ROAR attached.
He quickly joins Rookie 2. The klaxon keeps BLARING.

More metal DISTORTS. LOUDER, ANGRIER ROARS with each BANG.
Whatever's in there wants out.

THE SCREAMS HAVE CEASED.

The guards look like they'll never move again.
50 SOLDIERS SUDDENLY BURST into the hall behind them.
The guards JUMP - startled. Join the SOLDIERS.

The BANGS and ROARS ESCALATE. Their SOUNDS and the ALARM'S
WAIL at THEIR HIGHEST. Soldiers aim to fire. Don't get to.

The BANGS STOP. BEAT. The GROWLS at the DOOR GROW FAINTER.
The ONLY SOUND is the STEADY SHRILL of the ALARM.

The soldiers advance.

One SLIPS on the BLOOD at THE DOOR, steadies himself.
OPENS A PANEL. Patches wires in to override the lock.

ROOKIE 1. A WISP OF SMOKE wafts up before him. He frowns,
eyes finding the source: THE BLOOD IS BUBBLING. BEEP.

PANEL SOLDIER

Got it.

Rookie 1 turns to say something when--

AN EXPLOSION BLOWS THE DOOR AND A FIREBALL ENGULFS THE MEN!

Fire momentarily FILLS THE VIEW - when it SUBSIDES:

FLASHLIGHT BEAMS ILLUMINATE BURNED SHAPES like:
A ROASTED HAND FUSED to a CHARRED GAS TANK'S VALVE.

ONE BEAM turns towards us. Shakily approaches, rising slowly.

MAN WITH FLASHLIGHT

Oh - my - God...

The beam STRIKES US HEAD ON, BLINDING US.

The light turns GRAINY as does wreckage visible behind it:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

VIDEO of the post-accident PROBE plays on A HUGE SCREEN.

30 PEOPLE sit at A LARGE CONFERENCE TABLE, watching.
GENERAL RICHARD WARBURTON among them, 50s, saddened.

A sour-looking man, National Security Agency rep PENDLETON,
clicks a pen in frustration, stares ruefully.

VICKERS sinks despondently into his chair.

VICKERS

Another dream gone, another nightmare
born...

SUSSMAN

(re: something on screen)
What is it?!

Warburton leans forward.

WARBURTON

We don't know, Ma'am.

SUSSMAN

Don't tell me you haven't commenced with
a full dissection and analysis by now--

WARBURTON

Once we're done burying our dead, we'll
worry about probing something else's.

Sussman sits back, chastised. Pendleton stops clicking pen.

PENDLETON

We're all aware of the sensitive nature of this event, General, but you'd be well advised to begin identification procedures as soon as is... humanly possible.

Warburton doesn't like Pendleton.

WARBURTON

Yes, sir.

PENDLETON

In the meantime, to refute Mr. Vickers typically melodramatic view, this project can still be salvaged. These days, 'dreams' come with nifty product replacement plans.

(turns to a SAD TECH)

What would our plan entail?

As SAD TECH opens his mouth to speak, Warburton cuts him off:

WARBURTON

Complete refurbishing of the lab. Including chamber reconstruction, energy storage, computer banks, security systems-

VICKERS

How much?

Beat.

WARBURTON

Same as before: \$30 billion.

The room GROANS, shakes their heads.

PENDLETON

C'mon people, settle down, it's doable. We'll raise the price of movie tickets or something.

(to Sad Tech)

Upon disbursement of funds, how long until you can run the experiment again?

WARBURTON

(cuts Sad Tech off again)

Three months.

Pendleton glares at Warburton.

SAD TECHNICIAN

If... we bring in some outside help.

PENDLETON

Excuse me? Why?

SAD TECHNICIAN

(rising angrily)

Because the ones with the only knowledge of the project are smoldering in its wreckage!

Warburton raises up a calming hand, takes over.

WARBURTON
 We have the data to recreate the necessary facilities, we just don't have any experts left to put them to use - in our employment, that is.

PENDLETON
 You have somebody specific in mind?

Beat.

SAD TECHNICIAN
 Sayre.

The ROOM GROANS AGAIN. Protests fly.

SUSSMAN
 Not that arrogant little insect...

PIERSON
 But he's a high level security risk!

VICKERS
 (chuckles lightly)
 He was funny...

Pendleton finally pays Warburton serious attention.

PENDLETON
 Must we?

Beat. A VOICE from the video floats over them:

VOICE (O.S.)
 They're all gone...

Warburton stares at Pendleton, POINTS in VOICE'S DIRECTION.

PENDLETON
 (beat; to Sad Tech)
 You're go to rebuild. Once it's done - bring him back.

INT. SEBASTIAN'S HOUSE - WORKSHOP - MORNING

FADE UP TITLE: THREE MONTHS LATER

Elvis Presley's "The Lady Loves Me" wafts from a radio.

A SHELF, lined with the PLAQUES of a hard science recipient. A PAPER BULLS' EYE center. A RUBBER PROJECTILE FIRES, MISSES IT, STICKS to the WALL.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
 Damn it!

A HAND removes it. Beat. It STREAKS PAST, missing again.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Damn it!

The hand collects it and we FOLLOW to REVEAL DR. SEBASTIAN SAYRE, early 30s, handsome, all-nighter eyes. He sighs:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Eh, who gives a shit - I'm brilliant.

He tables a PLASTIC PISTOL, transfers A PHONE between ears.
 He sits over a PILE OF TOOLS and a SLUG-LIKE MACHINE.
 His phone CHIRPS: time to be brilliant.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Yerton, Boyd. Security code: seven alpha.
 Day code: steak, reverb, nylon.

Transfer. Connection, then - he speaks in A NASAL VOICE.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Yes, get me General Warburton!
 Yerton: Base Infirmary - it's a medical
 emergency!
 (beat)
 I don't care if he's in the field, I have
 to get through!

SMOKE DRIFTS BY his face. His MACHINE is SMOKING.
 He brushes tools past. They clatter to the floor along with:
 AN ANCIENT BOOK and some BUSINESS CARDS.

CARDS read: DR. SEBASTIAN SAYRE, Ph.D.; 'TURNING SCI-FI INTO
 SCI-FACT: THE ONLY WAY TO GO!' The BOOK lands cover-open; an
 INSCRIPTION inside reads: To S. on his Birthday Love, Erica.

He stares. MORE SMOKE. Resumes his tool hunt. Finds a winner.
 Attacks machine's problem - too late--

The machine SPARKS FESTIVELY, FIZZLES, then DIES.

Sebastian SLAMS the tool down, grabs the machine and HURLS it
 away into a CORNER where it lands in:

A BIN OF MECHANICAL DEBRIS, overflowing, LABELED:
 IMMUNODEFICIENCY REPAIR ROBOT. The bin sits amidst:

5 OTHER BINS - four FULL OF JUNK, one EMPTY. Three of the
 four full are labeled: ANTI-GRAVITY HARNESS, INVISIBILITY
 SUIT and TELEPORTATION DEVICE. The REPAIR ROBOT bin is 4th.

The EMPTY FIFTH BIN is, as yet, UNLABELED.

Sebastian glares at the remaining bin, shakes his head:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 One chance left...

The phone chirps again.

WARBURTON
 (filtered)
 Warburton here.

SEBASTIAN
 (mock seriously)
 Yes, General, this is Dr. Yerton, Base
 Infirmary. I've just received the results
 of your physical. Now, there isn't any
 easy way to say this, but I'll try my
 best. At a certain age, some men develop
 fatal kinks. Yours, I'm happy to report,
 is only extremely embarrassing. I regret
 to inform you that you've unfortunately
 developed - erectile dysfunction. I'm
 sorry I have to break it to you, I know
 this comes as a -
 (voice starts to crack)
 - b-blow, but you should look on--

A KNOCK at the WORKSHOP DOOR.

Sebastian gets up, heads for it, still talking.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 --the bright side, I mean: your risk of
 heart attack has substantially decreased--
 (starting to giggle)
 --and your wife won't ever again suffer
 the agony of--

Sebastian reaches the DOOR and--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 --of having to see... your...
 (full blown laughter soon)
 sagging... a--

--OPENS it - revealing WARBURTON, CELL PHONE at his EAR.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Uh, uh--

SEBASTIAN'S 'UHS' COME CLEAR FROM WARBURTON'S CELL.

WARBURTON
 Hello, Sebastian.

He closes his cell and enters, passing a dumbfounded Sebastian.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 The 15th call was the last draw. The time
 came to pay you an official visit.

Beat.

SEBASTIAN
 Least you took your comeuppance for
 firing me in stride awhile.

WARBURTON
 (looking around)
 Didn't expect comeuppance so much as I
 expected grief.
 (turns to Sebastian)
 But it's nothing having you arrested
 won't fix. You remember my aide, Major
 Zulfikar.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR, mid 30s, Indian American, steps inside, gives Sebastian a slight wave - HANDCUFFS in his hand.

SEBASTIAN
 (smiles weakly)
 Hey...

Sebastian notes Zulfikar standing by the FIRST EDITION 'WAR OF THE WORLDS' BOOK. Walks toward him, grabs it so he can hide it before Warburton can spot it and ask:

WARBURTON
 So, how's Erica?

Too late.

SEBASTIAN

How would I know? I don't stalk my ex-wife.

He discreetly shoves the book into a drawer FILLED WITH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS on one WOMAN. One reads: Dr. Erica Manning - Cape Town's Only Evolutionary Biologist.

Sebastian puts his hands behind his BACK and turns it to Zulfikar - who puts the handcuffs on.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(jerking head in cuff's direction)

I only have enough energy for one fixation.

EXT. SEBASTIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Warburton and Zulfikar lead Sebastian to their car.

SEBASTIAN

Don't suppose I could bribe my way out of this?

WARBURTON

Afraid not, Sebastian - I already have my share of jack shit.

SEBASTIAN

Well - maybe I could pay you in expertise. There must be something those half-wits working for you could use some help with...

Zulfikar stops Sebastian, looks at Warburton.

ZULFIKAR

You know, General, maybe we should--

WARBURTON

No. Absolutely not!

ZULFIKAR

I mean, we are pressed for time and he's right here--

SEBASTIAN

Yeah! Listen to him.

WARBURTON

It's out of the question.

ZULFIKAR

Sir - just think about it.

SEBASTIAN

He's got a point.

Beat. Warburton crosses his arms and goes into deep thought. Sebastian watches him closely.

WARBURTON

Well... since you mentioned it, Sebastian, there was a setback with one of our projects and... we could use an expert hand to help solve--

SEBASTIAN
 And that's what you're really doing here!
 I knew it! Un-fucking-believable. Well,
 you were better than Ben Affleck, that's
 for sure, but I'm saying 'screw you!'

Sebastian tears himself out of Zulfikar's grasp and storms
 back into his house - still handcuffed!

WARBURTON
 Sebastian, wait--

SEBASTIAN
 Thanks for stopping by!

He kicks the door SHUT on the soldiers. BANG.

Zulfikar shrugs at Warburton: I tried.
 Warburton walks up to the door and speaks through it.

WARBURTON
 Hear me out, Sebastian--

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
 But keeping me around was too risky for
 you, remember?

WARBURTON
 Sebastian--

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
 So why should I help clean up your barely-
 qualified eggheads' messes?

WARBURTON
 Because it was your project.

Beat. The door opens and Sebastian steps out, perturbed.

SEBASTIAN
 It didn't work..?

WARBURTON
 There was an explosion.

SEBASTIAN
 What caused it?

WARBURTON
 Want to find out?

Beat. Sebastian shifts where he stands.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 I'm not on the ground, but I have crawled
 back, Sebastian.

Sebastian looks over his shoulder, then at Warburton. Beat.

SEBASTIAN
 Will you take off my handcuffs?

WARBURTON
 Within reason.

SEBASTIAN
 (beat)
 I promise I'll behave this time...

Warburton removes Sebastian's cuffs and walks to his car. Sebastian lingers for a beat, rubs his wrists, smiles.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Within reason...

He pads after Warburton.

INT. DESERT BASE - TIMELAB CORRIDOR - DAY

Drifting toward TIMELAB'S NEW DOOR. Shiny. Unblemished.

Sebastian, Warburton and Zulfikar approach. Sebastian stops and stares reverently at the door. Beat. He turns, sees:

Warburton and Zulfikar - still walking.

SEBASTIAN
Hey - don't I get to see her brand,
spanking new?

WARBURTON
We show you the cause of the trouble
first.

SEBASTIAN
But it's been so long--

WARBURTON
Remember our deal Sebastian.

Sebastian raises his hands: you win. Joins them.

When the soldiers turn a corner, Sebastian hangs back.

He backtracks - to TIME LAB'S DOOR again...

INT. DESERT BASE - RECREATED TIMELAB - DAY

The DOOR SLIDES OPEN.

A MASSIVE ROOM: part Mission Control, part science lab. Dominated by a LARGE STEEL CHAMBER with HUGE GLASS VIEWPORT. You wouldn't know there had ever been a fire here.

Sebastian wanders through it, big smile on his face. He walks up to the chamber.

Runs his fingers over it as if caressing a woman's thigh.

SEBASTIAN
(to himself)
Hey, baby. Remember me?

Warburton appears beside him, shakes his head.

WARBURTON
Not off to a very good start, are we
Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN
And there was some accidental explosion?

WARBURTON
It was no accident. The techs blew the
lab up themselves.

Sebastian turns to Warburton - pissed.

SEBASTIAN

OK - show me why.

INT. DESERT BASE - MORGUE - DAY

A LAB TECH WHIPS a cover off a HUGE SHAPE lying on a table. SMOKE wafts up in A THICK WAVE. Sebastian GRIMACES at:

A LARGE CREATURE. STIFF, BLACKENED HAIR. HUGE FANGS. POWERFUL HIND LIMBS and a THICK, HEAVY TAIL.

LAB TECH

This was responsible for the deep gashes on all the bodies. Hair follicles found in those wounds match it exactly.

SEBASTIAN

So they blew the place to keep this - whatever it is - from escaping. What happened to the baboon they used as a test subject?

LAB TECH

(shrugs)
This was the only animal carcass we found.

SEBASTIAN

Guess that means we swapped explorers.

WARBURTON

That was our guess, too.

SEBASTIAN

Only we ended up with one sorely lacking the spirit. Anyway, the important thing is--

(gestures at creature)
My time machine worked.

WARBURTON

Yeah. We just didn't count on arriving in the Land That Time Hasn't Thought Of Yet.

SEBASTIAN

We're thinking of it now.

WARBURTON

(smiles)
I'm glad you said that.

INT. BASE - OUTSIDE AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

Sebastian storms out angrily, Warburton calmly joining him.

SEBASTIAN

Over my dead body!

WARBURTON

It's my responsibility to ensure this project is salvaged by being better prepared. All the necessary steps have been taken except for the inclusion of an animal specialist. I mean let's face it, Sebastian: you're no zoologist - of this or any other time.

SEBASTIAN

So we just avoid the time the techs picked up our explorer in! There - no need for an animal specialist.

WARBURTON

And if something unforeseen happens? An equipment malfunction that takes us there anyway? And more 'explorers' come through?! No - we can't risk it.

SEBASTIAN

Well, there must be half a dozen equally qualified scientists doing the same research she is--

WARBURTON

Look Sebastian, unfortunately for us, your ex-wife happens to be our only option.

(beat)

Consider it a cosmic joke and all you can do is laugh.

SEBASTIAN

If you bring Erica on board, she'll just make everything about her work. She'll never let up about it!

WARBURTON

You mean like what you did?

Sebastian's caught off guard. Warburton regrets his words.

WARBURTON (cont'd)

(a faint save)

She's not interested in stealing your glory, Sebastian...

SEBASTIAN

I know, damnit...

WARBURTON

Then what is the problem?

(beat)

You're not still in love with her, are you?

Sebastian fumes - then strides back into--

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

Sebastian harshly pries a GIANT CANINE from creature's jaw.

INT. OUTSIDE AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

He strides back out, passes Warburton. Over his shoulder:

SEBASTIAN

Warm up an airplane.

(to himself)

I'll show you who the 'better half' is...

INT. AUDITORIUM - SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

A GIANT MONITOR: A GRAPHIC of the OUTLINE OF AN ANIMAL. Throughout the following speech, the outline MORPHS into something wildly different. Over this, a VOICE:

ERICA (O.S.)
The future wild.
(beat)

Evolutionary biologists have exhaustively speculated on what wildlife will be like millions of years from now. But unless we could someday travel in time, we'd never be able to actually see any of these astounding evolutionary developments firsthand. Then again - we may not have to put our faith in such a silly goal.

A HUNDRED SEATED PEOPLE watch the presentation with rapt attention. A WOMAN'S UNLIT SHAPE holds court at a PODIUM.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Emerging environmental factors are effecting evolution as we speak and will allow us to see some amazing wildlife leaps sooner than we would've thought.

ON MONITOR: GRAPHIC of CELLS SHIFTING, SPLITTING, CHANGING.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Mutation is the catalyst by which any species evolves, and several different triggers can cause this truly wondrous process.

ON MONITOR: SLIDES CYCLE, providing illustrations throughout the following narration.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
One is significant change in a species' terrain. In Asia, _____ has resulted in the emergence of a new species of _____.

1ST SLIDE: BLURRED PHOTO of (new Asian species).

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Another trigger is a flux in sources of nourishment, a good example of which can be found in _____, where _____ has created a new kind of _____.

2ND SLIDE: PHOTO of (slightly more fantastical new species).

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
But perhaps the single most effective trigger has proven to be radiation.

3RD SLIDE: DIAGRAM of SOLAR RADIATION breaching the OZONE LAYER, RAYS striking EARTH - specifically SOUTH AFRICA.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Here in South Africa for example, the greatest ozone depletion found in any one area worldwide is allowing unparalleled amounts of radiation to affect the local wildlife, thereby effecting the most amazing evolutionary leaps of the last 5 million years. The most astonishing being what has now been dubbed: the Man-Hyena of Kapiti.

NEXT: BLURRED PHOTOS of what looks like something HALF-HYENA, HALF-MAN, very large, standing on two powerful legs.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Kapiti Plain, home to the peaceful village of the _____ Tribe, was a relatively undisturbed locale up until a year ago. It was around this time that villagers first encountered the extraordinary creature seen here in these amateur photographs.

PHOTOS of MAN-HYENA stalking jungle around the village.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Sightings first proliferated among local tribesmen, gradually spread to outlying officials, and eventually gained sufficient notoriety throughout the continent to draw healthy scientific attention - including my own. After weeks of shadowing the specimen, I compiled enough data to formulate a preliminary diagram of the Man-Hyena's physical structure. All indications are that this animal has undergone evolutionary leaps 1 million years ahead of schedule.

NEXT SLIDE: A DRAWN DIAGRAM shows front and back views of the MAN-HYENA'S BODY. She points to various parts as she speaks.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Notice the intriguing reduction of the forelimbs. The new position of the head - now carried further forward, necessitating balance by a thicker, heavier tail than that of a contemporary hyena. At the same time, evolution has visibly strengthened its hind limbs, causing its adoption of a nearly bipedal stance - thereby increasing its speed so it can better hunt prey. In physical form, the Man-Hyena bears a distinct resemblance to the carnivorous dinosaurs that died out more than 100 million years ago--
 (beat)
 --and, shockingly, seems to be following in their behavioral footsteps as well...

HAND-HELD VIDEO of NATIVES gawking at a CHICKEN COOP - HUGE HOLE TORN out of its MESH, BLOODY FEATHERS stuck to the WIRE.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 What basically began as a curiosity for the villagers of Kapiti, quickly turned into a nightmare after the first of many incidents involving raids on their village occurred.

HAND-HELD VIDEO of a NATIVE WOMAN holding a CRYING BABY - its SMASHED CRIB nearby, a TEAR in the WALL of its HUT.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Not content with snatching the contents of the village food supply, the Man-Hyena soon took to going after even more helpless prey.

HAND-HELD VIDEO of a OLD NATIVE showing off A LARGE CHEST WOUND - a SLASH from a CLAW.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 But the attacks reached their peak when this village elder was nearly eviscerated by the creature while praying at a sacred altar now within the area the Man-Hyena had staked out as territory.

The images disappear. The room goes momentarily BLACK.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 The Man-Hyena has been terrorizing the natives of Kapiti Plain with increasing frequency and violence - which only fortifies the very theory I've staked my considerable reputation and livelihood on, bringing all of us halfway around the world for this fateful meeting...

Images return: SLIDES showing DRAWINGS of NORMAL ANIMALS morphing into STRANGE CREATURES - toothy, vicious-looking creatures you wouldn't want running loose in your time.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 Of the countless advanced species which will keep surfacing yearly - increasing in number as time goes on - I believe a great many will pose a threat to mankind if allowed to propagate.

SLIDES showing drawings of the creatures running rampant: breeding; clearing fields, forests; eating animals; people.

ERICA (O.S.) (cont'd)
 In a very short span of time, this eclectic mix of wildlife could collectively affect our planet in unprecedented, catastrophic ways. They could breed legions, ravage our environment, overrun and - eventually - wipe us out.

The slide show DIES.

The LIGHTS come up, revealing: DR. ERICA MANNING(30s), gorgeous if she cared, at the podium. She faces the crowd.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Man has at least initiated preparations against natural disasters we've identified as potential threats: global warming, collisions with asteroids, and blank. But, what we haven't done is guarded ourselves against any biological antagonists other than viruses. And when the future wild inevitably appear, they'll almost certainly pose a much 'larger' threat to mankind. Luckily, I'm taking steps toward guarding all of us as we speak.

(beat)
 In conjunction with village tribesman and local officials, I have come to South Africa to capture this animal to use as leverage for a thorough study of this rapidly emerging, worldwide phenomenon. Several prestigious institutes have already offered generous financial backing pending capture of the specimen.

(MORE)

ERICA(cont'd)

And you'd better hope I'm successful, otherwise - in due time - we'll all be screwed. We'll now open up the floor for questions.

A HAND goes up. Erica sees the owner - and SWALLOWS.

ERICA (cont'd)

Yes - Dr. Jacob Dahlstedt.

DR. DAHLSTEDT, a pregnant looking man, stands up. Smirks.

DAHLSTEDT

Thank you, Dr. Manning. It seems to me that 3 measly creatures hardly constitutes an accelerated evolution explosion.

ERICA

Well, as I said before, at the rate the environment is changing - thereby advancing mutation - we have a veritable supernova on the horizon. If you study the various patterns and projections, do the math yourself--

DAHLSTEDT

Oh, but I have, Dr. Manning and frankly, the changes you're expounding will occur too far in the future to pose any real threat, according to my calculations.

ERICA

Then your calculations are wrong.

DAHLSTEDT

As are the U.S. Government's as well, I suppose?

ERICA

(thrown for a loop)
Beg pardon?

DAHLSTEDT

Correct me if I'm wrong but, isn't it true that you tried to secure funding for this study once before and were denied based on similar conclusions about your research?

ERICA

(beat)
No correction necessary.

DAHLSTEDT

In fact, the approval committee so strongly agreed with my views--

ERICA

Well of course they did, Doctor, you were among those on it!

Dahlstedt smirks, spreads his arms - 'guilty as charged.'

DAHLSTEDT

--that they passed on your project in favor of one they deemed more important - your husband's project, in fact.

ERICA
 (ruefully)
 Ex-husband.
 (beat)
 And 'No' still means 'No,' Doctor!

Dahlstedt goes red.

DAHLSTEDT
 Nevertheless - as I made perfectly clear
 a year ago, but will repeat for the
 benefit of those who should know: it is
 the opinion of many, myself included,
 that to devote any considerable attention
 to your research would be a serious
 misallocation of coveted government
 resources--

ERICA
 Thank you, Doctor. Next question?

DAHLSTEDT
 Furthermore, it's never great fun to
 watch a venerated colleague flush their
 career down the toilet, but if you
 continue on the path you're stumbling
 around on, that's precisely what will
 happen--

ERICA
 That will be all, Dr. Dahlstedt.

The unseen person sitting directly behind Dahlstedt leans
 forward as Dahlstedt starts to say something else--

DAHLSTEDT
 --so, you should stop wasting not only
 your time and money but ours as we--

--in mid-sentence, the unseen person WHISPERS something into
 Dahlstedt's ear - making Dahlstedt BLANCH, his EYES WIDENING.

Dahlstedt just sits silently for a beat, mouth open slightly.

Erica notices, looks confused.

ERICA
 Something wrong, Dr. Dahlstedt?

Beat. Finally, Dahlstedt can only stammer:

DAHLSTEDT
 N-No... please... Continue...

He glances behind himself slightly as the whisperer leans
 back in his chair--

--REVEALING himself: An OLD MAN in his 70s, fit-looking
 despite this, decked in worn SAFARI GARB, eyes like a wolf -
 a rough stone in a room of diamonds. Meet JULIAN RAPELOW.

He and Erica lock eyes. Smirking, he WINKS at her.

She half nods and barely stifles a smile. Re-addresses crowd.

ERICA
 So - next question?

A HAND goes up, then the person it belongs to - SEBASTIAN!

Erica sees him. This time, her JAW DROPS.
Sebastian smiles, opens his mouth just as:

ERICA (cont'd)
Well, that concludes the conference!
I'd like to thank you all for coming and -
keep an eye on the future.

APPLAUSE as Erica quickly gathers her things, scampers off.

Julian notices her reaction, pinpoints Sebastian as the source - and glares at him.

Sebastian strains to keep Erica in his sights, but she disappears in

THE CROWD

Sebastian weaves through the throng of people, searching.
Finally, the crowd parts almost magically, revealing:

Erica, looking around anxiously, scurrying forward.

SEBASTIAN
Hello, Erica.

Erica stops in her tracks, turns to face Sebastian. Sighs.

ERICA
So - unemployment's turned you into a
transcontinental stalker. That's nice.

She tries to push past him. He cuts her off.

SEBASTIAN
Actually, I'm here on--

ERICA
I'm sure you're operating under a very
interesting delusion but, unfortunately,
I don't have time for this - or you.

She tries to force him away - but he just grabs her hand.

SEBASTIAN
Look, if you'd just listen to me for a s--

Now she, less politely, tries to wriggle free of his grasp.

ERICA
Sebastian, I have a specimen to bag so -
if you'll excuse me--

SEBASTIAN
Not until you quit fussing and hear me--

JULIAN (O.S.)
You heard the lady--

Julian steps into the dispute, grabs Sebastian's hand--

JULIAN (cont'd)
Bugger off.

--and forcefully removes it from Erica's.

Sebastian stares warily at Julian - backs off, hands raised.

SEBASTIAN
Not a problem.

Julian half smiles at him, looking like a poised Cobra.

ERICA
(to Julian)
Everything's OK. Shall we?

JULIAN
After you.

Trying not to meet Sebastian's gaze:

ERICA
Goodbye, Sebastian.

She hurries off. Julian follows.

Sebastian and Julian glare at each other until Julian and Erica disappear from sight.

Sebastian turns to look at several DISPLAYS set up nearby.

Prominent on one are BLURRY, Big Foot-style PHOTOS of the animal Erica's about to go after. A caption above them reads: "MAN-HYENA OF KAPITI PLAIN."

On another display is a MAP of South Africa - the Kapiti Plain region Erica's headed for BOLDLY CIRCLED.

SEBASTIAN
The Man-Hyena of Kapiti, huh...

EXT. KAPITI PLAIN, SOUTH AFRICA - GRASSLAND - NIGHT

Erica, radio head set on, slinks toward:

A PACK of HYENAS. One in particular - SHAPED DIFFERENTLY. BIGGER, nearing BIPEDAL, a THICKER TAIL: the MAN-HYENA.

ADEWALE - a native SIDEKICK - and JULIAN CROUCH behind a RISE a ways off, a JEEP parked nearby. They wear headsets also.

Erica readies a TRANQUILIZER GUN.

ADEWALE
I'm telling you: you're too close.

ERICA
Prepare for more disappointment: I'm getting closer.

ADEWALE
No! Erica, if they pick up your scent, they're libel to--

ERICA
If I don't bag this specimen now, I'm libel to lose it for good.

ADEWALE
Damn it Erica, don't--

CLICK. Erica shuts her radio OFF.

Adewale curses, chucks his radio down angrily, watches Erica. Julian's head snaps AWAY - scanning for some distant danger. IN THE FIELD, Erica gets closer to the MAN-HYENA, prepares to fire. The other ones circle restlessly, getting agitated. Adewale notices this.

ADEWALE (cont'd)
Damn, something's spooking them.

JULIAN
I know. Same thing's been spooking me the last 5 miles.

ADEWALE
(looks where Julian is)
We're being followed?

Julian spots: FAINT, DISTANT HEADLIGHTS.

JULIAN
Hunted.

A GROWL TURNS THEIR ATTENTION BACK TO ERICA.

She's in the same boat. Whatever's spooking everyone is causing the hyenas to move in her direction. In a bad mood.

She continues BRACING for the SHOT. Unaware.

ADEWALE
Be close enough to smell her soon. Soon after: blood. Aren't you going to do something?

JULIAN
In a moment, I won't have to.

With that, he HEADS OFF.

ADEWALE
Where are you going?!

JULIAN
To show them what they're doing wrong.

Julian goes off: 'HUNTS' JEEP, CORNERS and DISABLES IT - it CRASHES Erica's tranquilizing effort - crashing into a TREE TRUNK - sends HYENAS RUNNING.

Julian lowers his rifle, smiles triumphantly.

JULIAN (cont'd)
My finest hunt in 30 years.

He heads for the Jeep.

As HER HYENA RUNS OFF, Erica THROWS a ROCK at it.

ERICA
Damn it, come back here!

She storms toward the commotion where:

JULIAN holds PEACH FUZZ SOLDIER and SEBASTIAN, behind wheel of crashed jeep, at GUNPOINT.

Sebastian surveys the destruction. Turns to the soldier:

SEBASTIAN
You were right - you should have drove.

ERICA
(arriving)
Sebastian? Priceless! Do you have any
idea what you just cost me?!

Sebastian looks off after the hyena, dizzy.

SEBASTIAN
It got away?
(gestures at her tranq.
gun)
Let me have that thing. I'll go bag it,
no problem!

ERICA
Oh please, Sebastian. You been able to
hit that plastic target yet?

SEBASTIAN
(beat)
I'm getting closer every day!

ERICA
Not good enough. Look around.
(gestures at car wreck)
Being cooped up indoors has even impaired
your driving now! You could never handle
anything this physical.

Sebastian stares daggers at her, a nerve struck twice now.

SEBASTIAN
Least I could get a job easily enough.

Erica shakes her head ruefully.

ERICA
Same old Sebastian.

She turns and walks away. Sebastian and the soldier scramble
out of the Jeep and follow her, Julian accompanying them.

ERICA (cont'd)
You show up - I get screwed.

SEBASTIAN
OK, there's some truth to that - but I
come bearing gifts!

ERICA
A blank check to replace the one you just
ruined my chances of getting?

SEBASTIAN
The next best thing: a lucrative job
offer.

Erica stops. Faces Sebastian. The others stop also.

PEACH FUZZ SOLDIER
(to Julian)
Sir, if you would...

JULIAN

Try to make me leave, and you'll soon be trying to realign your ass.

End of discussion. The soldier doesn't refute it.

ERICA

When I did need something from you it was then - not now.

SEBASTIAN

You sure? You get to hear some juicy apologies and promises from me first.

ERICA

(weighs that; then)
If you're not quieter leaving than arriving, Julian will bag his first trophy in 30 years.

She turns to leave. As she does:

SEBASTIAN

Would it help if the proposal was made in game form?

She turns back to him.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

It's an easy one.
(raises his closed fists)
Involves the fellas here and the picking of one.

She returns. He extends his fists to her. She picks one. He opens it - to reveal the CREATURE TOOTH.

She picks it up, examines it in awe.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

See - you bagged something today after all.

Julian looks at the claw with an equal amount of reverence.

EXT. JULIAN'S TENT - LATER - NIGHT

Erica and Sebastian ARGUE while Julian PACKS inside his tent.

A WOODEN SIGN stuck in the ground in front of it reads:
"Julian Rapelow - Field Guide For Hire; Safaris/Bush Tours."

SEBASTIAN

Absolutely not.

ERICA

He's doesn't go, I follow suit.

SEBASTIAN

He does and you don't get... health... coverage.

ERICA

Well - sometimes you just have to give up those little extras.

Sebastian grabs the tent flap and yanks it shut.

SEBASTIAN
 Damn it - this job isn't supposed to be an exotic getaway for you and your new boyfriend.

ERICA
 Weigh what you need more: my expertise or freedom from picturing me sleeping with someone besides you.

SEBASTIAN
 That's hard.
 (long beat)
 He comes along, he and the project are like this--

Sebastian spreads two fingers FAR APART.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 He stays in the dark.

ERICA
 Don't worry. I'll keep him company.

With that, and a smile, she heads off to do her own packing.

INT. JULIAN'S TENT - NIGHT

Sebastian opens the flap and hovers as Julian packs, puffing on a CIGAR, SEVERAL BAGS laid out in front of him.

Sebastian takes a quick stock of the tent:

A worn COT. Small BOOKCASE. A BOOZE CABINET. And oddly: A hanging set of PLASTIC-WRAPPED CLOTHES, LABELED: The Costume. They include: a GAUDY SAFARI JACKET, SHIRT, SHORTS and an oversized PITH HELMET.

Sebastian contemplates the clothes, then turns to the owner.

SEBASTIAN
 Wow - an honest to goodness great white hunter.
 (looks after Erica)
 You got yourself a helluva trophy this time, lemme tell ya.

Julian packs up a SMALL COMPASS, his INITIALS etched into it.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 So, how'd you two meet?

Julian just strides around the tent, retrieves SEVERAL METAL PIECES - a SHORT WOODEN ONE, a LONG PIPE-LIKE ONE, etc. - packing each piece into a DIFFERENT bag...

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 She stumble on you about to--
 (mimes shooting himself)
 --pull a Hemingway in your tent?

Julian brushes past him, sticks his hand out the tent entrance, gives a JERK and returns with: the WOODEN SIGN--

--which he suddenly BREAKS over his KNEE with a SNAP!
 Sebastian tries not to look intimidated, presses on.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Convince you to keep taking rich city
 slickers sight seeing to fund a whirlwind
 romance?

Julian flashes a LARGE HUNTING KNIFE before Sebastian's eyes -
 then strides over to his hung 'COSTUME' which he yanks off
 the rack and--

--TEARS UP forcefully into ragged shreds.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Must be tough knowing you're about as
 extinct as some heads on the wall.

Julian suddenly HURLS the knife at a WOODEN TARGET like a
 dart, where it EMBEDS MIGHTILY into the WOOD.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Real talkative, huh?

Julian looks directly at Sebastian and:
 Puts out his CIGAR by CRUSHING the LIT END IN with his THUMB.

JULIAN
 You certainly are.

He hoists a bag up and heads off. Sebastian's not happy.

EXT. TENT - NIGHT

Julian heads over to his Jeep, makes sure no one's looking,
 opens a BOX, and extracts a FINAL METAL PIECE - a TRIGGER
 MOUNT - stuffing it into his bag.

Julian has packed up a dismantled HUNTING RIFLE.

INT. ERICA'S TENT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Julian enters, heads for a BIG TRUNK in the corner.
 As soon as he does, Erica begins.

ERICA
 So, do you see what I mean?

Julian discreetly packs up OLD JOURNALS, CHARTS, and MAPS.

ERICA (cont'd)
 He hasn't changed. He'll never change.
 He's just out for himself. Never anybody
 else. And all he does is bullshit
 everyone it's just the opposite.

Then, he walks over to her, something in his hand.

JULIAN
 I want you to have this.

He hands her a BEAUTIFUL LOCKET.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 Consider it a (gift?) to celebrate your
 (career?) ascendancy. It's our... new
 shot at life.

She's speechless.

ERICA

But this was your mother's locket.
 (beat)
 You cut it out of the tiger that killed
 her.
 (beat)
 It's... personal.

JULIAN

That's why it's yours.

Erica's beyond moved. Beat.

ERICA

That's why I want you with me.

SHE KISSES HIM. That kind of kiss. They break.

JULIAN

(nods toward map of U.S.)
 Now let's away to that shit hole.

INT. DESERT BASE - TIME CHAMBER - DAY

Erica stands in the center of the TIME CHAMBER, alone.

SEBASTIAN'S DISEMBODIED VOICE fills the air, sounding eerily
 PRESENT, as he were right there talking to her.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)

The subject is put inside here. Next, we
 create an intense gravitational field to
 hold it in place.

A HUM SOUNDS and Erica struggles to pick up her feet - can't.
 She's FIXED to the floor where she stands.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

Then, massive amounts of nuclear energy
 are employed to accelerate that subject
 to the speed of light.

SUDDENLY, the WALLS around Erica STREAK PAST at the speed of
 light - her HAIR BLOWN BACK by the immense force!

SEBASTIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

Once that occurs--

Moments later, her speed SLOWS to a STOP and--

SEBASTIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)

--they're officially not in Kansas
 anymore.

--the environment around Erica COALESCES into a SHIMMERING
 FUTURE CITYSCAPE - columns of TALL, WEIRD BUILDINGS; FLYING
 CARS; MOVING WALKWAYS carrying ODDLY DRESSED PEOPLE around.

Then - the whole view CRACKLES, BREAKS UP and DIES.

INT. VIRTUAL DEMONSTRATION ROOM - DAY

Erica stands before a small, high tech looking CONSOLE,
 wearing A LARGE VIRTUAL REALITY HELMET, attached to the
 console by WIRES.

Sebastian stands at the MAIN CONTROL DECK behind her,
 operating the system, a government Universal Studios ride.

Erica removes the helmet, notes a label on it:
 "SPECTACULAR OPTICAL, INC."

ERICA
 Hey! These guys designed my presentation!
 I didn't get any fancy virtual reality!

SEBASTIAN
 Eh - we paid them more.

Erica puts down the helmet.

ERICA
 Well, congratulations, Sebastian. Pretty
 impressive.

SEBASTIAN
 What can I say, except: this is it. The
 first fully realized sci-fi undertaking!
 I'm as good as in the history books after
 tonight.
 (pointedly looks at Erica)
 Assuming nothing gets in the way, of
 course.

Erica notes the words, inspects the simulator's works.

ERICA
 So I bet you were just tickled having to
 bring me into the fold.

Sebastian makes a 'Who? Me?' gesture.

ERICA (cont'd)
 I know it wasn't your choice to bring me
 on board, Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN
 True, I made it clear we didn't need you,
 since I'd keep us out of Monster Land.
 (beat)
 But here you are.

ERICA
 And the headaches begin.

Erica unconsciously POSES against metal, BACKLIT by blinking
 LIGHT, looking, momentarily, like some science pin-up girl.

Sebastian gets flustered, has to turn away.

SEBASTIAN
 (to himself)
 Not to mention the other aches...

He looks at a large SCREEN showing a GRAPHIC OF THE CHAMBER.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Nevertheless, let's hope headaches are
 all that happens.

Erica pulls out the creature tooth, looks at it reverently.

ERICA
 Not sure I can agree with you,
 Sebastian...

He turns back to witness her reverie, concern on his face...

INT. TIMELAB - LATER - DAY

A CAGED BABOON, SMALL HEAD CAMERA ON, is wheeled to CHAMBER.

IMPOSING BARS and OTHER APPARATUS have been welded to it in strategic areas for REINFORCEMENT.

HEAVILY ARMED SOLDIERS hover around it. Tense.

Sebastian, Erica and Warburton are at A CONTROL CONSOLE, flanked by SCORES of TECHNICIANS.

A VIDEO CAMERA is aimed AT THE CHAMBER, broadcasting.

SEBASTIAN
(re: video camera)
We're going out live, guys. The pressure's on.

TECHS open cage, place baboon inside the CHAMBER. CLAMP DOOR SHUT. LOCKS SOUND. Chamber secured.

Everyone is so transfixed on the operation, they don't notice MOVEMENT in the bowels of the lab. JULIAN, UNSEEN, watches the proceedings in silence.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
OK, 1 baboon - same as in the first test.
(to technician)
Power up the GraviField Module.

IN THE CHAMBER, A HUM SOUNDS and the BABOON STRUGGLES to MOVE, CAN'T. STAYS FIXED in the SAME POSITION.

TECHNICIAN
Module up.

SEBASTIAN
Reactor Team, stand by. Gimme a safety confirmation.

2ND TECHNICIAN
Safety has gone green.

SEBASTIAN
All right - let's do it.
Next stop: 20 years hence.

A HI-TECH LEVER. A DIGITAL READOUT next to it. Sebastian GRABS LEVER, PUSHES IT FORWARD SLIGHTLY. The RADIATION TANKS HUM and THROB. NUMBERS RISE on the READOUT.

IN THE CHAMBER, the BABOON SCREECHES in FRIGHT as a LIGHT goes from WEAK to SEARING. A FLASH.

BABOON HAIR AND SKIN are BLOWN BACK HARD. It TWITCHES FURIOUSLY, still held in place. SMOKE FILLS the CHAMBER. In a second, it's over.

THE LIGHT GOES OFF. A LOW HUM the only sound.

The onlookers wait for the smoke to CLEAR, in silence. The soldiers PREPARE TO FIRE.

Soon, there is no more smoke, only - THE BABOON. Unchanged.

The group looks at each other in confusion.

WARBURTON
What happened? Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN
I'm not sure...

Erica walks up to the CHAMBER'S GLASS VIEWPORT; looks baboon over. Her EYES NARROW SUDDENLY.

WHAT SHE'S LOOKING AT: THE BABOON'S FOOT. An EXTRA TOE.

She returns to Sebastian's side at the CONTROL CONSOLE.

ERICA
Sebastian - I have an idea.

SEBASTIAN
It didn't work..?

ERICA
I think it did - just not in the way you'd planned...

SEBASTIAN
What do you mean?

ERICA
Send it further ahead and you'll see.

SEBASTIAN
How much further?

ERICA
Five million years.

Sebastian stares at her curiously.

THE READOUT. The NUMBERS RISE AGAIN. HIGHER.

IN THE CHAMBER, the ACTIVITY REPEATS. This time: METAMORPHOSIS!

The groups stares in awe as: the BABOON'S BODY DISTORTS. It GROWS, FORELIMBS SHORTEN, TAIL THICKENS, FANGS DISTEND, the HEAD CAM BURSTS - and then SMOKE OBSCURES IT FROM VIEW.

THE LIGHT GOES OFF. A LOW HUM the only sound.

The soldiers' GUNS DROP SLIGHTLY as they stare also.

Sebastian and Erica slowly approach the glass when--

--A HULKING BEAST EMERGES FROM THE SMOKE, STRIKING IT HARD!!!

The GLASS CRACKS, WEB-LIKE. Behind it, the BABOON-THING WRITHES. About 5 FEET TALL now, HUGE FANGS, POWERFUL HIND LEGS. TREMENDOUS POWER behind its LUNGES and STRIKES.

THE GLASS IS CRACKING EVEN MORE. It just might get out.

The soldiers RAISE their WEAPONS.

SEBASTIAN
GraviField! Now!
(to technician)
Hurry - bring the baboon back!

The technician stands at the controls, dumbfounded.

Sebastian runs back to the console.
YANKS THE LEVER ALL THE WAY DOWN. THE LIGHT RETURNS.

The BABOON CHANGES AGAIN. IT SHRINKS DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY.
LOSES FINGERS and TOES. STANDS on FOUR LEGS. A SMALL MAMMAL.

Awareness hits Sebastian. He grabs the lever and EASES IT UP
SLIGHTLY. ENERGY, FURIOUS, BLURRED MOTION, and FINALLY:

The BABOON - BACK TO NORMAL.
Sebastian CUTS THE SYSTEM FUNCTIONS. All goes quiet.

All stare at the HAPLESS BABOON, WHINING QUIETLY behind the
CRACKED GLASS.

Julian stares from the shadows, mouth open slightly.

INT. WASHINGTON SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

PENDLETON watches the test live via satellite on a SCREEN.
Stares at the ABUSED EQUIPMENT on the video, enraptured -
lips making A LITTLE SMILE.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

I originally assumed the baboon from the
first test had been lost after it got
sent through time, and that some nearby
future animal came back through in its
place. But, it looks like the baboon
never even left. Apparently, the
chamber's gravitational field only
succeeded in locking down the subject's
physical position and not its biological
ones. Consequently, the extreme
acceleration either devolves or evolves
it the amount of years it's sent back or
forward in time. So, the creature that
killed the previous team was simply the
test baboon, evolved by 5 million
years...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The group sits around a large table, deliberating.

SEBASTIAN

The point being: it didn't work. People
died. And it's all my fault.

ERICA

(re: Warburton et al)
Sebastian, it's their fault too.

WARBURTON

Yes, I mean we believed you, backed
you...

SEBASTIAN

You also brought me back. So, rest
assured I'll devote every waking moment
to licking all the bugs. My screw-up
might've created a monster, but that
wasn't the sci-fi I set out to realize.
And I won't rest until I realize it
properly!

ERICA

Look, this is an emotional moment for everyone, and there's always a chance of bouncing back.

(beat)

But I'm not sure having you toil away trying to make time travel work right is the answer.

Sebastian sits up, wariness getting piqued.

SEBASTIAN

Meaning..?

Warburton sighs.

WARBURTON

Meaning we change the focus of the project.

ERICA

Precisely.

WARBURTON

(rote)

We ensure those footing the bill end up with profitable results--

ERICA

It's only fair.

WARBURTON

--utilize the chamber's new quirk in the best possible way--

ERICA

Nothing else we can do.

WARBURTON

--by making the single greatest contribution to bio-warfare in history.

ERICA

Yes - wait, what?!

WARBURTON

We build up a collection of evolved predators for release into enemy territory. Completely make up for the set backs so far.

ERICA

Wait - I was getting at acquiring specimens purely for research--

SEBASTIAN

Welcome to government-funded science.

ERICA

But General, this is my - our chance to make an in depth study of species that human beings would never live to see. It's a once in a lifetime deal. You just can't pervert that with deranged militaristic applications!

SEBASTIAN

Watch him .

WARBURTON

Look, I'm not jumping for joy about it, but I have my orders. You ever get the honor of having a right-wing politico's hand up your ass then you tell me where your priorities lie.

Erica backs down, keeps her mouth shut.

WARBURTON (cont'd)

Sebastian, if you've got nothing else going on, you're welcome to stay on board. Maybe retrofit the chamber to accommodate any unwieldy specimens?

SEBASTIAN

Well, despite my current hang up with causing death - gotta eat to stay alive.

WARBURTON

Dr. Manning, can I assume you'll want to oversee the zoology end?

ERICA

I-I don't know...

WARBURTON

Then would you be so kind to recommend any equally qualified replacements before you leave?

ERICA

(beat)
No such animals.

WARBURTON

Precisely. This honor's yours alone.

ERICA

(beat)
Alright then - I'm in--

WARBURTON

Aces.

ERICA

--on three conditions.

WARBURTON

Such as..?

ERICA

1) We only evolve manageable specimens - we don't want to be handling any vicious pets made potentially more vicious just yet. 2) They have to be infants - again, the manageability factor; babies only cry and crawl at the beginning. And 3) only one sex each, males.

WARBURTON

Wait a second, we need both sexes to breed--

ERICA

We're not doing any matchmaking until we've studied each species thoroughly enough and assessed the exact threat that they pose.

(MORE)

ERICA(cont'd)

Nobody wants a legion of bio-warfare agents they know nothing about making home base the epicenter of the future war - do they?

Warburton stares at her for a beat - then walks off briskly. Sebastian looks at Erica - starts clapping slowly.

ERICA (cont'd)
What's that for?

SEBASTIAN
That impressive display of opportunism.

ERICA
I had an appropriately bad influence.

She gathers her things.

SEBASTIAN
Well, I look forward to sharing many romantic all nighters with someone of a similar mind set.

ERICA
If they were even remotely similar, I wouldn't be gagging at the idea.

SEBASTIAN
Maybe I'll surprise you.

ERICA
You did - that's why we broke up.

SEBASTIAN
Nobody believes I learn from my mistakes. What do I have to do, prove it?!

ERICA
Bingo!

She leaves.

SEBASTIAN
Man's gotta do what a man's gotta do...

He follows her with a smile.

INT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - NIGHT

Julian sits at a table in an under-lit study. Hunched over his collection:

Books, journals and videos. All bear ERICA'S NAME OR PHOTO. Dates on the material range from 3 years back to now. Her life's work.

We glimpse two CIRCLED quotes: "Evolutionary biologist prophesies accelerated evolution explosion;" "Is the world prepared to handle 'The Future Wild?'"

He sweeps through the pile, grabs a book. Finds a detailed diagram: a STRANGE CREATURE'S ANATOMY.

Places a small journal beside it. FEVERED WRITING inside.

Julian scrutinizes the diagram closely. Notes VITAL ORGANS.

He smiles to himself. Begins to fervently add more fevered writing to his worn tome. A very busy bee...

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

THE TIME CHAMBER

has been modified: it is bigger, with added mechanisms.

Sebastian outlines modifications he's made to Warburton, Erica nearby.

SEBASTIAN

(like a spokesperson)

Evolving contemporary animals into fantastic future species? Ensure the process goes smoothly with our new and improved Time Chamber 2006.

(points to mechanics)

Worried about what size specimen you might end up with? No problem. This baby can re-size vertically or horizontally at the touch of a button! Afraid of having cute and cuddly critters one minute and out of control beasties the next? Fear not. Our newly installed phosgen gas pump will help settle down those hard to handle buggers with a good hearty squirt. Evolution subject can't breathe oxygen? Not to worry. Our new and improved chamber comes equipped fully loaded with 100 gallon holding capacity and water-tight doors. Very cool!

ERICA

Well, you seem to have completely gotten over your 'current hang-up with causing death.'

SEBASTIAN

You know me. Nothing gets me out of an emotional rut like sci-fi science pursuits - and there's nothing more sci-fi than taking precautions against monster development.

A soldier trots in, confers with Warburton, who turns:

WARBURTON

OK - they're here.

EXT./INT. DESERT BASE - DAY

A transport truck pulls up to the lab's loading dock--

Scientists inside unload different INFANT SPECIMENS--
Inside the cages brought out are: BATS, HAWKS, and SQUID.

As the cages pass Erica and Warburton:

WARBURTON

I hope they turn out to be something.

ERICA

Your superiors shouldn't be too disappointed.

WARBURTON

Not if we evolve both sexes--

ERICA

My demands are non-negotiable. Just ask Sebastian.

LATER

IN TIMELAB, Sebastian prepares to evolve a creature.

THE CHAMBER

is filled with WATER. The better to contain:

The BABY SQUID which sits fixed to the chamber floor.

Sebastian nods to a technician - who eases the lever up.

IN THE CHAMBER

the squid changes before our eyes. Its tentacles grow into LEGS - 8 altogether. Its size increases, two front whips elongate, back rises into a massive hump--

And it thrashes around wildly, as if in trouble.

Its whips lash out, STRIKE viewport's glass. It wants out.

ERICA (cont'd)

It can't breathe!

Sebastian scrambles to find a certain switch. Pushes it. Alarms blare. Pumps throb.

And the water immediately starts DRAINING from the chamber.

As the water level lowers, the squid-thing struggles to reach the air, reduces its thrashing once it has.

Once the water's gone, the baby squid-thing is left on the wet floor, kicking its 8 legs, making cute slurping sounds.

Everyone in the room is totally still. Even Julian - who's even less noticeable this time, hidden behind equipment.

ERICA (cont'd)

It evolved to breathe oxygen. To live on land...

(beat)

It's beautiful.

(beat)

And it's only the first...

A quiet smile forms on Sebastian's face.

It's one of the most beautiful things he's ever seen indeed.

SEBASTIAN

Well - next?

INT. KENNEL - NEXT WEEK - MORNING

Sebastian, Erica, and Warburton move from METAL KENNEL to metal kennel, seeing the fruits of their labor.

All we see in each are three small, shifting silhouettes.

WARBURTON

Well - they're cute. Maybe we can exploit that: make our enemies come to them.

ERICA
 Don't worry. They'll get big and smelly eventually - and as wild as they were meant to be.

WARBURTON
 Then here's hoping the future wild impresses. Of course, I'll be less antsy once we officially start a family.

ERICA
 Jesus, Warbler, give it a rest. You sound like a chick.

WARBURTON
 Picking up Sebastian's habits isn't a step in the right direction. You undermine your orders, that jeopardizes mine and then - people will start taking other steps...

He moves off briskly. Sebastian peers into one of the cages.

SEBASTIAN
 It look like they got bigger over the weekend to you?

Erica joins him at the same cage.

ERICA
 By _____ at least.

SEBASTIAN
 Jesus, that happened fast.

ERICA
 Yeah. I think if we fed them a lot or let them out into the open they'd grow even faster.
 (beat)
 Speaking of feeding them...

LATER

Erica returns with a CRICKET-FILLED PLASTIC CAGE and a TRAY with SLICED MEAT laid on it. She pirouettes in search.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Where did they go?

Sebastian stands by the three CAGES - two doors OPEN, one still SHUT. The BABY BAT-CREATURE shifts inside.

SEBASTIAN
 (re: shut cage)
 Why aren't you letting this one wander around?

Erica has set the cricket cage and tray down, is bent, searching for the two loose infants.

ERICA
 I find that one a little untrustworthy.

A low SCREECH comes from the bat's cage. Sebastian backs off.

Joins her search. They follow low MUNCHING SOUNDS to:

A TALL, QUIVERING POTTED PLANT. Something agitating it.

As they arrive, it TOPPLES like a small tree revealing--

THE BABY SQUID-THING. Like a miniature elephant with eight legs. Humped back covered by a hard shell. Two small tentacles with leaf-shaped ends jut from its front. Potted leaves disappear into the unseen mouth in its underbelly.

Erica catches the plant just in time, moves it aside, smiles.

ERICA (cont'd)
(inching forward)
Is somebody hungry, huh?

She slides a nearby TRAY OF GOURMET LEAVES under the baby. It hunks, eats.

SEBASTIAN
Can you believe land living sea-life will become the norm one day?

ERICA
Where do you think we crawled out from?
And when it's our little friend here's turn, I'd say he'll be at the top of the pecking order.

A SMALL CRASH from behind them. They turn and follow it.

ERICA (cont'd)
Well, you guys are just a couple of little mischief makers, aren't you?

They approach a toppled TRASHCAN - a BABY BIRD CREATURE digging through the contents, sweeping crumpled papers past, making its way further into the can.

It looks like it's burrowing inside.

Before it gets in completely, Erica grabs it, lifts it away.

It looks like a feathered baby dinosaur with a beak. Two legs, a shock of tail feathers and powerful little clawed arms - no wings. It shakes a shred of paper in its beak.

ERICA (cont'd)
No, no, no--

She reaches to remove the paper when--

--the bird lets it drop and NIPS AT HER FINGER.

Ow!
ERICA (cont'd)

Erica quickly releases the bird, lets it hop to the floor.

THE BIRD'S CAGE

The tray of meat lies in it. A SHADOW falls across it. The bird appears, climbs back into its cage, feasts. WHAM! The cage door gets shut on it, traps it.

Erica and Sebastian watch it bite chow, warily.

SEBASTIAN
Why doesn't it have wings?

ERICA

Wings are mainly used to catch prey more easily and to better escape predators with. The prey of its time must be so easy it lost its wings to evolution. And there must not be any predators around worth having wings over - which would make him the dominant land-living predator of his time.

A SCREECH gets their attention. It comes from the last cage.

Erica brings the cricket cage over to it. Places it against a SMALL OPENING. Releases 30 CRICKETS into the baby bat's cage. Beat. All the crickets crowd in its corner.

Suddenly! The BABY BAT-CREATURE shoots out of the gloom and--
--GOBBLES UP ALL 30 CRICKETS IN 6 SECONDS!

The scientists gape at the infant as it mops up excess parts.

Looks much like a normal bat, except more vicious. It's furry, two-legged, and wingless - clawed arms instead. Head like a strange flower - large ears and fleshy nose flap. The head is pretty much all TEENY SHARP TEETH.

SEBASTIAN

Is... that... normal?

ERICA

Bats are considered nature's best bug control. Most can eat 1 every 6 seconds. That's up to 600 bugs an hour.

(beat)

So, to answer your question: no.
It's much worse.

Sebastian notices something that makes him blanch slightly.

SEBASTIAN

No wings either. No need to catch prey that way too I assume..?

Erica gets perturbed also, riding his train of thought. Nods. Pinches a severed cricket leg between her fingers, eyes it.

ERICA

No prey's any match for it. Same thing goes for predators...

Beat.

SEBASTIAN

Like you promised: Warburton's superiors won't be disappointed.

ERICA

(worriedly)

Wrong. Everything's not like I promised.

Sebastian looks down to see the BABY SQUID-THING at his leg. He bends down to its level, strokes and coos at it.

Erica returns, catches the display. Smiles quietly.

ERICA (cont'd)
I wouldn't have thought you'd be this
fond of these babies.

SEBASTIAN
Who doesn't love baby animals? It's like:
I hate dogs, but I find puppies
absolutely adorable. I mean - who doesn't
love puppies?

Beat. They look at each other. Break into grins.
Erica chuckles and shakes her head.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KENNEL - EVENING

Erica puts down an instrument, rubs her eyes.

ERICA
I'm beat. Whaddaya say we call it a day,
huh.

SEBASTIAN
OK.

As they gather their stuff, Sebastian looks at her nervously.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
So how does it feel finally having your
research validated?

ERICA
Better than when it hadn't been.

SEBASTIAN
So I'm thinking we should celebrate your
newfound acclaim. Say in front of a
roaring fire, dinner specially prepared
by yours truly.

ERICA
Actually, I think I'll go home and
celebrate with Julian, thank you.

SEBASTIAN
OK, but you're missing out. I've
officially graduated from heated
Spaghetti-Os to Past Primavera.

ERICA
No offense Sebastian, but you're still in
the same grade you were when we met.

With that, she leaves. Sebastian stands in the lab, alone.

He leans close to the baby squid-thing's cage.

SEBASTIAN
So - anybody up for a 'boy's night out?

This baby's ASLEEP. Sebastian moves on to the next cages.

Blackness within. Nothing stirs. Beat.
Sebastian taps the bird and bat cages with two fingers and--

THE INFANTS LUNGE OUT OF THE DARK AND SNAP AT HIM IN UNISON!

Sebastian jumps back suddenly, right into a counter. Beat.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Guess not...

He quickly moves away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TIMELAB - NIGHT

A worker carries a small cage with a THRASHING BAT inside.

He brings it to a PORT in the TIME CHAMBER'S side.
Opens the port, places the cage against it--

--and releases the bat into the chamber. It whizzes around.

TECHNICIAN
Ready to evolve female.

PENDLETON'S FACE

Fills a VIDEO SCREEN dominating the room, hungry looking.

PENDLETON
These females are our insurance, General.
See to it they're treated like ladies -
and only we know it.

AN APPREHENSIVE-LOOKING WARBURTON

stands behind the Technician at the chamber's controls.

WARBURTON
Yes, Sir...

Warburton puts his hand on the wary Tech's shoulder.

The technician powers the systems up.

The room brightens from the sudden flash in the chamber -
illuminating ANOTHER CAGE waiting in the wings--

--A FEMALE HAWK poised inside, on guard, alert...

INT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - STUDY - NIGHT

Julian is still pouring over journals. He gets up, heads for

THE BEDROOM

Toward his trunk, passing the bed--

--where Erica, in full posh SAFARI REGALIA, lies - expectant--

--ignoring her, bending down and rummaging through it. Beat.

ERICA
Ahem...

He slowly turns to look at the bed.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Don't you recognize me? I'm the snobbish,
 Colonial trust fund child, decked out in
 city girl safari clothes, just crying out
 for some untamed bushman to introduce her
 to jungle law...

Julian resumes rooting through his trunk.

JULIAN
 And to what can I attribute this display?

Erica crawls to the edge of the bed near him, like a jaguar.

ERICA
 My blatant disregard for the rules
 between a hunter and his quarry.

Julian turns back to face her.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Like she's home for more than a couple
 hours weekly so that they can...tussle.

JULIAN
 Just think moveable feast instead of date
 night, eh?

ERICA
 Heh, yes...

She closes her eyes, leans in to kiss him--
 --and he turns back to his trunk.

She stays puckered for a moment, then opens her eyes to find
 she's kissing air.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Oh no - my absenteeism's created a
 monster: trades sex for intellectual
 pursuit.

JULIAN
 The former I've conquered.

ERICA
 And I have fond memories. Just thought
 I'd add to the collection.

She starts kissing the back of his neck.
 He's still more interested in the trunk.

Erica sits up.

ERICA (cont'd)
 So, what gets them going when sex doesn't
 do it anymore?

She looks around the room, eyes landing on:
 A folder on the project - cover stamped TOP SECRET.
 She grabs it and quickly crouches next to him.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Look, I know you're upset but you
 shouldn't be. Because I'm not going to
 let this--
 (gestures at folder)
 (MORE)

ERICA(cont'd)

--come between this.
 (gestures at both of them)
 And to prove it, I'm gonna let you in on
 something: what, exactly, I've been up to
 at the base...

He stops rooting through the trunk. Turns to face her.
 Gives her his sincerest expression.

JULIAN

And what, pray tell, would that be?

INT. DESERT BASE - FLIGHT SIMULATOR ROOM - NIGHT

TRACER FIRE BLASTS AT US. ENEMY PLANES streak past.
 EXPLOSIONS burst all around.

SEBASTIAN sits in a SHAKING FLIGHT SIMULATOR, doing his best.
 It isn't enough.

SEBASTIAN

Shit!

SIMULATOR SCREEN: A FIRE BLOSSOM as SEBASTIAN'S HIT, CRASHES.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

Why am I so good at crashing and burning?

INT. DESERT BASE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Sebastian grabs a POT on the stove. Dumps the heated
 SPAGHETTI-O'S into a plate. Sits down to eat as he reads:

His copy of "War of the Worlds."
 He looks at Erica's inscription longingly. Sighs.

LATER - BASE CORRIDOR

Sebastian wanders, bored. He reaches a new PASSAGE.
 A SIGN above it reads: RESTRICTED AREA B.

As Sebastian walks - a light CRUNCH. He stops, looks down.

He picks up the something he stepped on, fingers it.
 It's a SMALL COMPASS. Initials etched in the back read: J. R.

Sebastian completes the curio. Beat. His EYES NARROW.

INT. KENNEL/LAB - NEXT DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

Erica's hunched over a microscope, in same wrinkled clothes.

Sebastian comes in and leans against the wall, stares at her.

She's looking at a creature sample. 2 more slides beside her.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE,

Are strange, multicolored cells. Swarming.
 A certain group of MICROBES 'patrol' the edges of each wall.
 They move more slowly than the others.

Erica frowns. Grabs a dropper filled with red liquid.
 Applies a few drops to the sample.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE,

The red liquid starts ERODING the cell. The slow microbes
 scramble to defend against it. Not good enough.

The microbes are overwhelmed, destroyed, and the cell erodes.
She changes slides. Next creature's microbes just as slow.

ERICA
Strange.

SEBASTIAN
What?

ERICA
There appears to be a defect in each specimen's make-up. Their immune systems are highly impaired. Looks like they're operating way below peak efficiency.

SEBASTIAN
You think it has something to do with me?

ERICA
What?

SEBASTIAN
Well, my contraption did advance their systems millions of years in, what, seconds?!

Erica warms to the idea, finds it makes sense.

ERICA
And their genes got scrambled as a result... Not too shabby, Dr. Sayre.

SEBASTIAN
Glad to know I can still please you in some way. Since the usual duties are no longer mine. So, how's Jungle Jim enjoying base life anyway?

ERICA
He's keeping himself busy.

SEBASTIAN
Oh, I don't doubt that. When he's not... influencing your wardrobe, he's taking soul searching walks through the complex.

He puts JULIAN'S COMPASS on the table in front of her.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
I found that in Restricted Area B last night. I'm going to Warburton - your guy's gonna be outta here by sunset.

Erica stares at the compass, perturbed.

ERICA
It's a confusing place. He could've gotten lost looking for the PX or something--

SEBASTIAN
Oh my ass. The guy's up to something. And not just indoor sports with a high ranking official.

ERICA

Then do what you have to do. But I'm not gonna stop going home to him just because he isn't on our side of the fence.

Sebastian digests the news.

SEBASTIAN

You really like this guy? He doesn't push any wrong buttons?

ERICA

He doesn't push them repeatedly. With glee.

Truth there stings Sebastian. He gets gone - fast and angry.

Erica stares after him, curses. She grabs her coat, leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KENNEL - NIGHT

Infant creatures get loose somehow, escape from the base.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - LATE NIGHT

On TWO TV SCREENS, one labeled KENNEL HALL, one KENNEL: HISSING STATIC.

A bleary-eyed Warburton stands before a BANK OF MONITORS. A TECHNICIAN runs the kennel's security tapes for him.

WARBURTON

And both tapes were like this?

TECHNICIAN

(nodding)

Nothing but static.

WARBURTON

I don't understand it. None of the cameras show any signs of tampering. And both tapes ran their course.

TECHNICIAN

You suspect foul play?

WARBURTON

I would if all the evidence didn't support the creatures getting loose themselves...

He looks to the KENNEL MONITOR showing:
The GLASS of each infants' cage BROKEN;
The METAL SLATS of a LOW WALL VENT BENT wide into an OPENING.

A SOLDIER fingers a SLAT, rubs his fingers together, spreads them - a SALIVA STRAND stretches between them.

WARBURTON (cont'd)

But - that doesn't seem to be the case...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Warburton heads a hurried meeting. Erica wears a heavy coat over PAJAMAS. Sebastian didn't sleep, wears same clothes.

WARBURTON

We have to get them back before they get eaten alive out there. Consider yourselves lucky there's not much to worry about: since they're still infants, they probably haven't strayed too far from the base.

ERICA

No offense, Warbler - but you should probably include yourself in that consideration.

Erica stands up forcefully.

ERICA (cont'd)

OK: I want three small survey teams assembled. We'll spread out and search for the infants within a 5 mile radius.

She looks over at Sebastian.

ERICA (cont'd)

You're not moving, why?

SEBASTIAN

I'm taking advantage of not being the animal quack. Hey, if you need expert backup, you can always call Jungle Jim - assuming you didn't knock him out completely. I'm going to stay behind, catch up on my reading.

He whips out the copy of "War of the Worlds."

ERICA

You kept that?

SEBASTIAN

Not about to throw away a good thing. That's your job.

Erica storms off. Sebastian forces himself to keep reading.

EXT. DESERT SURROUNDING BASE - EARLY MORNING

A few stars still twinkle above the quiet desert. A BEEPING.

ERICA, coat shut tight over her pjs, heads up a survey team.

Each person sweeps BEEPING INSTRUMENTS like metal detectors over the earth.

EXT. DESERT SURROUNDING BASE - AFTERNOON

Erica's team swills coffee by a Jeep. A GUY adds booze to his cup from a FLASK. Erica shoots him a disapproving look. One of the other TEAM LEADERS runs up to her.

TEAM LEADER

We both know it's impossible - but it looks like they're long gone.

Erica looks unhappy. Yanks the flask away from the guy. Knocks back every last drop.

EXT. KANSAS WOODS - NIGHT

Trees cover a SMALL TENT and parked SUV.
Crickets provide a soothing lullaby for the campers.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

A family sleeps huddled: a BIG DAD, SMALL MOM, and LIL' TYKE.

The cricket sounds disappear. Beat.

A LOW CRASH. Leaves against dirt.

It only takes a few moments for the lil' tyke to stir.

EXT. TENT - NIGHT

A little hand opens a tent flap. The tyke appears with a flashlight. Trains it on the ground.

He illuminates the RANSACKED FAMILY COOLER.
Contents strewn around it.

A LOW GRUNT from the WOODS. Tyke kills the flashlight beam.

He follows RUSTLING coming from the edge of the camp.
Passes and illumines FALLEN TREE TRUNKS - stripped of leaves.

He comes upon an UNNATURAL CLEARING - a section of MISSING TREES amidst the normal patch of forest where:

A HUMPED SHAPE - 6 feet high, WIDE - shifts in the darkness.
Strange CHEWING SOUNDS coming from it.

The tyke shakily lifts the flashlight, clicks it on--
BATHING a HUGE ANIMAL in light.

It FREAKS. Rears up, out of the light, TRUMPETING so loud it--

Knocks Tyke down, mouth agog. His light goes wild on:

HUGE GRAY LEGS like tree trunks -- FLAILING TENTACLES -- WET LEAVES blasted through the air in a rush of HOT BREATH--

The animal pounds away; the tyke BOUNCES. Follows it with the light, glimpses of: legs moving it impossibly fast toward--

--the SUV it RAMS HEAD ON, turns over, STEPS on, massive weight crushing it. Windows BLOW, air bags FILL holes left--

It passes the dumbstruck PARENTS peeking out of the tent, disappears into the dark forest.

The cricket sounds gradually return.

Big Dad exits the tent on weak legs.
His son joins him, and Big Dad takes his flashlight.
Aims it after the animal, revealing:

A FAR-REACHING CARPET OF FALLEN TREE TRUNKS, stripped to their bark, leave-less. Big Dad's mouth drops open.

The tyke picks up a CHOCOLATE BAR at his feet and eats it as he and his father stare at the moonlit woods...

INT. DESERT BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Erica runs in, joins Warburton and Sebastian in front of the large MONITOR. 4 newscasts play. Sebastian grips his book.

Kansas newscast:

KANSAS REPORTER
 --when their campsite was invaded by some
 strange animal resembling a... large
 squid with legs--

Idaho newscast:

IDAHO REPORTER
 --the 25 year old single mother saved her
 toddler from what she described as a
 large bird-like creature--

Utah newscast:

UTAH REPORTER
 --residents calling in with strange
 reports of high pitched shrieks coming
 from the hills around--

SEBASTIAN
 Looks like things are gettin' out of
 hand...

ERICA
 Jesus, look at that!

She points to Kansas footage of the overturned SUV -
 and several LARGE FOOTPRINTS near it.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Looks like the specimens have grown
 substantially--

SEBASTIAN
 In only a 24 hour period...

ERICA
 It must be another result of the genetic
 scrambling in their systems--

WARBURTON
 What genetic scrambling?

ERICA
 The hyper-evolution process affected
 their genetic patterns. Giving them
 highly impaired immune systems - and
 accelerated growth rates as well.

WARBURTON
 Well, just how big will these things get?

ERICA
 Good question.

WARBURTON
 Permission to reconsider your answer.

ERICA
 These creatures escaped before I could
 completely study them! How's that?!

Sebastian puts calming hands on both her shoulders.

SEBASTIAN
Reactionary.

Erica takes stock of herself, eases up. Proceeds more calmly. Studies the newscasts intently.

On the Kansas 'cast, the FOOTPRINTS catch her eye.

ERICA
(pointing at footprint)
Based on the size of those prints...

On the Idaho 'cast: a 10 FOOT HIGH HOLE the bird made in the WALL of an OUTDOOR SHED it crashed through.

ERICA (cont'd)
(pointing at hole)
And the height of that hole...

She faces the two men.

ERICA (cont'd)
These two could grow to be as big as dinosaurs.
(beat)
But that's not the worst of it...

She points to the large patch of fallen campsite trees.

ERICA (cont'd)
See what the squid creature's been doing?
Consuming massive amounts of vegetation?

Sebastian and Warburton nod.

ERICA (cont'd)
20 million years from now, the world will be one vast rain forest, so the species won't make so much as a dent in the food supply no matter how much it consumes. However, our current reserve of flora isn't nearly as bountiful as it will be one day. So, if the squid continues to consume the Earth's vegetation at its current rate, it'll destroy our ecosystem to the point where we will all eventually die from having had our oxygen supply eradicated!

Erica points to the TODDLER that almost got snatched.

ERICA (cont'd)
Now, in case it's not apparent, the bird creature wasn't attacking in self defense - it was going after food. In its time, it is the top predator and preys on every other life form - which is exactly what it'll do in our time. Same thing goes for the bat creature--

Suddenly, Erica's hit by a realization that makes her wobble.

ERICA (cont'd)
They're all at the top...

WARBURTON
So what does that mean?

She sinks into a chair, slowly delivers the bad news.

ERICA

Each of these creatures are the dominant species of the era they're from. The problem is, they have never existed together at the same time before - until now. We've got 3 dominant future species running around loose, at the same time, in our era. So, instinctively, they'll fight any species they have to, in whatever way they can, for dominance of the planet. Whether that means eating us out of house and home...

Erica points at the ravaged forest footage.

ERICA (cont'd)

...or just eating us...

Then, she points to both the toddler footage - and a nearby CRICKET CAGE. Empty.

ERICA (cont'd)

...I'm saying: as far as the future wild's concerned - the future is now!

She turns to Warburton.

ERICA (cont'd)

Wanna know what I consider ourselves now?

WARBURTON

I'd rather know how you can counteract the effects of my reluctance to question orders.

Erica and Warburton smile slightly. Mutual respect. She sits.

ERICA

Just gimme a minute...

SEBASTIAN

(re: book)

Guess this will be my last chance to finish this for a while.

He opens the book again to the last chapter and--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

Holy shit!

WARBURTON

What?

Sebastian recites a passage.

SEBASTIAN

"...slain by the putrefactive and disease bacteria against which their systems were unprepared; slain by the humblest things that God, in his wisdom, has put upon this earth..."

Erica's ears perk up. She knows what he's getting at.

ERICA
 (almost to herself)
 Damn it, now I'm glad I gave you that book
 all over again...

WARBURTON
 Very poetic. Translate for the layman.

SEBASTIAN
 It's simple: we engineer a new strain of
 bacteria that'll act on the specific
 weakness in these animals' immune
 systems, killing them instantly.

Erica stands up. Sebastian's on the right track.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 We'll just have to design a suitable
 delivery system for the bacteria. Think
 along the lines of a giant syringe.

He sidles up behind Erica so she sure hears this next bit.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Should be a piece of cake if we put our
 heads together.

She meets his gaze head on.

ERICA
 Yeah - just not very sweet.

SEBASTIAN
 Hey, if it works, my sweet tooth will be
 satisfied for good. Just gotta remember
 to go home and label my last project bin:
 'Kill Rampaging Monsters!'

ERICA
 I'd appreciate it if you'd stop referring
 to them as 'monsters.' They're not -
 they're just animals.

SEBASTIAN
 I'll try to keep that in mind.

Warburton steps between them.

WARBURTON
 Just where do we undertake this little
 engineering project? This facility's only
 equipped for a select type of bio-agent.

SEBASTIAN
 I've been conversing with the CDC for my
 little nanobot project. We're practically
 married: they'll give us all the support
 we need. We engineer the bacteria
 together, return to base to build the
 delivery system.

WARBURTON
 I'll get on the horn with them
 immediately. Pack up your toothbrushes.
 You're both going to Atlanta.

Erica doesn't look completely thrilled. As Warburton exits:

WARBURTON (cont'd)

In the meantime, I'll upgrade the search for the creatures to satellite thermal imaging.

SEBASTIAN

Better go and tell your playmate you'll be on the road for a few days.

ERICA

You're lucky your second shot at glory requires I help save the world - otherwise I'd take the time to say goodbye properly.

She pushes past him and leaves.

EXT. SPACE - EARTH ORBIT - TIMELESS

SATELLITES in strategic places around the earth--
Mechanisms on them whir and beep--
They reposition to scan certain areas--

A DIGITAL MAP of the U.S. flares to life with countless HEAT SIGNATURES - the majority of appropriate size.

INT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - DAY

Erica paces beside a couple packed bags. Checks her watch.

ERICA

Where could he be?

An MP rushes through her open front door.

MP

We can't wait any longer.

Erica sighs, rummages through a drawer. Finds paper. Writes: "Had to go to Georgia. Be back soon. Be good. Love, Erica."

EXT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - BACKYARD - DAY

Seen from afar, Erica and the MP quickly exit the house, board a JEEP and drive off--

Which is when JULIAN STEPS INTO VIEW, stares after them. Beat. He smiles, then strides off hurriedly...

INT. DESERT BASE - SECRET PEN - DAY

Two TECHNICIANS man a bank of MONITORS. Two show INSIDE strange holding cells, two more show their massive doorways.

MOVEMENT on a monitor with the readout 'FEMALE BIRD' catches techs' attention. A SUPERVISOR notices also.

SUPERVISOR

(re: animal in cell)

Jesus! How big is it gonna get?

TECHNICIAN 1

Even Number One Skirt doesn't know. She'd shit a brick if she knew we had this female in storage.

TECHNICIAN 2

Hell, I'm halfway there myself.

On ANOTHER MONITOR - its readout: FEMALE BAT - a TIMID FEEDER brings a TRAY to the second cell.

SUPERVISOR
Well, they'd better hope that bird tops out around 10 feet. Any higher and our facilities won't be able to contain it. This ain't "Jurassic Park" for Chrissake.

TECHNICIAN 1
At least the bird hasn't given us too much trouble.

On monitor: feeder bends before a SLOT at the bottom of the door, slides it open, inserts the tray.

TECHNICIAN 2
Almost pecked Carlsen's nuts off--

TECHNICIAN 1
Yeah, but I'm telling you: it's the other one we got to worry about. Damn thing wasn't but a foot and a half high when it opened up Albach. And it's a helluva lot taller now.

The feeder's grabbed by something behind the door. Silently.

SUPERVISOR
Speaking of which: isn't it about feeding time?

TECHNICIAN 1
Yeah, I suppose so.

SUPERVISOR
Who gets the privilege?

TECHNICIAN 1
Sandursky. In fact, I think he's already on it--

They both turn to the other monitor--

Just as the feeder's arm disappears into the slot, mouth wide open in silent agony.

The group suddenly LEAP from their seats to go help.

On monitor: the trio rush in, bend down to grab their friend and tear him away from the door.

MUFFLED CRIES AND ROARS come from down the hall.

HOLD on monitor as they wrestle with the body. It twists violently, knocks technicians down. The supervisor holds on. Techs get up, re-grab feeder--

--which is when we PULL AWAY to REVEAL: we are now in an IMPRESSIVE OFFICE, viewing a tape on the TV of:

Warburton, who grimly watches. Major Zulfikar behind him.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
You should just be aware that both creatures are becoming increasingly difficult to handle.

Warburton lifts the remote and shuts the tape off.

WARBURTON
Well - I am now.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
Your orders?

Warburton gives this a long think. Finally:

WARBURTON
Forthcoming.

The RED PHONE RINGS. Warburton answers it hastily.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
Warburton.

Beat. His faces changes at the news we don't hear.

INT. CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL - ATLANTA, GEORGIA - DAY

Sebastian and Erica watch two technicians manipulate:

GRASPING MACHINERY within a BREACH-PROOF CHAMBER, holding a SMALL CONTAINER housing the newly synthesized BACTERIA.

SEBASTIAN
I hope this works.

Erica looks at him incredulously.

ERICA
It was your idea!

He shoots a look back at her. She sees it and nods.

ERICA (cont'd)
I see your point. Don't worry: this combination of pathogens would liquefy God's immune system - your professional touch of death be damned.

SEBASTIAN
Thanks for putting me at ease.

The container's placed against an opening and into a shaft.

Gloved hands open the shaft, collect the container, brandish it before them. They look at each other, a little freaked.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
You wanna do the honors?

LATER

Sebastian and Erica keep a safe distance behind SOLDIERS pushing a cart with a BIG container on it, small one inside.

EXT. CDC - HELIPAD - DAY

They make their way toward an IDLE Sikorsky helicopter. Erica runs up to the open door.

ERICA
(to pilot)
What's the deal, Lieutenant?! Gear up, we're in a hurry!

The pilot hands her a pair of headsets.

PILOT
General Warburton.

Erica hands Sebastian a headset. They both slip one on.

ERICA
Go ahead, Warbler.

WARBURTON (V.O.)
(filtered)
We've located one of the creatures. The Megasquid. It's heading in your direction. Current location: Mississippi.

ERICA
Oh, Jesus! That's a major source of vegetation--

WARBURTON
So I'm told. How soon can you get there?

ERICA
But we have to return to base first and build the delivery system--

WARBURTON
Negative. You'll just have to rethink your strategy.

SEBASTIAN
Done. We'll construct the system along the way.

Erica's outraged, turns to Sebastian.

ERICA
Will we?

SEBASTIAN
Absolutely. As long as we can get a mobile lab with everything we need to do the job right.

WARBURTON
You can get one with _____ as long as you intercept the target and engage while you have the chance. I'm being flooded with reports of destruction all across the Southeast!

SEBASTIAN
Then we can be there _____ after the lab's delivered.

WARBURTON
(filtered)
Good. Stand by: you'll get your motor home in about 2 hours. Ditto air and ground support. I'll meet you there too. Good luck. Over and out.

Sebastian and Erica look at each other.

ERICA
I hope this works.

EXT. COLORADO MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY - NIGHT

ROAD SIGN: Welcome to Ft. Collins! Pop: 30 - How We Like It!"

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A worn sexy waitress, LURLENE, grabs her purse.
PETE, the bartender, turns to her.

LURLENE
Well, I'm off. See ya tomorrow.

PETE
Hold up - I'll walk you out.

The cashier, FLORABELL, watches the display with amusement.

LURLENE
That's OK, I been walking by myself since
I was 3. I'll manage.
(smiles coyly at him)
But, until next time...

Pete watches Lurlene leave. Grabs something beneath the bar.

FLORABELL
So, is tonight the night?

Pete holds up a small box, opens it to reveal:
A SHIMMERING ENGAGEMENT RING.

PETE
It better be. Else I'll succumb to the
urge to pawn it.

FLORABELL
Good luck, hoss.

PETE
Don't need it.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Pete quickly catches up to Lurlene. She's happy about it.

PETE
I think you dropped something.

He grabs her hand, and leaves the ring box in it.

LURLENE
This isn't mine.

PETE
You sure. Open it up. See.

She does. She looks at him. Rocked. Neither look away.

PETE (cont'd)
Now hadn't you been looking for that?

Lurlene tries to blink back tears. Finally:

LURLENE
You're right... It's mine.

They embrace each other, kiss, WHOOP. Head for her car.

PETE
So...impromptu honeymoon?

As they reach her car, its ROOF comes into view--
Where TWO VICIOUSLY CLAWED FEET land with a THUNK!

Pete and Lurlene, dumbstruck, see the creature LEAP OFF--

THE GROUND

as its feet land, rush forward. A HIGH PITCHED SHRIEK.

CREATURE'S POV

Alien. Rushing toward the couple - figures visible like it
was day. Pete snaps out of it, pushes Lurlene away.

PETE (cont'd)
Get outta here! Now!

He jabs the box into her hands. She runs off, her last view:

A 6 FOOT BLUR STRIKING PETE as he SCREAMS.

She loses herself in the lot. PETE'S SCREAMS CONTINUE.

Lurlene hunkers behind a car. Covers her mouth.
PETE'S SCREAMS STOP.

She lays flat, scans the lot from under the car. Nothing.

Then - PETE'S FEET appear. Dragging, slow - but him.

She crawls around the car--

LURLENE
Oh Pete, Thank--

--stopping cold because she's seeing:

Pete, tucked under a HUGE, SPINDLY, FURRY GRAY ARM--

CURVED CLAWS PIERCING his BELLY, mouth dribbling BLOOD--
Feet hanging limp, dragging across the ground...

Lurlene screams as she's--
YANKED OUT OF VIEW, leaving behind:

The diamond ring, glittering beautifully in the moonlight...

EXT. ALABAMA FREEWAY - MOVING - DAY

A HIGH-TECH TRAILER, POLICE MOTORCADE surrounding it.

INT. MOBILE LAB - MOVING - DAY

Messy, overflowing with junk from countless other projects.

Sebastian works on one of 10 LARGE SPEAR-LIKE PROJECTILES.
A MISSILE LAUNCHER-TYPE WEAPON nearby.

He uses STEEL SYRINGE to INJECT bacteria into projectile TIP.

SEBASTIAN
Finito. Now: what am I gonna do?

ERICA

You mean: what am I gonna do.

Beat. Sebastian rises and escorts their AIDE out.

SEBASTIAN

Excuse us.

He shuts the door hard and whirls back to Erica.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

Now: you think you're doing what exactly?

ERICA

I don't think anything - but I know I've tranquilized animals before. I know I know more about these than anybody on the planet. And I know you're not egotistical enough to blow our best chance at stopping them.

SEBASTIAN

Well, you don't know how to work the weapon I designed so--

ERICA

Oh, for Christ's sake--

She points at launcher and projectiles to make her points.

ERICA (cont'd)

Fancy, shmancy projectile: business end filled with bacteria.

She points at the projectile's tip.

ERICA (cont'd)

Load it into the launch housing--

She points to the circular shaft in the launcher.

ERICA (cont'd)

Power up the targeting system--

She flicks on a small computer generated TARGET DISPLAY.

ERICA (cont'd)

Get the target in the cross hairs, lock on, fire.

Finally, she points to a SYRINGE-LIKE MECHANISM.

ERICA (cont'd)

The Automated Bacteria Injector does the rest.

SEBASTIAN

Sorry, you missed about 100 crucial details. I do the firing.

ERICA

You really think I'm just gonna stand by and let you jeopardize the mission's success?

SEBASTIAN

What is the problem?

Erica strides across the room, grab's SEBASTIAN'S BAG. Roots.
Takes out Sebastian's trusty PLASTIC PISTOL.

She jabs it at Sebastian, who takes it.

Erica walks over to a CORKBOARD. Points at a PINNED NOTECARD.

ERICA

Hit this.

Sebastian looks momentarily apprehensive.
Then - he sucks it up, aims the pistol and FIRES.

A rubber projectile BULLS EYES THE NOTECARD.
Erica looks at Sebastian in disbelief.

He blows imaginary smoke from his pistol's barrel. Smiles.

SEBASTIAN

So - your problem was what exactly?

ERICA

(beat)

My problem is trust. Which is why I'm
gonna make damn sure you hit the target
if you insist on being the one to do so.

SEBASTIAN

Just what did you have in mind?

Beat.

ERICA

Have you ever played paint ball?

LATER

Erica stands before a DRAWING of the MEGASQUID'S ANATOMY.
Sebastian sits close by.

ERICA (cont'd)

First step: know your quarry--

SEBASTIAN

'Quarry?' What, are you sleeping with a
big game hunter? Oh wait...

ERICA

Now, we want the bacteria to spread
through the Megasquid's system as quickly
as possible. This means targeting the
heart of its circulatory system. And the
system axis is usually located beneath
the _____ in contemporary cephalopods.
So, if you hit within this general area--

She points to a section of the squid's UNDERBELLY.

ERICA (cont'd)

--the bacteria should spread in seconds
and then, God willing - it'll melt.

Erica roots through junk on a table.

ERICA (cont'd)

And to make sure you don't screw this up--

SEBASTIAN
Appreciate the vote of confidence.

ERICA
--my pleasure - I'm gonna 'paint' the
target so that you hit it for sure.

SEBASTIAN
Paint it?

Erica comes up with a THICK PEN.

ERICA
(nods)
Military term. It's when they train laser
beams on targets so that their bombers
can successfully destroy them. But we're
gonna be old school about it.

Erica CRACKS the pen slightly - it dribbles INK.
She aims the pen at the DRAWING, squeezes - fires a SQUIRT.

A glob of INK BULLS EYES THE SPOT on the squid drawing's
underbelly she pointed to earlier.

ERICA (cont'd)
Once I've painted the precise area on the
Megasquid, you'll have a pretty, brightly
colored spot to aim at - and my mind will
be put at ease.

Sebastian takes the faulty pen from her.

SEBASTIAN
Somehow, I don't think this will do the
job.

ERICA
I've got to build a bigger version.

A soldier enters.

SOLDIER
We'll be in Mississippi in an hour .

ERICA
I've got to build it in an hour.

Just before Erica leaves:

SEBASTIAN
Can't wait to get out on that field with
you - partner.

ERICA
Just don't let me down again, Sebastian.
I'm not the only one who'll get screwed
this time.

Erica exits. Sebastian gets up, goes to the room's FAR END.
He aims the pistol at the drawing's painted target.

He fires - and MISSES SPECTACULARLY!

He curses silently. Collects the projectile, reloads.
Aims again, fires again, misses again - and again and again.

SEBASTIAN

Just gotta get close enough is all.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI FREEWAY - MOVING - LATER - DAY

As lab pulls off, a MILITARY CHOPPER overhead follows it.

INT. CHOPPER - DAY

TRACK THROUGH IT, REVEALING: JULIAN, hidden behind supplies in the rear, his rifle slung across his back...

EXT. MISSISSIPPI FOREST - LATER - DAY

An infinite green plain, surrounding intermittent patches of THICK FOREST. HUGE TREES with hanging moss predominant.

A LARGE CROWD, held back from the edge by SOLDIERS.

IN THE AIR,

A NEWS HELICOPTER flies near forest where a HUGE CLOUD OF DUST rises. A MILITARY CHOPPER buzzes it.

EXT. STAGING AREA - MISSISSIPPI FOREST - DAY

Several TENTS swarming with soldiers and military vehicles.

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Several portable TVs. One - a view from the NEWS 'COPTER.

CHOPPER REPORTER

--we are being ordered away from where the giant squid creature has finally stopped, after an unbroken run--

OTHER VIDEO of PEOPLE IN NEARBY TOWN hassling soldiers.

2ND REPORTER

--The military struggles to evacuate the outlying areas, even as they prepare to engage or dispatch the animal--

Warburton oversees the operation.

WARBURTON

(into radio)

All units, this is Warmonger 1. Prepare to engage.

EXT. ROAD TO SECTION OF FOREST - MOVING - DAY

5 Jeeps. Sebastian and Erica, wearing radio headsets - in respective Jeeps - lead.

Sebastian mans the PROJECTILE LAUNCHER bolted in back of his.

Erica mans a HOMEMADE JUMBO PAINT GUN - 3 feet across.

Two APACHE GUNSHIPS fly overhead - cover.

SEBASTIAN

Warmonger One, this is Mad Scientist 7. We are lit up and ready to...uh...we're...ready.

Sebastian's attention wavers as he sees

The approaching tree line. SHAKING. Birds squawk away.
LOUD, LOW BELLOWS FLOAT THROUGH THE AIR TOWARD HIM.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

I hope...

EXT./INT. ERICA'S JEEP/MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Each Jeep is equipped with SMALL MONITORS showing various views of the BATTLE ZONE.

Erica notices at a monitor showing a THERMAL VIEW OF THE AREA. Strangely, there's no thermal image for the Megasquid. Erica looks perturbed.

INTERCUT ERICA AND WARBURTON

ERICA

Warbler - did you locate our friend using thermal imaging?

WARBURTON

(filtered)

Negative. It wouldn't show up on any thermals...

Erica nods absently.

WARBURTON (cont'd)

(filtered)

We only found it through (tech term for radar trace system).

(beat)

But what's strange is the other creatures aren't showing up on either...

ERICA

But only this one's cold blooded...
Shit - cold blooded!

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Warburton confers with a soldier.

ERICA

(filtered; to choppers)

Tango 3 & 6, return to base.

Warburton whips around at the words.

WARBURTON

What do you think you're doing, Erica?!

EXT. ROAD TO SECTION OF FOREST - MOVING - DAY

Sebastian, having overheard, speaks into his radio.

SEBASTIAN

I have similar reservations, Doctor.

ERICA

(filtered)

The Apaches' heat seekers won't lock on the Megasquid - it's cold blooded.

SEBASTIAN

Oh, Jesus...

WARBURTON
How is removing the angels on our
shoulders going to help anyone?

SEBASTIAN
It'll keep you from causing more damage
than that thing out there. Sound good?

Beat.

WARBURTON
(to pilots)
Tango 3 & 6, stand down - but stay in the
air. Continue cover.

EXT. ROAD TO SECTION OF FOREST - MOVING - DAY

SEBASTIAN
Good enough.

WITH ERICA

She stares at Sebastian's Jeep. A slight smile.

ERICA
Thanks, Sebastian.

WITH SEBASTIAN

SEBASTIAN
Think nothing of it.
(to other Jeeps)
All units: Erica and I'll take point.
Unit 4, bring up the rear, Units 2 & 3,
box this thing in good...I guess...

ERICA
Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN
Yes?

Beat.

ERICA
Good luck.

SEBASTIAN
Don't need it.

ERICA
OK - here we go.

Thick vegetation swallows their jeeps as they enter
THE FOREST

Huge, thick trees, lush plants. Primeval. And no animal.

Sebastian raises his hand. The Jeeps slow, stop. Quiet.
Sebastian motions. They continue--

--which is when A TREE CRASHES TO THE GROUND BEFORE THEM.

A HUGE GRAY TENTACLE, end like a giant leaf, curls around
leaves, taking all it can--

Sebastian and the others follow it to finally gaze upon:

THE ADULT MEGASQUID

2 stories tall now. Massive humped back and body. EIGHT LEGS like tree trunks. Beady orange EYES above the huge tentacles. A head SAC vibrates--

--producing the LOUD BELLOWS which fill the forest.

The leaves disappear. Chewing NOISES as it gobbles them up.

Erica can't help but smile - a tear runs down her cheek.

Sebastian stares. Watches as squid walks on - extremely slowly. Sluggish, with great effort. The ground trembles.

SEBASTIAN

(whispering)

It's so slow! Oh man, I got this. No problem.

ERICA

(to her driver)

OK, get me right underneath it, but go really slowly - we don't wanna spook it. Don't stop until I tell you.

The Jeeps inch forward, hardly make a peep. Follow as the Megasquid arrives at more trees, stops.

2, 3, and 4 take position as Erica and Sebastian approach.

Sebastian quietly sidles up parallel to Erica, straps himself to his launcher, swivels it into position, gets squid in the targeting system's sight.

Then Erica's jeep inches underneath it.

8 legs pass by on either side like freeway pillars. Erica must duck from the RISING and FALLING BELLY as it breathes - THE SOUND DEAFENING.

Sebastian passes the squid's legs on the outside, in tandem with Erica.

Just before she gets to its MOUTH, she whispers:

ERICA (cont'd)

OK, here's good.

They stop. All is quiet. Erica aims her PAINT GUN at the Megasquid's BELLY. Her eyes flit to Sebastian. She MOUTHS: "Ready?"

Sebastian gulps - then nods.

Erica braces herself, her finger inches toward a TRIGGER--

--when she's startled as a tentacle delivers more leaves to the mouth. The Megasquid crunches them loudly.

Erica and Sebastian sigh. Look at each other, grin. Erica turns back. The Megasquid stops chewing.

ERICA (cont'd)

(to Megasquid)

No hard feelings, huh pal?

She starts to pull her fire control when--
THE JEEP'S RADIO SQUAWKS LOUDLY--

--and all hell breaks loose.

The Megasquid BELLOWS in fright. Tentacles LASH out, GRASP TREES on EITHER SIDE it uses to--

--lift itself into the air, out of the 'box' they have it in!

It's legs SNAP TOGETHER, into a POINT - make it look like an inverted teardrop SHOOTING UPWARD!

Man and woman stare into the air in awe--
The animal lets go of one tree, swings like a monkey in Jeep 3's direction, GROWS as it returns to Earth - on top of them.

Men leap from it as a leg lands on the Jeep, OBLITERATING IT--

--the TREMOR BUCKS every Jeep 2 feet in the air, pops Sebastian's straps, sends him flying from his jeep. Beat.

The Megasquid runs off - faster than they thought possible.

Sebastian scrambles to his feet--

SEBASTIAN
(to Jeeps)
All units: go after it, damnit!

The remaining three Jeeps give chase.

The Megasquid pounds away, SMASHES OVER, THROUGH TREES; every now and then grabs and uses them to swing, change direction.

Erica aims her gun as Megasquid's in MID-SWING, FIRES and--

--BULLS EYES the SWEET SPOT on the MEGASQUID'S BELLY with a HUGE DAY-GLO SPLAT!

Jeep 2 approaches it when--
It side-swipes a huge tree, knocks it over, ONTO Jeep 2!

Sebastian, back on the horse, passes Erica's Jeep--
She locks eyes with him, JABS her finger at the creature--
Sebastian NODS FIERCELY, flies ahead--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Get me underneath it!

His driver BLANCHES - then complies.
Their Jeep catches up with the Megasquid - GOES UNDER IT!

Darkness swallows them. The driver has to do some FANCY DRIVING to

- A) Keep the Jeep underneath the huge animal as it runs and
- B) AVOID BEING CRUSHED by squid's POUNDING TREE-SIZED LEGS!

Sebastian struggles to get a bead on THE MOBILE PAINTED BELLY TARGET with the projectile - the TREMORS from the squid's footfalls prevent it, ruin his shot at every turn.

The LIGHT RETURNS SUDDENLY - as the squid SHOOTs SKYWARD, swings away again. Sebastian and his driver turn, race after.

Suddenly - the squid stops, turns, lashes out with a tentacle, STRIKES JEEP 3, sends it flying through the air--
--crashing in front of Sebastian's Jeep.

Sebastian swerves to avoid it, passes the squid - which is heading back the way they came toward--

--THE SMALL TOWN IN THE DISTANCE.

The Apaches see this, spring into action.

PILOT
It's heading for the town! Tango 6, dig in!

ERICA
No, damnit! I said stand down!

The Apaches ignore this, streak after the charging animal.

AT THE TOWN,

Gathered ONLOOKERS freak, scatter in every direction.

NEAR THE STAGING AREA,

A SOLDIER leans on a Jeep, listens to battle by radio when--
A GUN BARREL appears, presses to his head.

A HAND opens the door to the Jeep.

VOICE (O.S.)
Get in.
(soldier starts to)
Oh - hold tight. Invite a friend.

The Apaches reach the squid, FIRE MISSILES at it which--

--ZIP PAST IT - toward the town and the onlookers!

Onlookers scream, duck as a missile hits a LARGE BUILDING, blows the hell out of it; fire and debris rains down on them!

The second missile hits a full CAR LOT. A MASSIVE EXPLOSION.

The Megasquid sees the fire, skids to a halt, REARS up in fright, trumpets - heads back in the direction it came.

SEBASTIAN
(to driver)
Now! Head straight for it!

Sebastian's Jeep speeds toward it - Erica following - the Apaches visible behind the oncoming animal--

The choppers chase it - OPEN FIRE with their MACHINE GUNS--

TRACER BULLETS WHIZ at it, MISS--

Sebastian and his driver DUCK as the TRACER FIRE RIPS through the air around them, glinting off their Jeep, shearing metal!

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(into walkie, to Pilot)
Damn it, stand down! You're gonna hit us!
I've got it!

Another FIRE BURST from the Apaches and--

Erica's Jeep is HIT, SWERVES, CRASHES - and EXPLODES!

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

ERICA!!!

The Apaches FALTER, then PULL UP and AWAY.

Sebastian SNARLS - then snaps back to the Megasquid--
His Jeep closes on it - he aims to fire--

The Megasquid HALTS, LIFTS LEGS on one side as Jeep speeds
into them -- The REAR LEG LOOMS ahead -- They wait for it to
lift too -- When it doesn't they realize--

--IT'S A TREE! By then it's too late and--

They crash right into it--
The driver FLIES through the windshield; NECK BREAKING loud--
The Megasquid charges past.

Sebastian, bleeding, sees:

Megasquid turn, CHARGE BACK to finish him off.

He swivels launcher around and up to hit the PAINT TARGET.

It's almost on them; Sebastian fingers the trigger, when--
THEIR ENGINE CATCHES FIRE.

The squid sees this, freaks again, changes course suddenly--
Just as Sebastian fires, missing the target, hitting a TREE!

The tree ERODES as bacteria infects it, squid charging past.

Sebastian fights to keep conscious, loses.

The Apaches return, swoop after Megasquid--

It SWINGS from a tree again - its legs SWEEP AROUND--

--CATCH APACHE 1 - send it flying like a baseball at Apache
2, HITTING IT--

--sending BOTH crashing into the trees and EXPLODING
SPECTACULARLY--

--setting the TREES at Megasquid's heels ABLAZE - near the
infected one...

The Megasquid continues toward: the STAGING AREA ahead!

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Soldiers freak.

WARBURTON

Sebastian! Erica! Come in!

EXT. MISSISSIPPI FOREST - DAY

Sebastian's radio SQUAWKS to the unconscious. No one answers--

--until ERICA, BRUISED and BLOODIED, appears and grabs it!

She looks Sebastian over. Out but alive. She quickly reports:

ERICA
Sebastian missed. Hit a tree.

WARBURTON
(filtered)
The ones on fire?

She finds the tree Sebastian hit, not on fire - heating up,
POPPING.

ERICA
Shit - yeah...

She scrambles to haul Sebastian out of the Jeep.

WARBURTON
(filtered)
Trees on fire can burst.

ERICA
I know.

Erica struggles with Sebastian's limp body.

WARBURTON
(filtered)
That tree's infected!

ERICA
I know.

The tree heats up more, POPS INSISTENTLY.

WARBURTON
(filtered)
If you get hit by infected shrapnel,
you're history!

ERICA
(to unconscious Sebastian)
Are you hearing this?!

Erica drags Sebastian away from the tree--

It's COMING APART, SHAKING--

Erica TRIPS, falls flat with Sebastian, looks to the tree--

About to GO FLYING EVERYWHERE--

Erica finds the strength, picks them up, heads for safety--

--when the INFECTED TREE BURSTS, sends SHRAPNEL everywhere.

Erica falls, covers Sebastian, just barely avoiding it.

Sebastian COMES TO. Sees Erica. A joy glint fills his eyes.

SEBASTIAN
(a whisper)
You're OK...

ERICA
And you're in deep shit...

EXT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Warburton joins A LINE OF SCARED SOLDIERS preparing to shoot the approaching animal, FOOTING SHAKY from its FOOTFALLS.

WARBURTON

Steady, men--

SOLDIER (O.S.)

Who the hell's that?!

IN THE FIELD, TWO JEEPS head straight for the Megasquid.

WITH THE JEEPS,

The first driver shoots a glance at the second, alongside.

FIRST DRIVER

(into headset)

Don't let me down, Jack! You bail out, this guy's gonna kill me.

SECOND DRIVER

(from radio;filtered)

Hate to break it to you, but that guy's gonna kill us both!

Driver glances to the person holding him at gunpoint-- Julian, also in headset, loads a hand-held ROCKET LAUNCHER.

JULIAN

Focus, sweethearts - you make it, you can fuck my sister.

The Megasquid will soon be upon them.

JULIAN (cont'd)

Alright - on my word, fishtail your rides so they go sideways, then: kiss your asses good bye or jump. Pick a favorite.

Julian stands up, hangs onto his door. As they close in:

JULIAN (cont'd)

NOW!

He JUMPS as the two Jeeps FISHTAIL to either side--

The first driver BAILS--

The second driver's CAUGHT in his Jeep, SCREAMS as--

Both fishtailing Jeeps CRASH into the Megasquid's TWO FRONT LEGS like baseball bats!

Megasquid TOPPLES OVER THEM, lands on its BACK, head facing--

--toward Julian now, who rolls to his feet, and AIMS rocket launcher at its head, in an amazing display of agility.

An enormous DIRT CLOUD ENVELOPES HIM as he FIRES - a BOOM.

Beat. Several Jeeps pull up. Warburton gets out.

As dust clears, they see the Megasquid's head - blown apart. Then, Julian emerges from the cloud, covered in dirt and weird-colored Megasquid blood, like some Indian warrior.

JULIAN (cont'd)
Julian Rapelow - at your service.

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

Warburton watches a MONITOR showing a BIO-SUITED TEAM sterilizing infected trees. Shaking his head.

Erica brings Sebastian, wounds dressed, a cup of water.

SEBASTIAN
Thanks for saving my ass.

Erica THROWS THE WATER IN SEBASTIAN'S FACE.

ERICA
Thanks for putting all of ours at risk!

SEBASTIAN
(wiping off his face)
Yeah - you should've done the firing.
Don't know why you didn't insist on it in
the first place.

WARBURTON
(to Erica)
Well, you will next time. Speaking of
which, where do we stand on the other
two?

ERICA
Based on your satellites - in deep shit!

WARBURTON
All it means is we're not seeing them--

ERICA
Well, what we saw was the Megasquid
locate the largest source of vegetation
around. What we're 'not seeing' but, by
God, better be soon is the meat eaters
locating what satiates them.
(beat)
Just be glad you won't be seeing them
reproduce.

Warburton looks nervous, quickly moves on.

WARBURTON
So, how do we find them?

Beat. Erica sighs.

ERICA
I'm not sure yet...

WARBURTON
Luckily I'll have a relatively easy duty
before I inform the President we're not
sure how to locate the last two creatures-
(he points to:)

Julian cleans himself up at a sink, SOLDIERS offering kudos.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
Giving this...gentleman an honorable
discharge.

SEBASTIAN

Something tells me you're not gonna send this guy on his merry way with just a thank you.

WARBURTON

We'll name a school after him, what else could he want?

He walks off. Sebastian looks at Erica pointedly accusatory.

SEBASTIAN

Any thoughts on that question?

ERICA

The media's brimming with reports about these animals; he was probably watching TV, getting cabin fever, saw one and decided to risk helping. Classic right place/right time scenario. And pretty noble if you ask me.

She heads for Julian a little too quickly. Joins Warburton.

WARBURTON

Well, Mr. Rapelow, on behalf of the United States military, I'd like to offer my deepest thanks--

JULIAN

How about offering me the task of perishing your enemies for you instead?

WARBURTON

I'm afraid that's out of the quest--

JULIAN

Oh, I'm sorry, you're under the impression there's a discussion to be had. Not necessary when you follow orders like a good soldier.

WARBURTON

Thank you, Mr. Rapelow, but we've got the situation from here--

JULIAN

What you've got is your mincy little members gripped tight between your fingers, each and every one of you. And a swell in the population that is incontestably inhuman. Now, in case my recent altercation didn't sufficiently prove I'm good with beasts--

He chucks a squid blood covered RAG on a table before them.

JULIAN (cont'd)

--I invite you to tour my bucolic African homestead - where you'd find the animal population extremely arid. However, since this quarry has a pressing fancy for your planet, I'd suggest you save some time and relax your grip on your dicks long enough to hand their extermination over to the great white hope who's here to sort your mess out proper: for free - and with pleasure.

SEBASTIAN
 (to Warburton)
 You're not actually considering this?!

Warburton's expression doesn't look promising for Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 So all that qualifies a new addition is
 some macho bull shit, huh?

JULIAN
 And also the fact we only lost two
 chariots my way.

SEBASTIAN
 Actually, I only see one of the soldiers
 you kidnapped still standing.

JULIAN
 Which - along with the missile rain on
 the town - wouldn't have happened if
 Frankenstein had actually conquered in
 time, like he said he could - eh,
 General?

Sebastian makes a sudden move for Julian, is restrained.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 No worries - he won't kill me, just look
 outside.

Despite the deliverer, the words' truth effect Warburton.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 Furthermore--
 (points to Erica)
 This one's my lady. I know her works,
 inside and out--
 (a smile)
 --and her research makes wicked reading.
 Finally--

He points at the MONITORS showing the last two creatures' non-existent RADAR and THERMAL IMAGING TRACES.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 --I'm not unskilled in finding game
 playing hide and seek - how close are you
 to winning?

SEBASTIAN
 What did we do to deserve this?

WARBURTON
 We failed... and he didn't. And in the
 end it's me who's responsible. Well, I'm
 not gonna be responsible for turning away
 our best shot when it's this... clear.
 (to Julian)
 You get the honors, but mark my words -
 there will be conditions.

JULIAN
 Fair enough, mate. I have but one: I pick
 my right hand. I have a pedigree chum
 who'll be right helpful in that regard.
 Skilled wicked similar.

Warburton nods. Julian moves off, gives a disgusted Sebastian a wink. Erica corners him.

ERICA
I don't want you to do this. If you got killed I'd--

JULIAN
I'm pushing 80 and just felled the most even-tempered prey of my career - only beasts get killed today!

ERICA
But, we already have a way--

JULIAN
'Fraid it has to be this way.

Erica goes pale.

ERICA
'Our new shot at life,' huh?

JULIAN
(a faint smile; quoting)
"Surely the best lance out of all New Bedford won't hold back from the greatest hunt of all..."

He exits. Sebastian sidles up to a stewing Erica.

SEBASTIAN
If I didn't know any better, I'd swear you brought Jungle Jim along to steal my thunder on purpose. Not easily concealed when all you care about's his safety.

ERICA
Just think of it like I am: the better man won. You've thought like that before, right?

SEBASTIAN
(genuinely impressed)
Wow - good time to bring that up. It really does hurt!

ERICA
Be thankful I don't have your jones for torture and I won't keep repeating it.

She leaves. Warburton tries to console Sebastian.

WARBURTON
Still haven't reconciled that little sticking point between you, eh?

SEBASTIAN
No...

Warburton's about to give him more comfort when--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Hey, it's my fault - I never let us.

Sebastian leaves Warburton dumbfounded. Was that Sebastian?

INT. SHANTY - KENYA - NIGHT

Coarse, ancient FINGERS caress a gleaming .357 MAGNUM.
Raise it to the open mouth of:

ENDERBY, a haunted looking Brit, 70s, about to clean his head
of ghosts. He is wreathed by WALL-MOUNTED ANIMAL HEADS.
His teeth wrap around the barrel, squeezes the trigger when--

The phone RINGS. Enderby puts the gun down, answers it.

JULIAN (O.S.)
(filtered)
Do you know who you're talking to?

Enderby glances at a PHOTO: he and JULIAN, sitting in front
of a downed ELEPHANT, rifles at their sides.

ENDERBY
Julian...

JULIAN
Sharp as ever. And I interrupted?

ENDERBY
Nothing, I was just - catching up on my
Hemingway.

JULIAN
Well, pack your belongings.
(big)
We're needed again...

INT. DESERT BASE - LOADING DOCK - MIDNIGHT

CAPTAIN MACADAM supervises SOLDIERS readying a HUGE TRAILER.
HEAVY BREATHING comes from SMALL CIRCULAR OPENINGS.
ARMED GUARDS ring the operation.

MacAdam walks over to a BUILDING - two of its WALLS and its
CEILING DISTORTED WRECKS. MAJOR ZULFIKAR joins him.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
You haven't disappointed me yet, Captain.
Don't start now.

CAPTAIN MACADAM
Don't worry, sir. We'll get Birdzilla to
Washington easily enough.
(re: wrecked building)
They'd just better be sure their
facilities can handle it.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
They're better equipped and more remote.
It's for the best.

CAPTAIN MACADAM
The best would be to neutralize this
animal, right here and now--

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
I was only ordered to neutralize one.
The bat. This one goes to Washington -
under your supervision. So, see that it
gets there. As ordered.

CAPTAIN MACADAM

Yes, sir.
 (to soldier)
 Let's move out.

Major Zulfikar heads inside--

INT. CORRIDOR - MIDNIGHT

Walks briskly when - AN ALARM BLARES. Then, he RUNS for--

INT. SECRET PEN - MIDNIGHT

Collides with a SCREAMING SOLDIER stumbling out the entrance, his NEARLY-SEVERED RIGHT ARM bleeding profusely.

Zulfikar runs inside to find:

BODIES. Slashed unrecognizable. Blood everywhere.
 Equipment destroyed like a tornado blew through the room.

Zulfikar crouches before a TWITCHING BODY, tries to get its last words to come out information.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR

Is it dead?

Bloody mumbles.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR (cont'd)

IS IT DEAD?

TWITCHING BODY

It's... gone...

Zulfikar notices BLOODY INHUMAN FOOTPRINTS leading out door.

INT. CORRIDOR - MIDNIGHT

He follows prints down hall, passes MUTILATED BODIES, finds:

A METAL MAINTENANCE DOOR - TWISTED OUTWARD, stained with BLOODY CLAW PRINTS.

Light spills onto the QUIET DESERT beyond the creaking door. A HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEK SHATTERS THE QUIET, HANGS, FAR AWAY...

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - MISSISSIPPI - EARLY MORNING

ON A TV: Footage replays the Megasquid's fall; is replaced by:

WORRIED REPORTER

Sources have revealed that this creature was one of three now loose in the United States. Sightings of anything unusual should be reported to your local news affiliate immediately. We hope to get a statement from the military concerning the effort being initiated against this threat, within the next half hour--

Sebastian and Erica watch. A LOUD ROAR sounds outside.

SEBASTIAN

Looks like the second half of 'the effort's' arrived.

OUTSIDE, a TRANSPORT HELICOPTER descends.
 ENDERBY hops out, strides toward:
 Julian, rock solid as he's blasted by prop wash.

The two meet. Appraise each other, then - embrace.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 You know this guy?

Erica shakes her head, "No."

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Don't get to meet the whole family just
 yet, huh?

Erica just rolls her eyes.

EXT. MAIN TENT - JULIAN AND ENDERBY - DAY

Julian gestures at the activity and ordnance being readied.

JULIAN
 Did you ever think you'd see the day...
 when we'd finally be back?
 (beat)
 That we'd be needed on so grand a scale?
 Or have such a magnificently expansive
hunting ground to maneuver in?
 (beat)
 Hemingway himself could never have even
 dreamt it.

Enderby smiles.

ENDERBY
 These Americans have no idea what they're
 in for...

INT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - LATER - DAY

Platoon leaders and troops surround Julian and Enderby;
 Warburton nearby. Sebastian and Erica stew on the sidelines.

JULIAN
 Ladies and gentlemen, as of today, we're
 on safari. Two parties ensure a
 successful kill: the gun bearers and
 their tribal support. Mr. Enderby and
 myself will grin and bear that gun, and
 you chaps will do an about face from jar
 heads to bwanas: native guides. Local
 tribesmen who back their lords in battle
 with pride and balls. And since you know
 the land that you love far better than
 we, I expect more than just a pale
 imitation. I expect legends. Otherwise,
 you just might join our quarry in the
 company of death.

A PALE AIDE whispers into Warburton's ear. He hurries off.

SEBASTIAN
 Where does all this leave me?

JULIAN
 In my wake. And it is violent, so my
 advice is keep your distance.

SEBASTIAN

Duly noted. But I can swim, so I'm getting wet with you.

JULIAN

'Fraid we can't risk you drowning and taking us along. Right lads?

Warburton BANGS his fist on a table in anger. All turn.

ERICA

What is it?

WARBURTON

It got out...

ERICA

What?

WARBURTON

The female bat creature.

ERICA

You evolved a female when I specifically warned against--

WARBURTON

I had ordered it destroyed, but then it escaped - so we change the order of priority. Simple.

(to Julian)

Mr. Rapelow, consider this recent escapee first on your list for extermination.

JULIAN

It's walking dead, governor.

Erica makes a great effort to stifle her rage.

ERICA

I won't slap you since I'll venture evolving the female wasn't entirely your doing, but I find out you're keeping anymore secrets from me and that's what you're getting.

WARBURTON

Thanks. Now, about this species' reproductive cycle--

ERICA

Damnit, I don't know! I didn't get that far with my findings. I need my samples!

WARBURTON

You'll get them. But, in the meantime, gimme a rough projection.

ERICA

Normal bats can only have one baby a year but these... Best case scenario: the female reaches the male and they have twins, absolute worst case scenario: octuplets, I mean... They could be able to have litters of babies, like dogs! They could overrun us in weeks--!

SEBASTIAN
Let's just calm down. Now, can we get a
projection of its path?

WARBURTON
Home base is uploading one now.

On main monitor: A DIGITAL MAP with three BLINKING ICONS:
BASE; FEMALE; and STAGING AREA. An electronic line extends
the female's path from UTAH, straight into COLORADO.

SEBASTIAN
Makes sense: vocalizations were heard in
the hills around Hudspeth County three
days ago.
(points)
Here. So the male was definitely around -
and the female's definitely headed for
him.
(to Erica)
Bats live in caves right?

ERICA
So what's the cave situation in Colorado?

SEBASTIAN
Anybody from Colorado?

A soldier steps up.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Is there a really big cave system
anywhere?

SOLDIER
Well, I know the _____ Cave System starts
outside Ft. Collins, here.

He points to a spot directly in the female's oncoming path.

SOLDIER (cont'd)
We took a field trip there once.

SEBASTIAN
So, how far's it go down?

SOLDIER
I don't know. I wasn't paying attention.

SEBASTIAN
Well, while you were making out behind
stalagmites or whatever, did you happen
to catch the phrase "stretches for
miles," or "goes down hundreds of feet?"

SOLDIER
I think so. Maybe.

SEBASTIAN
Screw it. It's good enough.

The soldier waits expectantly.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
What? You don't get a prize! Am-scray!

The soldier backs off.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

(to Warburton)

If the male is in those caves and we don't stop the female from reaching him, they could dig in too deep and we might not be able to find them before they reproduce.

ERICA

And we wouldn't know how many infants we were dealing with until they surfaced - to hunt...

WARBURTON

Any luck locking onto Birdzilla?

A TECHNICIAN monitors radar and satellite sweeps.

TECHNICIAN

Negative. We've never been able to pick up its trail, even from the base.

ENDERBY

You just didn't know what to look for. Take me there. I'll look.

JULIAN

Then it's settled: Enderby, you'll take our feathered friend, I get the chiroptera.

(to Warburton)

Just fly me Rocky Mountain High forthwith, and I'll cut your creatures' honeymoon short with ease.

SEBASTIAN

Fly us.

JULIAN

If you stay behind, you shan't make any more messes to clean up.

SEBASTIAN

General, you're tired of making mistakes right? Well, so am I. I should have left my weapon's deployment in more capable hands--

(glances at Erica)

--and I didn't. But it is the most effective way of killing these things we have. And since we've been blessed with the most capable hands--

(eyes Julian)

--we'd be making our biggest mistake if we didn't match 'em up with the perfect weapon to save the world.

(to Julian)

So, I say we team up and you fire my gun. With me on hand to explain any big words to you.

(to Warburton)

That should make collateral damage impossible, make sure Mogambo here bags his trophies...

(to Erica)

...and give him greater odds of coming out alive.

Erica smiles faintly at him.

JULIAN
Now, wait a minute--

WARBURTON
He's right Mr. Rapelow. If this is the least risky way to guarantee the creatures' destruction, then that's what we're doing.

Julian looks pissed.

SEBASTIAN
What do you care? You still get to shoot 'em.

ERICA
(to Julian)
It's better this way. You'll be safer, I'll be there. I'll back you up, 100 percent.

Julian sits on any more protests - for now.

JULIAN
(to Sebastian)
Think you can stomach your final sight being a feeding animal's teeth?

SEBASTIAN
(stuffy British accent)
Care to make a wager of it?

JULIAN
No need. Seeing you emerge from scores of future recta will be prize enough for me.

SEBASTIAN
Sounds like the beginning of a beautiful rivalry.

WARBURTON
Enough. Get moving.

Sebastian, Julian and Erica start walking, an unlikely trio.

ERICA
Well, this 'whole new me' charade is vaguely interesting.

SEBASTIAN
Hey I bitch, but I like life and so do others. And if I have to share the glory to keep it going then - what the hell. Did I say that? What is happening to me?

ERICA
I don't know but it's...

SEBASTIAN
Yeees?

ERICA
An improvement.

She hurries off. Sebastian looks at Julian - smiles BIG.

EXT. MAIN TENT - STAGING AREA - DAY

The two hunters calmly exit the tent. Light CIGARS. Puff.

ENDERBY
 Guess there's no point in arguing with
 our intellectual betters.

JULIAN
 You actually planning on using
 Frankenstein's contraptions?

ENDERBY
 Balls, no! You?

Beat.

JULIAN
 Maybe I'll get creative...

VARIOUS NEWSCASTS

MONTANA NEWSCAST: Footage of POLICE wrangling a crowd of DEER
 HUNTER/SURVIVALIST TYPES toting hunting rifles.

MONTANA REPORTER
 Local hunters are competing for the
 chance to rid their area of any creatures
 which might intrude upon their turf--

BEMUSED NEWSCAST: A reporter with a GRAPHIC over-shoulder.

BEMUSED REPORTER
 --An Animal Planet special is already in
 the works--

DATELINE BROADCAST: One of the hosts interviews DR. JACOB
 DAHLSTEDT - Erica's heckler from the African conference.

DAHLSTEDT
 (Gives his interpretation of scientific
 implications of this occurrence,
 grudgingly admits Erica was right.)

Suddenly, Dahlstedt nervously glances behind himself -
 looking for Julian!

EXT. DESERT SURROUNDING BASE - UTAH - DAY

The base is a dot a mile distant. Enderby leads a platoon of
 soldiers in a sweep of the area. He stops suddenly.

ENDERBY
 Guess now we know why you couldn't find
 the bird.

TILT DOWN TO REVEAL: a HUGE HOLE in ground, 5 feet wide.
 A HUMPED TRAIL of dirt goes off a few feet, then disappears.

SOLDIER
 Which way was it headed?

ENDERBY
 Northeast...

From huge hole:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OREGON FOREST - NATIONAL PARK - DAY

GARGANTUAN HOLE, 20 feet in diameter. Darkly infinite.
Tons of loose dirt surrounds it - like something BLASTED out.

TILT UP TO REVEAL: a FOREST RANGER stands over it. Behind
him, a VEHICLE pulls up. A SECOND RANGER exits, walks over.

FIRST RANGER
What do you think?

SECOND RANGER
Well, there aren't any geysers around
here... Natural gas vent?

FIRST RANGER
Nah. The surface area'd be hotter 'n
hell. Besides, gas and water don't leave
footprints.

HUGE FOOTPRINTS

riddle the land around the hole. Three-toed, 4 feet long.
The rangers follow a line of them to:

A SECOND HOLE 50 yards away. A HUMPED DIRT TRAIL behind it.

FIRST RANGER (cont'd)
Looks like whatever it was came up over
there...
(points to first hole)
...looked around a little, then went back
to whence it came...

SECOND RANGER
Something tells me it didn't come from
Haberman's...

From the dirt trail, we RISE UP to show it headed toward:
A GENERAL STORE/GAS STATION in the distance.

EXT. HABERMAN'S GENERAL STORE/GAS STATION - DAY

DENNY, an attendant, waits for work. HABERMAN appears.

HABERMAN
Hey, Denny, do me a favor and check the
gauge on the gas tank.

Denny hops to it, walks to the:

LARGE ABOVE-GROUND GAS STORAGE TANK. He does as ordered when--

A SEVERE RUMBLING builds underground. Haberman pokes out:

HABERMAN (cont'd)
What the hell?

Their surroundings shake - footing becomes more precarious--

THE EARTH BENEATH THE STATION GIVES WAY - 100 yards across--
The STORE SINKS INTO THE EARTH, disappears completely,
swallowed by dirt--

--Denny, screaming, and the GAS TANK the last thing to go!

Where buildings and people once stood, there is now just a
HUGE PIT of loose, sunken earth, 100 feet in diameter.

THE RUMBLING BEGINS ANEW.

Suddenly - the GAS TANK BLASTS OUT OF THE PIT -- rammed from below -- sails through the air toward--

EXT. OREGON FOREST - NATIONAL PARK - DAY

The Rangers hear a WHISTLING, look up, spot the falling tank--

FIRST RANGER

Duck!

They dive out the way as the tank LANDS ON--

--the ranger's TRUCK, DETONATING - A COLOSSAL EXPLOSION - which sets the forest ABLAZE!

FOREST EDGE, where a SCREAMING CROWD runs from the FIRE.

The GROUND ahead of them is SHIFTING - an EARTHEN WHIRLPOOL. It stops for a beat as they approach, then--

BOOM! A GIANT SHAPE EXPLODES out of the ground - sending TONS OF DIRT INTO THE AIR then RAINING DOWN on oncoming mob.

The dirt rain lasts 15 seconds, totally obscures visibility--

So we only GLIMPSE PEOPLE SNATCHED by an UNSEEN CREATURE!

A MOTHER'S separated from her LITTLE GIRL--
A GIANT BEAK pierces the dirt, encircles and yanks her away--
GIANT CLAWS appear, SPEAR OTHER VISITORS, take them--

As dirt subsides, LITTLE GIRL looks up, up, starts to see:

A LOOMING SHAPE materialize, as big as a 3 story house.
Turkey-like figure defined by settling dirt.
And just as it's about to fully come into view--

It VIGOROUSLY SHAKES OFF the DIRT like a dog, sends a CLOUD STRAIGHT AT US which--

--knocks the little girl and others left down.

As they haul themselves up and the view clears, they glimpse the DISAPPEARING CREATURE DIVE into the loose earth.

We RISE TO REVEAL it's heading toward:
The CITY a few miles away...

INT. JET - SKIES ABOVE KANSAS - EN ROUTE TO COLORADO - DAY

On a TV: Footage of the Oregon forest fire/smorgasbord.

SEBASTIAN

The news is so interesting these days...

JULIAN

Fear not. Enderby will make it less so on the bird-creature end.

ERICA

C'mon, Sebastian! We're almost to the caves. Show Julian what you've got.

IN-FLIGHT LAB, outfitted with similar equipment. Another DRAWING - this time of BAT CREATURE - displayed on a board.

Sebastian moves to show them: a high-tech DEVICE like a huge walkie-talkie, bristling with dials and antenna.

JULIAN
Yes, show me how you're gonna proper fuck us this time.

ERICA
Uh, I had a hand in it too, dear.

JULIAN
It's not your hand I'm worried about.

Sebastian ignores the remark, hefts device for Julian to see.

SEBASTIAN
I've built us an advanced bat detector to hear the Night Stalker's echolocation calls--

JULIAN
Night Stalker? What film did you take that from?

SEBASTIAN
"The Night Stalker."

ERICA
(re: bat detector)
These are modeled after the primitive ears some insects have developed to detect a bat's sonar so they can escape being eaten.

SEBASTIAN
It takes the ultra sonic sound of a bat, lowers the frequency, and allows us to hear it. It'll give us time to get the advantage - especially in caves we'll barely be able to see the Night Stalker in. Watch.

He grabs a SMALL FAT STICK like a laser pen, a BUTTON on top.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(to Julian)
Sonar signal maker.

Hands it to Erica - then jabs HIS PLASTIC PISTOL at Julian.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
It's not the size, but how you use it, no?

He finds a piece of BLACK CLOTH, BLINDFOLDS himself.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Alright, I'll be the insect. Erica: you be the Night Stalker, Julian: you do your thing. If you're as good as you say, you'll know when to shoot. Erica: spin me right round, baby.

Erica SPINS HIM a couple times, then--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Ok, stop--
(he spins on his own)
(MORE)

SEBASTIAN(cont'd)

Now, sneak up on me, press that button
and keep pressing it.

He stops spinning. Turns a DIAL on the DETECTOR as Erica
SLOWLY SNEAKS UP ON HIM, pressing the signal maker's button.

As Erica closes in:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
The bat, sending out twenty or more sonar
signals per second, suddenly picks up a
return signal and heads for the target--

As Erica's finger presses the button down harder:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
--Increases both the speed and rapidity
of the signals, locks on the target,
adjusts its trajectory for the kill--

As Sebastian turns the dial on his detector UP:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
--But the prey has developed a means of
detecting the sonar, begins evasive
maneuvers--

Detector BEEPS: LOUD and FAST as Erica gets closer.
Sebastian astonishingly AVOIDS her, even though he can't see.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
The bat increases the signal rate--

Erica practically presses button INTO her device - the BEEPS
INCREASE - veers after Sebastian, kind of pissed-looking--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Dives for the target but at the last
instant the prey--

Just as Erica's about to catch Sebastian he:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
--drops out of sight and escapes and--

Julian aims and FIRES the plastic pistol and--

The BEEPING STOPS.

Sebastian frowns. Pulls off blindfold to see: Erica in front
of him, minus RUBBER PROJECTILE. He looks down at his chest.

The rubber projectile sticks out of it.

Julian smiles slyly.

JULIAN
Oops. Missed. Won't happen again.

Sebastian stares daggers at him. Gestures to his projectile
launcher in the corner of the room, waiting for another shot.

SEBASTIAN
It better not when you're manning my
baby.

JULIAN
A true hunter needs no such trinket.

He plucks the projectile off Sebastian's chest.

JULIAN (cont'd)
He has his own methods.

Julian cocks his arm back and--
HURLS RUBBER at Erica's drawing like a DART - BULLS EYES the
right spot! An amazing display of skill and power.

Julian then bull eyes Sebastian with a sinister grin.
Sebastian looks worried.

LATER

Sebastian roots through JULIAN'S THINGS. Comes up with:
A torn piece of PAPER.

It's a crude, hand-drawn MAP of the BASE. A DOODLE of GUN
CROSS HAIRS over a drawing of a CREATURE IN A PEN.

Sebastian, perturbed, dips further, pulls out: a VIDEOTAPE.

A TV/VCR

An image springs to life: an INSIDE VIEW OF THE BASE KENNEL.
The infant creature cages and their captives visible.

A SHADOW FALLS OVER THE CAGES.

JULIAN steps into view, wielding a ROCK PICK and CROW BAR, _____
advances on the cages.

Sebastian watches, eyes widening as the tape rolls on, SOUNDS
over his reaction: GLASS BREAKING, EXCITED INFANT SQUEALS and
PADDING CREATURE FOOTSTEPS when--

TURBULENCE SHAKES THE PLANE.

Sebastian falls on his ass, watches helplessly as:

The TV/VCR crashes to the floor, SPARKS.

Sebastian scrambles to the VCR - VIDEOTAPE BUBBLING out of
its opening like saliva from a dying man!

Sebastian presses EJECT repeatedly. Beat. The cassette
finally pops out - trailing mangled, useless videotape.

Sebastian curses. Looks at the map. Well, I still have you.

ERICA AND SEBASTIAN

ERICA
You've sunk to a new low, Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN
You gotta believe me! I watched the tape
with my own two eyes--

ERICA
Oh, and the most crucial bit of evidence
supporting your accusations just happened
to get destroyed! That's too bad.

Sebastian shakes the piece of paper in her face.

SEBASTIAN
 But this bit sure didn't, sister.
 And it's just as suspicious...

Erica takes the map.

ERICA
 Well, shut my mouth - I'm convinced. You
 probably drew this up yourself--
 (she shoves it at him)
 --you got the anatomy wrong.

A soldier pokes his head in.

SOLDIER
 We've reached Colorado. Get ready for
 touch down.

Erica nods to him. Starts moving away from Sebastian.

ERICA
 We don't have time for your nonsense
 right now.

He GRABS her arm, stops her.

SEBASTIAN
 I'm telling you: Julian released these
 animals just so he could hunt them!

ERICA
 Let me go, Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN
 This guy's insane! Who knows what's going
 on inside his head? He could get us
 killed!

ERICA
 There is no 'us,' Sebastian. Remember.

A horrible beat for Sebastian. He can barely say:

SEBASTIAN
 Maybe not. But 'you' can certainly still
 be hurt. And I would've thought you
 wouldn't want that.
 (beat)
 I don't.

He storms off. Erica stares after him, a tad regretful.

EXT. ASTORIA, OREGON - DAY

In RUINS. Quaint houses DEMOLISHED. Overturned CARS.
 Crying ONLOOKERS. HUGE HOLES here and there dot the land.
 HUMPED DIRT TRAILS criss-cross it also.

A MILITARY PROCESSION drives through, Enderby and Zulfikar in
 lead Jeep. They stand, survey the damage.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
 Birdzilla's been here alright.

Enderby shoots Zulfikar a quizzical look.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR (cont'd)
 We started calling it that at the base.

ENDERBY
Thank you, Major.

EXT. ASTORIA ZOO - DAY

A ZOO OFFICIAL with a BLOODY-BANDAGED ARM gives guided tour.

ZOO OFFICIAL
It came up through there...

Leads them to a HUGE HOLE in the center of a SQUARE.

ZOO OFFICIAL (cont'd)
...went after every poor creature in the
whole damn place...

PANORAMA of RAVAGED ZOO: WRECKED CAGES, DEAD ANIMALS, BLOOD.

ZOO OFFICIAL (cont'd)
But it did the most damage over here...

INT. AVIARY - DAY

Huge GLASS DOME overhead SHATTERED. Unlucky BIRDS litter the
area - SMEARED. A BLOOD-and-FEATHER CARPET.

ZOO OFFICIAL
Should've known something was up two days
ago. All the animals got riled up.
Especially the birds.

ENDERBY
Not hard to believe: since a 20 foot
blind date barged in looking for love.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
(to official)
Two days ago? Why?

ZOO OFFICIAL
Well, the town was shut down. We were all
ordered to stay inside while some strange
convoy went through. Every animal on the
grounds didn't calm down til it was long
gone.

Zulfikar is visibly shaken by the news. Enderby notices.

ENDERBY
Why'd you blanch right then, mate?
(re: carnage)
Plenty of opportunity to do so before.

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
I know where it's headed.

ENDERBY
Where?

MAJOR ZULFIKAR
Washington...

EXT. FORT COLLINS, COLORADO - DAY

The road sign we saw earlier: a QUESTION MARK has been spray-
painted over the 'POP: 30' figure. Strange.

A MILITARY PROCESSION approaches - the three heroes leading.

ERICA
 (to driver)
 Route 5 beyond the town should take us to
 the caves.

Their Jeep slowly drives past sign. Sebastian ruffles at it.

SEBASTIAN
 Why do I feel like we're headed into a
 ghost town?

JULIAN
 Probably 'cause you got piss for blood.

EXT. FORT COLLINS - MAIN STREET - DAY

The town is DEAD. Not a soul in sight. Suffocating SILENCE.

Ominous mood gets to the drivers. They SLOW, inch through
 town cautiously.

SEBASTIAN
 Funny how silence makes you feel. You
 don't hear any crickets, you feel
 strange. You don't hear any people, you
 feel scared shitless.

They turn a corner to find--

A MASSACRE IN THE TOWN SQUARE

Blood splattered down either side of main street, like some
 grisly aborted paint job. A few DEAD BODIES.
 Some still whole, most NOT.

They stop their vehicles - near the BAR we were at earlier.
 Our trio gets out, paces.

A SOLDIER GAGS when he sees:

A BODY hugging a TREE TRUNK in an attempted climb, nails DUG
 DEEP into the bark. IT HAS NO LOWER HALF.

Something SHINY on the ground catches Erica's eye.
 She picks it up. It's LURLENE'S ENGAGEMENT RING.
 Erica regards it sadly.

ERICA
 You felt right Sebastian. Except this
 time, I think we are the crickets...

Sebastian slowly realizes what Erica means by that.

SEBASTIAN
 Oh shit...

WARBURTON
 You saying these Goddamn bats think we're
 the bugs for their diet?!

ERICA
 The biggest, tastiest-looking ones around
 I'm afraid. These things breed, they'll
 wipe us out by the hundreds, hourly...

JULIAN
 Well, I don't see 30 poor bastards.
 (gestures at body parts)
 (MORE)

JULIAN(cont'd)

Gather these bits neatly, looks like we only have 'bout half.

ERICA

(lighting up)

Yeah. Bats take food back to their nests and store it. So there's a good chance there are survivors. In those caves.

SEBASTIAN

Then we gotta get to 'em - before those damn things make my ghost town official.

JULIAN

(to soldiers)

Alright, cherries, we're moving! Double time it!

Our heroes pile back into their rides and speed off.

EXT. TOWNWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

A MOUNTAINSIDE. A GAPING HOLE leads into THE CAVES. A TRAIL OF BLOOD leads from the town, into the HOLE.

The procession arrives. A CHOPPER buzzes overhead, flies on.

Our heroes' pull up, leap out. Stand before CAVE ENTRANCE.

SEBASTIAN

At least they left us a trail. I was never much for spelunking.

JULIAN

Imagine that.

Their JEEP RADIO CRACKLES.

CHOPPER PILOT

(filtered)

I've found another entrance, facing base-ward.

ERICA

The female would've entered there.

SEBASTIAN

(into radio)

Secure it. Look for signs of the female.

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - DAY

Chopper sits. Soldiers line ENTRANCE. Inspect the GROUND.

Same INHUMAN FOOTPRINTS from base disappear into entrance...

EXT. TOWNWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

From Jeep radio:

SOLDIER

(filtered)

Looks like we missed it.

ERICA

Hopefully 'just.'

JULIAN
 (to Sebastian)
 Your orders, Doctor? Do we find the poor bastards first or our girl? Should we flip a coin?

SEBASTIAN
 No need. This trail should lead to the Night Stalker's... pantry.
 (to Erica)
 That's where any survivors would be stored, yes?

ERICA
 Right. And the female will want food before doing the dirty deed.

WARBURTON
 So find the survivors, find the... Night Stalkers?

ERICA
 That's right, Warbler. That's right.

REAR OF JEEP

Sebastian slides HIS PROJECTILE LAUNCHER at Julian--

--who slides it BACK AT HIM, yanks the PROJECTILE ITSELF out as he does. Plants it at his side - like a SPEAR.

SEBASTIAN
 What is this?

JULIAN
 A rejection. Familiar, no?

Just as Sebastian's about to say something--

JULIAN (cont'd)
 My little in-flight dart throw wasn't solely showmanship. If I have to lower myself to your level, might as well lower it to mine.
 (points to launcher)
 Cave geography's too rough for lugging unwieldy contraptions around.
 (hefts projectile)
 When I've spear hunted jaguar, all I've had to lug was a spear.
 (points to cave)
 And that's all I'm lugging in there. Besides - it's far more sporting.

Erica looks from Julian to Sebastian, expects ugliness.

SEBASTIAN
 Ok.

She relaxes. Continues prepping.
 Sebastian leans into Julian's ear so she can't hear.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 (whisper)
 Listen, asshole. I know you released these things unpurpose.
 (MORE)

SEBASTIAN(cont'd)

Now, I don't give a damn what happens to you or me while you try to get your 'thrill of the hunt.' But if you put Erica in any worse danger than we're already in - I will find some way to kill you, you understand?

JULIAN

My friend, I love her and she loves me: you can't touch me.

SEBASTIAN

You've been warned.

Erica catches their hunched formation. Tenses again.

Julian grabs an EXTRA PROJECTILE, heads off. Sebastian follows moments later. Erica grabs Sebastian by the arm.

ERICA

What did you say to him?

SEBASTIAN

I made him a promise.

ERICA

(sarcastically)
Hope he knows what he's in for.

SEBASTIAN

Me too.

LATER - THEY PREPARE

Put on HELMETS WITH LIGHTS, RADIO HEADSETS -- Clip on EXTRA HIP RADIOS -- Break out DAY-GLO CHALK -- Sebastian slings his BAT DETECTOR around himself with a STRAP -- Julian slings extra projectile across his back -- Erica has JULIAN'S RIFLE.

JULIAN

(to Sebastian)
What do I need to know?

SEBASTIAN

Aside from the fact that it runs fast, eats fast, and can see in the dark better than you can? Just: kill it quickly.

ERICA

(to Warburton)
Watch these entrances like hawks. Don't let it escape - again.

WARBURTON

No more escapes.

Sebastian, Julian and Erica stand before entrance, ready.

ERICA

We mark our path with the chalk. We stay together.

SEBASTIAN

(gesturing to detector)
Listen for the beeps, guys.

His eyes bore into Julian.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Remember our chat.

JULIAN
Unforgettable.
(looks at cave entrance)
Let's go.

With that, they enter

THE CAVES

Shining, jagged walls. Stalactites. Stalagmites. Crevices.
Dripping sounds. Whistling wind. SHADOWS.

They follow BLOOD, occasional LIMBS. Their path is a TOURIST TRAIL, marked by occasional POSTS, INFORMATION PLAQUES.

Erica ETCHES A DAY-GLO STREAK into the wall at intervals, DRAWS an ARROW pointing the way they came in.

For awhile, LIGHTS set in the walls illumine the way. Then, they disappear - SHATTERED. It gets DARK and OPENS UP.

They marvel at what their helmet lights illumine. Any other time, it'd be beautiful. Right now, it's SCARY.

Sebastian turns up his detector's DIAL. Nothing so far. They continue. A CRICKET sounds.

SEBASTIAN
(whisper)
Can we talk?

JULIAN
(whisper)
No.

ERICA
(whisper)
Just keep it low.

SEBASTIAN
OK. I didn't wanna whisper.

A BEEP. They freeze. Stare at the detector. LOW SHRIEKING from deep in the cave. BEEPS INCREASE. ECHO LIKE THUNDER.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
It's coming.

JULIAN
From where?

Sebastian turns with detector, finds the direction, points.

Julian raises the spear, ready; Erica raises her rifle. THE BEEPS INCREASE - THE SHRIEK TOO.

They brace themselves as suddenly--

--A NORMAL BAT FLIES AT THEM, SCARES THEM!

It swoops down, snaps up CRICKET - whose sounds CEASE. The trio stare after the bat - pale.

SEBASTIAN
 I hate animals.
 (off Erica's look)
 Sorry, but...

MANY LOW SHRIEKS. MORE BEEPS TOO. INCREASING.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Uh-oh.

ERICA
 Duck!

They do as - HUNDREDS OF BATS SWOOP PAST THEM, shrieking toward the entrance. Panting, the trio stares after them.

ERICA (cont'd)
 Looks like they got scared away...

LATER - They keep following the blood, emerge into
 THE NIGHT STALKER PANTRY

which, ironically, is the CAVE VISITOR'S FOOD COURT.
 Their LIGHTS FIND: BENCHES, GUTTED FOOD STANDS and:

BLOOD and SKELETONS: EVERYWHERE - but NO SURVIVORS.

ERICA (cont'd)
 We were too late...

A SHRIEK SOUNDS from afar. SCARIER than a normal bat's.
 The Night Stalker.

Then - ANOTHER ONE. From a different direction.

JULIAN
 Oh, they're about alright.

The three slowly pirouette, try to pinpoint the sounds.

ERICA
 They sound lost, like they're trying to
 find each other...

SEBASTIAN
 They haven't yet. Thank God for really
big damn favors...

ERICA
 But they're close. And they'll be back...

Julian stops moving.

JULIAN
 Let's finish them.

AN ARCHWAY

We're facing out, THE PANTRY FOOD COURT beyond. A HELMET
 LIGHT BLINDS US - Julian. Sebastian and Erica hover behind.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 You find anything?

They shake their heads.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 (pointing at archway)
 Then this is the only entrance other than
 the one we came in through. When they
 return, it will be through here. Now--

He strides back to the center of the pantry.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 When attempting to bring down a buffalo
 say, to attempt a kill shot to the head
 is futile. The hunter's goal is to
 disable the animal's forward locomotion.
 Essentially, shattering the lowest bones
 of the legs until the animal cannot move
 forward. As a result, the animal is
 rendered immobile and one is free to
 dispose of it at their leisure. This is
 what we will attempt and succeed at
 today.

He paces, demonstrates.

JULIAN (cont'd)
 To rule the dance, our tango will take
 three: bait, a rifleman, and an expert
 spear arm. The bait attracts the quarry,
 lures it to the rifleman. Rifleman shoots
 out the quarry's shins, it is disabled
 and then - the hunter appears, hurls the
 spear home. Being said rogue, that duty
 falls to me. The two open positions are
 bait and rifleman. Who gets the shit
 detail and who gets the shittier one?

Sebastian and Erica look at each other. THE SHRIEKS SOUND.

SEBASTIAN
 I'll be the bait.

ERICA
 Sebastian, you don't have to--

SEBASTIAN
 I did it on the plane. We've established
 my shooting handicap. And you've already
 bulls eyed one of these things. Shittier
 detail--
 (raises his hand)
 Right here.

They all look at each other, know this is how it has to be.

JULIAN
 We won't have that much light.

SEBASTIAN
 We won't need it.

MOMENTS LATER

They mark the rock with day-glo chalk: Sebastian DRAWS ARROWS
 on the GROUND from the ARCHWAY, where he'll be, PAST--

A LARGE ROCK 50 feet away he'll have to run by - where Erica
 crouches, checking her rifle's ammo.

Julian MARKS rock around Erica's spot from HIS ANGLE so he'll see where to aim. His SPEAR leans on A RAMPART-SHAPED ROCK 30 feet away - RAMPART ROCK - where he'll hide.

NIGHT STALKER SHRIEKS. Do they sound closer?

Julian raises his hand to make another mark when--

His HIP RADIO GOES OFF. He switches it on.
CHAOS NOISE BOOMS OUT OF IT, FILLS THE CAVE, STARTLES THEM.

ENDERBY (V.O.)
(filtered)
Julian!

EXT. WASHINGTON HIGHWAY - DAY

PANDEMONIUM.

Enderby is at a Jeep in f.g. DIRT BLASTS OVER HIM - a CONSTANT DIRT CLOUD in b.g. clears now and then, reveals--

--the STALLED FEMALE BIRDZILLA CONVOY we saw earlier:

Soldiers madly run around -- CHOPPERS buzz overhead -- TRACER FIRE strafes the area, trying to hit an UNSEEN TARGET -- OVERTURNED JEEPS surround the HUGE TRAILER - which is MISSING PORTIONS -- out of which JUT GIANT, CLAWING LIMBS.

The trapped female wants out.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(from radio;filtered)
I'm here! Where are you?!

ENDERBY
(into radio)
Washington! Outside Moses Lake! The male bird is here - it's trying to free the female!

INT. CAVE PANTRY - DAY

The three VISIBLY REACT.

SEBASTIAN/ERICA
FEMALE?!

ERICA
Warburton's gonna get a present from me when we get outta here!

VIOLENT SOUNDS blast from Julian's radio.

JULIAN
(into radio)
What's happening?!

EXT. WASHINGTON HIGHWAY - DAY

As Enderby reports, the DUST BEHIND HIM CLEARS MOMENTARILY--

BEHIND a CHOPPER, MALE BIRDZILLA explodes from the ground, BREACHES LIKE A WHALE - we glimpse WING-LIMBS folded back, a MASSIVE FEATHERED BODY, THICK BOX-HEAD, yawning BEAK which--

SNAPS AROUND the CHOPPER, takes it down to earth as--
The DUST SWALLOWS THE VIEW AGAIN--

ENDERBY

The male's devouring us! It's about to
loose its girl!

DUST CLEARS AGAIN: BIRDZILLA SURFACES UNDER A JEEP, overturns
it - DUST RETURNS--

ENDERBY (cont'd)

I don't think I can stop it, old friend!
I'm sorry. My apologies to our species!

DUST CLEARS: BIRDZILLA'S BEAK COMES STRAIGHT AT US AND
ENDERBY LIKE A BULLET, SNAPS INCHES FROM OUR FACES--

INT. CAVE PANTRY - DAY

JULIAN'S RADIO DIES. He ERUPTS to life, gathers his things.

JULIAN

I'm going!

SEBASTIAN

What?! We need you!

JULIAN

So does my mate. And I love the gobshite!
You're not as impressive!

SEBASTIAN

Well, how impressive's humanity?!

JULIAN

Enough for me to go perish the giant
birds threatening it!

SEBASTIAN

Don't feed me any bullshit nobility-

ERICA

Sebastian--

SEBASTIAN

Erica, he can't leave!

ERICA

He has to.

Sebastian reacts. Julian stares at him.

ERICA (cont'd)

We can't let the birds breed too! If we
fail at one species, we'll have one
trying to eat us. If we fail at both,
we'll have them fighting over the right!

(beat)

Go get those birds, Julian.
We'll have to deal with the Night
Stalkers ourselves Sebastian.

Sebastian looks scared. Julian notices.

JULIAN

What do you say to that, Frankenstein?

Sebastian meets his gaze levelly, now angrily invigorated.

SEBASTIAN

Gimme that spear!

MOMENTS LATER

Julian makes for the cave entrance, Erica stops him.
Sebastian watches them from afar, now brandishing spear.

ERICA
I'll come after you.

JULIAN
I know.

He winks at her. They KISS. With that, he's gone.

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - LATER - DAY

Soldiers stand. A SUDDEN WIND BLASTS THEM. A CHOPPER lifts.

WARBURTON
Where the hell's he going?!

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

PILOT, sweating hard, looks beside himself.

PILOT
You sure we got orders?

Julian sits in the co-pilot seat.

JULIAN
You do now.

They fly off, for Washington.

INT. CAVE PANTRY - LATER - DAY

Sebastian hides in his bait perch near ARCHWAY.
Erica waits BEHIND RAMPART ROCK, 100 feet away.

INTERCUT

SEBASTIAN
(into headset)
Don't let me down, Doctor. When they show
up, I'll make a run for you and you shoot
one. I'll spear the other... I promise.

ERICA
(into headset)
Sure - but I'm gonna hold you to that.
(beat)
You OK, Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN
I'm a little scared, actually.

ERICA
Tell yourself that joke you know.

SEBASTIAN
(beat)
You tell it to me.

ERICA
Is that an order, Doctor?

SEBASTIAN
A plea.

ERICA
(tells hilarious joke)

He chuckles lightly. Erica can't help but smile herself.

SEBASTIAN
Thanks.

Erica MOUTHS so Sebastian can't hear: "You're welcome."
Beat. She picks up her hip radio. Turns dial.

ERICA
(into hip radio)
Julian, come in.
(nothing)
Julian, come in.

Nothing again. Erica looks off, worried. Distracted.

WITH SEBASTIAN,

Still chuckling, he doesn't notice:

A DARK SHAPE emerge from UNSEEN CEILING CREVICE above him!
It crawls toward him like a creeping spider.

Sebastian shuts up. A HALF-SHREIK. A SINGLE DETECTOR BEEP.
Sebastian INHALES - looks UP, HELMET LIGHT STRIKING:

HUGE TEETH that SNAP AT HIM. He SCREAMS. LEAPS away.

ERICA (cont'd)
SEBASTIAN!

Erica rushes to Sebastian, sees:

FEMALE NIGHT STALKER land on cave floor - chase after him.

Sebastian jets through the ARCHWAY, Female at his heels.

Erica chases after them, deeper into the cave...

Sebastian looks back, SEES the creature:

A grizzly-sized BAT. Brown fur. Spindly gray LEGS and ARMS -
no wings - end in HUGE BLACK CLAWS. Beady eyes; teeth like
gleaming steak knives; HUGE, WIDE EARS; FLESHY FLAP above its
nose. Moves like a cheetah.

Suddenly - Sebastian TRIPS. Falls through a WALL CREVICE.
TUMBLES down an INCLINE, lands on ground - OFF TOURIST TRAIL.

Sebastian looks back, sees FEMALE try to squeeze through
crevice. He GETS UP and SPRINTS OFF.

SEBASTIAN
Erica!

No response. He rips his BROKEN HEADSET OFF. Runs on.
Female SHRIEKS. The detector BEEPS FURIOUSLY - still works.

Finally, female GETS THROUGH CREVICE, pursues Sebastian.

Erica approaches. Looks around - unsure where to go.

ERICA

Sebastian!
 (no response, screams)
 Sebastian!

She HEARS FEMALE'S SHRIEKS ECHO - sound EVERYWHERE at once.
 She takes off down the TOUR TRAIL - in the wrong direction.

Sebastian stumbles through cave, SPEAR in hand.

Off trail, it's VERY INHOSPITABLE: no markers, DEAD ENDS,
 GAPING HOLES, UNEVEN GROUND. He emerges into:

A HUGE CHAMBER

Everywhere, GIANT STALAGMITES jut from the floor like spires.

Sebastian hides behind one. Grabs his HIP RADIO when--

His DETECTOR BEEPS as FEMALE SHRIEKS BEHIND HIM and--
 LEAPS AT HIM from BEHIND stalagmite, SWIPES as he LEAPS AWAY--

--SEVERING the DETECTOR STRAP, letting it fall to the ground.

He DROPS HIS SPEAR as he GRABS for the detector--

Female SNAPS at HIS HAND - he retracts it, runs off.

Now begins THE STALKING SEQUENCE.

Female pursues Sebastian like he was a cricket.
 He tries to get the spear and detector back.

He CRAWLS around as the Female tracks him, STOPS when it
 appears, CONTINUES when it moves on.

He mistakenly CRAWLS right INTO IT -- It CHASES him -- FINDS
 him -- LOSES him -- He SPOTS SPEAR, goes for it -- FEMALE
 appears, BLOCKS him -- He AVOIDS it -- Comes at SPEAR from
 another angle -- SPOTS Female--

He picks up ROCKS - THROWS them ACROSS chamber -- FEMALE
 SNAPS HER HEAD in that direction -- HEADS there--

Sebastian scrambles for detector, reaches it, grabs it, turns-

THE FEMALE LEAPS ON TOP OF HIM!

SNAPS at his FACE. CLAWS at him - grazes his HIP RADIO,
 turning it ON. ERICA'S VOICE shouts from it:

ERICA (V.O.) (cont'd)
 (filtered)
 Sebastian! Sebastian, where are you?!

He GRABS ITS ARMS - stops SWIPING CLAWS inches from his face.
 Uses his FOOT to PUSH it AWAY FROM HIM, STRAINS with one arm
 to grab SPEAR--

He DOES, raises it and - SPEARS FEMALE in the STERNUM!

The female HOWLS, rolls off him. Sebastian watches as:

The BACTERIA INFECTS IT. The flesh around the jutting spear
 ERODES, RADIATES OUTWARD - SLOWLY. STEAM wafts from its body.

Erica's shouts continue over the Female's death.
 Sebastian grabs his hip radio.

SEBASTIAN
 (into hip radio)
 I'm here.

WITH ERICA,

She stands in a SHADOWED AREA.

ERICA
 Sebastian! Are you Ok?

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
 Yeah. I got it.

ERICA
 Where are you?

SEBASTIAN
 Hell if I know!

As Erica talks, A DARK SHAPE APPEARS BEHIND HER.

ERICA
 Can you find your way back to the pantry?

SEBASTIAN
 I have to make sure it dies first...

The shape CREEPS UP ON ERICA, dissolves into the blackness.

ERICA
 OK - then I'll find you.
 We're all right now.

THE MALE LUNGES AT ERICA FROM THE DARKNESS.

WITH SEBASTIAN,

As MALE'S SHRIEK and ERICA'S SCREAMS ERUPT FROM THE RADIO.

SEBASTIAN
 ERICA!

He looks from radio to dying female: the infection doesn't look like it's spreading as fast as it should be.

He hesitates - stay or go. ERICA'S TINNY SCREAMS COME AGAIN.

He RUSHES OFF, scoops up the DETECTOR as he goes!
 The Female Night Stalker's STEADY WHEEZING continues...

Sebastian follows the human/bat cries - never far apart.

He tries to use detector, turns its dial - it goes haywire, SQUEALS; sound so SHARP and GRATING, he covers his ears.

Sebastian inspects detector: it's a little DAMAGED.
 He curses as A FIERCE SCREAM sends him after Erica FASTER.

WITH ERICA - as the Male STALKS her.

Scary and intense. It FINDS HER -- She tries to SHOOT IT -- It DODGES -- Shows up, SNAPS HER RIFLE - she's weaponless--

It CORNERS HER in a NARROW CREVICE, reaches in, tries to HOOK HER with its CLAWS. She spots a CEILING HOLE, scrambles through - BARELY AVOIDS the Male's closest SWIPE yet.

She slides down rock, hits ground, runs off--
The Male can't find her, moves off -- Sebastian nears them.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Erica!

Erica's ears perk.

ERICA
Sebastian!

Sebastian gets a bead on the cries, follows them--
So does the MALE NIGHT STALKER--

INTERCUT

Erica heads for Sebastian--
Sebastian heads for her--
The Male heads for ONE OF THEM - but which?

A RUSTLING AHEAD stops Erica mid-rush. She flattens herself
against the rock of a corner, slowly peeks around it when--

A SHAPE LUNGES AT HER - she SCREAMS--

--only to discover it's SEBASTIAN!

Panting, they HUG, inspect each other.

SEBASTIAN
Are you OK? Where is it?!

ERICA
I'm alright. I think I lost it.
Is the female dead?

Sebastian strains. He's so sure, he's not. Finally:

SEBASTIAN
I speared it.

She's satisfied. Gestures to her hip radio.

ERICA
I can't raise Julian. We have to get to
him and the birds. We can get the male
later.

MALE NIGHT STALKER SHRIEK OFF SCREEN. CLOSE.

SEBASTIAN
Fine by me.

He grabs her and they race off. As they go:

ERICA
How the hell do we get outta here?!

Sebastian thinks, grabs HIS HIP RADIO.

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - DAY

Warburton paces by a Jeep. It's RADIO CRACKLES.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)
(filtered)
Warburton!

WARBURTON
 (into radio)
 Sebastian? What's going on?

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - DAY

SEBASTIAN
 We're lost - that's what! You have to
 help us get out of here!

WARBURTON
 (filtered)
 How?

SEBASTIAN
 I don't know - I was hoping you would!
 Aim all your lights into each entrance,
 make a lot of noise - something's better
 than nothing!

SUDDENLY - the Male LUNGES OUT AT THEM!

They narrowly avoid it, RUN.

EXT. TOWNWARD/BASEWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

The troops AIM LIGHTS into the respective entrances and--

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - DAY

The LIGHTS STAB DEEP into the cave.

WITH SEBASTIAN AND ERICA as

They DODGE the male - through TUNNELS, BOTTLENECKS, CREVICES--
 It ENCROACHES every step of the way--

Sebastian tries to use his detector - it just SQUEALS NOW--
 The Male's SHRIEKS SOUND - very near--

Sebastian and Erica only stop when they hear LOUD YELLING -
 the troops.

SEBASTIAN
 Listen!
 (beat)
 Let's go!

He yanks Erica in the direction of the yelling when--

--they run smack into LURLENE!

All three leap back against rock in fear, stare for a moment.

Lurlene SHAKES, covered with scratches, dirt, and grime -
 tell tale signs of the horror she's been through.

Sebastian and Erica see 5 MORE PEOPLE BEHIND HER - survivors!

ERICA
 Oh, thank god. We thought you'd--

SEBASTIAN
 Gone the way of the cricket!

Suddenly, Lurlene VICIOUSLY ATTACKS SEBASTIAN, striking him--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Whoa! Help! Erica!

They subdue Lurlene, who collapses onto Erica, SOBBING.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(composing himself)
Sorry...

ERICA
(to DIRTY MAN)
Are there anymore of you?

DIRTY MAN
Just us. We got away from them.

ERICA
(to Sebastian)
Night Stalkers must've been looking for them when we got to the pantry.

DIRTY MAN
(re: Lurlene)
She got us away. Hasn't said one word.

They stare at the trembling Lurlene with quiet admiration.

SEBASTIAN
Well I got one for ya: let's get the hell
outta here!

The Male SHRIEKS - LOUD AND NEAR.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
NOW!

The group of survivors bolts in the direction of the YELLING.
As they go, Sebastian jiggles his detector in frustration.

ERICA
It would really help if you fixed that!

SEBASTIAN
What do you think I'm trying to do?

The pantry escapees trail Sebastian and Erica.

ERICA
Look!

Erica point ahead - to FAINT LIGHT stabbing into the cave.

SEBASTIAN
Keep moving!

Suddenly - LAST SURVIVOR'S YANKED INTO BLACKNESS by the MALE.
He SCREAMS.

The group turns -- Sebastian drops the detector - which
SQUEALS HORRIBLY when it hits the ground.

The Male SHRIEKS, drops survivor, who scrambles to OTHERS.

Sebastian hauls him up, pushes him into the rest.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(to Erica)
Get them out!

ERICA
What about you?

SEBASTIAN
Erica!

She can't argue with that - herds group toward the light.
Sebastian rushes forward, bends to grab the detector when--
The Male leaps out of the darkness, snaps at him--
Sebastian does a nice TUCK AND ROLL, AVOIDS MALE'S JAWS--
GRABS the detector--
Lands in a sitting position just as--
Male turns and LUNGES AT HIM and he TWISTS DETECTOR'S DIAL--
Making it SQUEAL HORRIBLY AGAIN.

The Male FREAKS, retreats.

WITH ERICA,
as she and the others reach the CAVE ENTRANCE, rush outside.

WITH SEBASTIAN,

As the male gets its second wind, charges again--

Sebastian turns DIAL FARTHER - detector SQUEALS SO LOUD HIS
EARS BLEED!

The Male can't take it - runs off, into the dark!

Sebastian looks at his detector in amazement, runs off too.

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

Sebastian rushes out, panting, to see:

Erica approach Warburton and PUNCH HIM in the FACE!

Sebastian stumbles up to them.

ERICA
(to Warburton)
That's for keeping the female bird
secret.

WARBURTON
(wiping away blood)
Fair enough.

ERICA
(to Sebastian)
You made it.

SEBASTIAN
So far.

ERICA
Shall we?

SEBASTIAN
Just a second.

Sebastian grabs a SOLDIER'S CANTEEN, takes a hit. Then, he STRETCHES, ROLLS HIS HEAD, CRACKS HIS NECK. Looks at Erica.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

After you.

They RUN to a nearby CHOPPER--

Pass a JEEP loaded with MECHANICAL GOODIES--

Erica grabs TWO PROJECTILES--

Sebastian grabs a SMALL ROCKET LAUNCHER and a TOOL BOX...

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - LATER - DAY

We DRIFT over the rock and find:

The Female Night Stalker - STILL ALIVE, breathing SLOWING more and more as INFECTION branches throughout its body.

A SHADOW OVERTAKES IT - the MALE NIGHT STALKER.

It watches as its mate expires and listens as:
A HIGH WAILING NOISE SOUNDS - then ANOTHER and ANOTHER--

The sound of nightmares being born...

EXT. WASHINGTON HIGHWAY - DAY

The ravaged Birdzilla convoy. Overtaken vehicles.
Downed choppers. Smoldering wreckage. HUGE HOLES everywhere.

Most importantly, the huge trailer - EMPTY.

A CHOPPER flies overhead--

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Sebastian and Erica inside. Erica PILOTS.

Sebastian TIGHTENS A SCREW on a PORTABLE PROJECTILE LAUNCHER:
a regular ROCKET LAUNCHER modified to fire his projectiles.

SEBASTIAN

That oughta do it.

Erica looks out at the DEVASTATION.

ERICA

Let's hope so.

AIR ABOVE WOODS

As their chopper flies over

Towering PINES, unblemished save for - A HUGE PATCH MISSING.

FURTHER AHEAD - A GIANT NEST

made of FALLEN TREES, some SOLDIER BODIES strewn about.
Weapons also - some broken, some not; a FEW ROCKET LAUNCHERS.

IN THE HELICOPTER,

Using binoculars, they spot:

Julian and Enderby, trapped in the nest, unconscious!

SEBASTIAN

Wow, that almost makes this worthwhile.

Erica shoots him a look.

They LAND. Wait for the ROTORS to STOP SPINNING.
Dismount - carefully.

Erica cradles LOADED LAUNCHER.
Jabs 2ND PROJECTILE into Sebastian's hands.

ERICA

I shoot, you reload. Keep your eyes
peeled - and keep quiet.

They slowly approach the nest, eyes darting around fearfully.

SEBASTIAN

Where the hell are they?

Erica looks around: spots the HUGE HOLES EVERYWHERE.
Eyes the ground beneath them.

ERICA

I think we should hurry.

As they approach the nest, a grisly sight:

Julian and Enderby, on opposite sides, bodies entangled in
mud, dirt and trees. They are DIRTY, BLOODY, SCRATCHED.

ERICA (cont'd)

I'll get Julian. Take care of his buddy.

Each makes for the respective hunters, are SEPARATED when--
A RUMBLING BUILDS.

The ground SHAKES -- they TEETER as--

THE MALE BIRDZILLA EMERGES FROM UNDERGROUND!

Sebastian and Erica are knocked down in unison, watch as:

The MALE rises NEAR ERICA, displaces TONS OF EARTH.

Sebastian's EYES BALLOON as the GROUND BENEATH HIM SWELLS
into a GIANT HUMP, LIFTS HIM UP, BREAKS OPEN -- he ROLLS down
its side -- REVEALS the RISING FEMALE BIRDZILLA.

The humans stare as the creatures come clear for first time:

GIANT BIRDS like feathered T-Rexes, clawed arms - no wings.

They SCREECH LOUDLY then - SEE Erica and Sebastian.

The Male chases Erica, the Female attacks Sebastian.

As Erica runs, she DROPS LAUNCHER - it's CRUSHED by Male.

She reaches a TREE. SCRAMBLES UP IT like a lemur, Male
snapping at her all the way!

While Male chases her, Female chases Sebastian, who sees:

Erica almost SLIP OFF a tree branch, into Male's OPEN BEAK--

Sebastian rushes towards Erica to save her when--
 The Female LEAPS in front of him--
 He JABS HIS PROJECTILE AT IT--
 Which it SNAPS IN HALF WITH ITS BEAK!
 Sebastian HIDES from stalking Female BEHIND TREES, tries to
 get to Erica, AVOIDS swiping claws--
 Erica scrambles HIGHER into her tree--
 MALE STARTS CLIMBING TREE AFTER HER--
 Sebastian SEES, has to do something, heads for her tree as--
 --weight of male TOPPLES it to ground toward him - and
 GAINING FEMALE--

WITH JULIAN,

Julian STIRS, SEES CHAOS -- Grabs NEARBY ROCKET LAUNCHER--
 Uses it to PRY himself out of nest--

BACK TO SCENE

Sebastian reaches Erica's tree as IT CRASHES TO THE GROUND--
 Erica RIDES IT DOWN, SCURRIES to him as--

The BIRDS CLOSE IN FROM EITHER SIDE, trap the humans BETWEEN
 THEM, prepare to pounce when--

BIRD CALLS SOUND from:

JULIAN

who's hand's cupped by his mouth, making the FAKE CALLS ECHO--

The two birds ABANDON Sebastian and Erica, head for Julian--

Julian READIES his launcher BEHIND A TREE as--

Two giant birds near--

Suddenly, Julian STEPS OUT, LAUNCHER AIMED, PULLS TRIGGER and-
 CLICK! The LAUNCHER JAMS!

Birdzillas SCREECH, give CHASE--

Julian DODGES them AMONG THE TREES--

Sebastian and Erica REACT as the birds stalk like:

SEBASTIAN
 Wild turkey...

ERICA
 WHAT?

Sebastian GRABS Erica, pulls her toward chopper.

SEBASTIAN
 C'mon! I got an idea!

WITH JULIAN,

The two birds CHASE him through the trees, almost get him--
WITH SEBASTIAN AND ERICA

As they climb aboard the chopper:

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
My Dad used to bowhunt wild turkey!
Dragged me along once.

As Erica moves for the pilot seat - Sebastian climbs into it.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
No - I'm taking the wheel.

ERICA
You can't fly!

SEBASTIAN
No - but I can crash!

He powers the chopper up.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
A shot to a turkey's Central Nervous
System will kill it instantly. The best
target is the base of its tail because 1)
that's where the spine is and 2) it has
its back to us and won't see us shoot!

ERICA
What are you gonna do?!

SEBASTIAN
Just get ready to jump!

Sebastian FLIES the chopper A FEW FEET OFF GROUND, WOBBLY,
towards the birds--

THROUGH CHOPPER'S WINDSHIELD

all we can see is bird's BACKS as they stalk Julian.

Sebastian BRACES, then - DIPS chopper suddenly and sharply--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Jump!

He and Erica do as--

CHOPPER hits the earth and--

Its STILL-SPINNING ROTORS BREAK from their mechanism--
FLY THROUGH THE AIR toward birds like GIANT ARROWS--

The Birds turn heads toward the commotion in unison as--

--ONE ROTOR SPEARS FEMALE right at BASE OF ITS TAIL, and the
other SPEARS MALE through ITS CHEST--

Both FALL DOWN DEAD INSTANTLY!

Sebastian and Erica sit up on ground, panting.

Julian EMERGES - eyes dead birds between he and the others.

JULIAN
Wild turkey...

He smiles, meets Sebastian's gaze.

JULIAN (cont'd)
Brilliant!

He walks over, AROUND Male's corpse, passes it when--
--MALE LEAPS UP, still alive, rotor JUTTING from its chest!

SEBASTIAN
Oh no, lung shot! Not good enough!
Male SEES dead female, GROWLS, turns, and--
Locks on the trio - RACES at them--
Julian FREEZES in its path--
Erica freaks--

ERICA
HATARI! (Danger!)

Sebastian GRABS a ROCKET LAUNCHER at his feet - AIMS SHAKILY--
As Male reaches Julian, opens beak to strike and--
Sebastian FIRES: ROCKET STREAKS TOWARD MALE and--
BOOM - takes its head off!

It falls dead, makes the earth QUAKE HARD.

Sebastian can't believe it. Neither can Erica or Julian.

Sebastian and Erica get up, shamble over to Julian.

Julian and Erica HUG fiercely, eyes closed.
Sebastian watches them silently.

Erica opens her eyes, looks at Sebastian.
She smiles slightly - and mouths 'Thank you.'

Sebastian returns the subdued smile.

Julian and Erica break.
Julian just looks at Sebastian for a beat, then looks off.

JULIAN
Enderby.

He rushes to help his friend. Erica follows.

Sebastian stares after Julian.

SEBASTIAN
(under his breath)
You're welcome...

EXT. TOWNWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - COLORADO - NIGHT

A CAMPED PLATOON OF SOLDIERS, their VEHICLES blocking
entrance. They tap KEGS OF BEER in celebration, are rowdy.

A jeep RADIO crackles. A soldier, MEDITZ, answers it.

MEDITZ

Meditz here.

JULIAN (O.S.)

(filtered)
You know me, lad. You gentlemen keeping
an eye on things?

MEDITZ

That bat's not going anywhere tonight.

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - COLORADO - NIGHT

Julian speaks at a Jeep. MUSIC and SPIRITED NOISE in b.g.

JULIAN

Then enjoy the spirits - you've earned
it. Cheers and out.

He walks back to

THE VICTORY CELEBRATION

Our HEROES drink, dance, have fun. A ROARING FIRE lends a
tribal air. Sam Cooke's "Twisting the Night Away" plays.

This group BLOCKS the cave entrance facing the base.

Julian centers himself among Enderby, Erica and soldiers.
Sebastian sits on a rock, smoking, looking ready to pass out.

JULIAN (cont'd)

Gentlemen, only the male bat remains and
he's buried in his hole, waiting for us
to walk him down the last mile. But,
before we do that, we must attend to more
pressing matters: rampant, drunken, self-
congratulation!

CHEERS AND TOASTS.

JULIAN (cont'd)

Congratulations to your selves - for
immersing yourselves in the role of
bwanas and proving right award-worthy.
And congratulations, from me, to my self,
for matching God's killing prowess, if
not his numbers, for more years than he'd
ordained. I'm dying a real man.

(beat)

This quarry wanted the world millions of
years ahead of schedule and the only way
they could get it was to make us extinct.
But bloody hell if we were going to
perform that trick for them. Yesterday,
the future wild was up and coming. As of
today, they are the future no more.

SEBASTIAN

(to himself)

At least not until we're gone.

A soldier starts SINGING the theme from "Rio Bravo."
Others, including the hunters, join in soulful camaraderie.

"Having a Party" begins. Erica wanders over to Sebastian.

ERICA

How about a dance, Doctor?

SEBASTIAN

I'm too sore.

ERICA

You know, you now have the best pickup line any man could ever ask for: 'I saved the world from rampaging future animals.' You should start capitalizing on it.

SEBASTIAN

Eh - don't know how many chicks I can get being me.

ERICA

You got me.

SEBASTIAN

And lost you.

Beat. Erica's about to say something else when--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

But then, that was the old me.

ERICA

Exactly. And this wonderful new you will surely find someone else to drive up the wall.

SEBASTIAN

What if I said I didn't want to drive anyone else?

Julian approaches. Erica glances at him, then back.

ERICA

Afraid there's nothing we can do about that.

Sebastian nods, accepts the news as Julian arrives.

JULIAN

(to Sebastian)

You did your thing--

(beat)

--and let me do mine.

Sebastian gives him a pregnant stare filled with tension.

JULIAN (cont'd)

Today, you crept in, got in danger quick, turned things around - and came out alive. You were a hunter out there.

(puts hand out to him)

May I have this dance?

SEBASTIAN

It's OK. You two go ahead. I'll watch.

(looking right at Erica)

I like seeing Erica happy.

Erica smiles quietly at him. Julian nods, leads her away.

As they enter the dance floor, A SHRIEK FROM DEEP IN THE CAVES. It is FORLORN, MOURNFUL. All heads turn, listen.

JULIAN

Listen to him. He knows the end is near -
and he can do nothing.

EXT. TOWNWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Soldiers party f.g., BLACK CAVE MOUTH b.g. Fire FLICKERS.

Something GLINTS in the cave - becomes MANY SOMETHINGS,
reflecting the firelight.

A DANCING SOLDIER COUPLE spots the glints, STARES at:

NUMEROUS SETS OF GLEAMING DAGGER-TEETH, twinkling like
horrific stars from the black of the cave!

INT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

As people slow dance--

The music STOPS. People groan.

A soldier walks to the boom box - stops short when he sees:

THE MALE NIGHT STALKER PERCHED ATOP THE CRUSHED BOOM BOX.

Suddenly - A PACK OF 50 NIGHT STALKERS ATTACK!

SWARM the party goes like ants.
They're smaller, only 3 feet tall - infants.

Everyone scatters, SCREAMING.

Sebastian gets up, sees:

Julian push Erica away.

JULIAN

Get under cover!

Erica rushes for a TENT, looking for a WEAPON--

Sebastian fights to get to Erica through the oncoming crowd--

Julian rushes to get his HUNTING RIFLE as:

The infants DEVOUR THE PARTY. Their SHRIEKS FILL THE AIR.

Soldiers are OVERWHELMED - one on one, and IN DROVES--
It's like when Erica first fed the Night Stalker crickets
TIMES 10 - troops are COVERED and GOBBLED UP in SECONDS!

Enderby watches soldiers go down viciously.
Looks around, spots what he's looking for:
Someone's HOLSTERED .357 MAGNUM hanging from a Jeep.

He heads for it, DODGES DEATH around him, reaches it--

He grabs gun, raises it to his TEMPLE, shuts his eyes,
strains to pull the trigger when--
A BLOOD SPURT lashes his face.

Enderby opens his eyes to first see:

A SMILING Night Stalker, HIS WATCH HANGING FROM ITS TEETH...

Then, he looks down at the ground to behold:

His SEVERED HAND lying in front of him, gun still gripped .

Julian pushes through crowd, hunting rifle IN HAND, sees INFANTS ENCIRCLE ENDERBY. Julian and Enderby LOCK EYES. Enderby SMILES slightly--

ENDERBY
(shouts; re: gun)
Should've done it when I had the chance--

A night stalker LEAPS ONTO HIM, drives him down-- Others SWARM OVER HIM -- A BLOOD MIST BLOSSOMS as Enderby DISINTEGRATES in the infants' jaws!

Julian lets out A FIERCE WAR CRY in fury-anguish - raises his rifle, BLOWS nearest Night Stalker away!

Then - HE STORMS THEM.
He charges into their midst, FIRES WILDLY--

Erica emerges from the tent - sees this, chases after him--

Sebastian bolts to stop her--

She COLLIDES with a FLEEING SOLDIER, loses gun, watches:

The infants OVERRUN Julian--

He SHOOTS them as they come, picks off those he can when--

They start to EAT HIM FROM THE FEET UP --
He STILL SHOOTS THEM AS THEY DO - body SHRINKING DOWN moment by moment as he's eaten at LIGHTNING SPEED--

Erica cries out, barrels forward - when Sebastian appears and GRABS HER, holds her back. She struggles furiously in his arms, can only watch as:

Julian goes down fighting -- his bared clenched jaws FOAM BLOOD, body VANISHING like the Wicked Witch of the West--

With last of his strength, he AIMS RIFLE AT SEBASTIAN--

Sebastian BLANCHES - braces to be blown away as--

JULIAN FIRES at his romantic rival and HITS--

--a Night Stalker about to pounce on Sebastian and Erica !

Sebastian sees the bat corpse collapse, looks back sadly as:

Julian gives a FINAL DEATH CRY and disappears - the last thing to go his arm and the HAND holding the RIFLE -

The infants left CHEWING ON AND TWISTING RIFLE in their jaws.

One has a couple of JULIAN'S FINGERS STUCK IN ITS TEETH - TWITCHING like unconsumed insect legs.

Finally, Julian's completely GONE - like he never existed.

The infants SURROUND Sebastian and Erica - who FREEZE. They CLOSE IN, SNIFF them and SNAP - crouch to POUNCE when--

The MALE STRIDES UP to the humans, stares at them, GROWLS-- It then looks to its young, SNARLS GUTTURALLY, causing:

The infants to BACK OFF...

The Male lifts A CLAW next to SEBASTIAN'S FACE and--
SCRATCHES IT with one quick move!

Sebastian WINCES, but keeps as still as possible.

Then, Male turns to Erica - SCRATCHES HER CHEEK also!
The scientists are scared shitless.

Beat. The MALE surveys the carnage then - throws its head
back and SHRIEKS, LOUD and LONG.

The infants gather around it. Then, the vicious family of
bats VANISH into the cave, as quickly as they appeared...

An eerie silence falls on the campsite.

Sebastian lets go of Erica. She stares at where Julian once
stood, trembling. Sebastian fingers his BLEEDING SCRATCH.

SEBASTIAN
Jesus - something tells me they're saving
us for later...

Sebastian walks over to a dead infant, inspects the body.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
The female reproduced...

Erica slowly looks over at him, infuriated, expectant.
He meets her pointed gaze.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
I don't understand... I speared it...
I watched it die...

She walks up to him, stares hard.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
...for as long as I could.

Erica gets visibly upset.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
You were in trouble: I had to come after
you...

Erica ATTACKS Sebastian - slaps the hell out of him.

ERICA
You lying, incompetent son of a bitch!
Look what you've done.
(tears)
You killed him.
(beat)
You've killed us all. And if you ever
come near me again - I'll kill you.

She storms off.

Sebastian just stands amidst the carnage, shattered.

EXT. CLEARING IN WOODS - DAY

Erica, Warburton and A HUNDRED SOLDIERS stand solemnly,
faces splashed by the FLICKERING FIRE of:

THE FUNERAL PYRE

BURNING WOOD topped by SOLDIER and HUNTER REMAINS.

Erica steps forward, the LOCKET Julian gave her in hand.
Sebastian watches her from across the flames.

Erica puts the locket onto the pyre, watches it burn.

THE NIGHT STALKERS' SHRIEKS FLOAT TOWARD THEM FROM THE CAVES.

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - DAY

Flashlight BEAMS probe the dark recesses.

One finds FEMALE NIGHT STALKER - COMPLETELY ERODED, save for
leftover sections of SKELETON and clinging CHUNKS OF FLESH.

Beam illumines ITS RIB CAGE, spear jutting, STUCK in a CHUNK.

Sebastian leans into the EXPLODED STOMACH CAVITY, examines.

WARBURTON

What went wrong? The spear worked in that
forest. Why not now?

Sebastian inspects the spear:

A little oblong WINDOW on its side, calibrated with NUMBERED
MARKS like a measuring cup.

The SYRINGE-LIKE PLUNGER marked ABI visible in it -
STOPPED at the HALFWAY MARK.

Sebastian pushes down on the plunger with his thumb.
It won't budge - STUCK.

SEBASTIAN

The Automated Bacteria Injector
malfunctioned... It released enough to
kill a tree, but not nearly enough to
kill this in time... And it was able to
birth its young...

Horrible silence. Then, Warburton looks sadly at Sebastian.

WARBURTON

Should I chalk this up to human error,
Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah...

Beat.

WARBURTON

Then I'm sorry, but I have no choice: we
can't rely on your efforts anymore.

SEBASTIAN

Look, I know I can make it work, just
give me another chance!

WARBURTON

Not this time, Sebastian.

NIGHT STALKERS SHRIEK OFF SCREEN. A SOLDIER moves toward it.

SOLDIER
Let's get 'em now!

BUDDY
Hell no! I want revenge too, but I don't
wanna get lost--
(gestures at Sebastian)
--like they did!

WARBURTON
He's right. We'll cover both entrances,
flush the creatures out - and then bomb
them all to Hell.
(looks at Sebastian)
Dr. Sayre - you are dismissed...

Sebastian resignedly gets up to leave--

SEBASTIAN
Funny how you only call me that in these
instances...

EXT. DESERT BASE - MAIN GATE - DAY

Sebastian drives up to discover a swarm of REPORTERS in front
of the gate. Soldiers part the group roughly, clearing a path
for Sebastian. The gate opens and he drives through.

INT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - DAY

Erica solemnly packs up JULIAN'S THINGS - and HERS.
The front door opens behind her - Sebastian appears.

She doesn't look at him as he ambles up, or as he talks.

SEBASTIAN
I know I'm risking certain death coming
here but I just wanted to say... I got
fired again. Just thought I'd leave you
with something comforting to think about.
And if that doesn't work, I think this
will:

(beat)
I was lying about Julian. There was
nothing on that tape and I drew that map
myself. I made all of it up. He was a
flawless individual.

(this he means)
And a true hunter.

(beat)
I'm the one that deserved to die.
I deserve everything I've gotten. And I'm
OK with it. In fact, that I got fired
doesn't even matter. All that matters is
that I got hired long enough to get to
work with you - Doctor.

Erica reacts.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Anyway - see ya.

With that, Sebastian is gone.

Erica slows her packing. Tries to blink back TEARS.
Makes a small MOVE for the door, stops - resumes packing.

EXT. DESERT BASE - MAIN GATE - DAY

Sebastian, despondent, screeches to a halt at the gate.
It slowly opens. The reporters still there get parted again.

He slowly drives through them.
They shout into his window, try to shove mics in.
An OLD TIMEY REPORTER makes himself noticeable.

OLD TIMEY REPORTER

Dr. Sayre! According to our sources,
you'd been fired before and asked to
return to deal with the creatures. Now
that you've single-handedly killed them
all and saved the world, how does it feel
finally getting the glory you've always
wanted and deserved? How does it feel to
be the hero?

Sebastian brakes hard.

All the reporters watch the door open, Sebastian emerge,
calmly stride up to the Old Timey Reporter and--

--PUNCH HIM to the ground.

The Old Timey Reporter rubs his jaw, shocked and confused.

SEBASTIAN

I wouldn't know. Dr. Erica Manning was
the one who identified the threat and
tried to deal with it properly. She's the
hero.

(beat)

Everything that's gone wrong - and will -
has been my contribution...

With that, he leaves.

INT. ERICA'S BASE HOUSING - DAY

She crouches before Julian's BIG TRUNK. It's locked.

She PICKS IT. OPENS trunk - finds:

ERICA-THEMED ARTICLES, BOOKS, and PAPERS.
Julian's STALKER TREASURE TROVE.

Erica digs through it, dumbfounded. Something catches her:

A SEALED ENVELOPE from Julian - addressed to her.

She opens it, unfolds a LETTER inside. Reads.

JULIAN (V.O.)

Dear Jane. Tarzan's Jane. In case it's
not apparent, I'm writing this letter
under the influence - the influence of 5
whiskeys, the bushman breakfast of
choice. I need it to write what I can't
say: that the time has come for us to
part ways.

She REACTS - awed.

JULIAN (V.O.) (cont'd)

If you're shocked, it's understandable.
What isn't is how shocked I am.

(MORE)

JULIAN(cont'd)

I never expected I would have really fallen for you, but I did, over time, and hard - and it wasn't part of the plan. I had a plan you see. Find you, get close to you, and then re-emerge when the quarry you were heralding finally appeared - necessary again. This new breed of yours offered me new shots, you see - at their lives and mine. Well, that time has now arrived - and I must seize my destiny while I can still control my bodily functions. Although you are my lady, the hunt is my mistress and I am, at heart, a true philanderer. So, I'm afraid we must say goodbye. At least you'll still have Sebastian. And you can be sure he didn't have an ulterior motive when he got together with you. All he did was love you. And from the way he acted in South Africa - it seem he still does. Hmm - maybe I shouldn't give you this letter after all...

She leaps up and runs out the door.

EXT. DESERT BASE - MAIN GATE - DAY

Erica runs up to it. Searches frantically for Sebastian. He's long gone. Her expression slackens.

She starts to head back when--

REPORTERS

Dr. Manning! Dr. Manning!

She turns to the reporters massed behind the gate. A BURLY ONE catches her attention.

BURLY REPORTER

Dr. Manning! Now that you've single-handedly saved the world, how does it feel to be the hero?

ERICA

What?! Who told you that?

BURLY REPORTER

Dr. Sayre gave you all the credit for exterminating the creatures.

He points to the Old Timey Reporter - split lip being nursed by an assistant.

BURLY REPORTER (cont'd)

Punched this guy out for not getting that fact right. Heh, now that's what I call defending someone's good name.

Beat. Erica slowly BEAMS - runs to a nearby Jeep. Hops in. Pulls up to the gate. Shouts for the guards to open it.

They comply and she races through, drives off...

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Warburton supervises an operation. A NEW AIDE stands by him.

On main monitor: GROUND UNIT VIDEO of each guarded cave system ENTRANCE and--

F-18 BOMBER VIDEO as JETS, TANGO 1 & 2, streak toward them.
 Warburton talks to the bombers and ground troops via radio.

WARBURTON
 Alright, gentlemen, it's time to clean
 house.
 (to ground troops)
 All units: commence flushing operation.

EXT. TOWNWARD/BASEWARD CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

TROOPS pull GAS MASKS over their faces.

THREE TROOPS holding HI-TECH SHOULDER LAUNCHERS step up to
 each ENTRANCE.

They AIM their launchers and FIRE--

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - BOTH ENTRANCES - DAY

THREE HUGE GAS CANNISTERS WHIZ deep into the cave--
 FIND PERCH, LODGE and BEEP--

EXT. BASEWARD CAVE SYSTEM ENTRANCE - DAY

A HAND-HELD DEVICE BEEPS at the same time.
 The soldier holding it shouts orders:

SOLDIER
 Contact acquired. Pull back!

The soldiers leap into Jeeps; drive off to:

A PERIMETER 100 ft. away. They watch entrances from afar.

INT. CAVE SYSTEM - DAY

The SIX CANNISTERS TWIST OPEN.
 THICK GAS SHOOTS OUT, TRAVELS - FILLS the cave.
 SHRIEKS ECHO in the darkness.

EXT. CAVE PERIMETER - DAY

A soldier at the perimeter PULLS a VISOR over his eyes.

VISOR POV

INFRARED VIEW trained on a CAVE ENTRANCE.

A GROUP OF RED BLOBS slowly GROWS.

SOLDIER
 I have a visual on the targets.

INT. TANGO ONE - IN FLIGHT - DAY

WARBURTON (O.S.)
 (filtered)
 Roger. Tango 1 & 2: prepare to fire.

The PILOT swoops his JET low, toward HIS TARGET ENTRANCE.

EXT. CAVE PERIMETER - DAY

The soldier keeps watching the entrance. Jet roar BUILDS.

VISOR POV

RED BLOBS reach the entrance, FILL visor's view and--
 HUNDREDS OF BATS BLAST OUT, take to the sky, a furious mass.
 A THICK CLOUD OF GAS chases them out...
 JET STREAKS BY overhead. Troops stare at entrance, confused.

WARBURTON
 (filtered)
 Where the hell are they?

EXT. MINER, COLORADO - DAY

RAMSHACKLE BUILDINGS haphazardly laid on the rough terrain.

INT. GENERAL STORE - BASEMENT - DAY

A SODA JERK creeps down a staircase with a LIT FLASHLIGHT.
 Follows AN EERIE WHINE to:

A FLOOR-TO-CEILING HOLE in the EARTHEN WALLS of the basement.

He aims the light INTO THE HOLE as the WHINE GETS LOUDER--

The SODA JERK'S EYES WIDEN at what he's seeing--
 A RUMBLING BUILDS as--

EXT. GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

~~300 NIGHT STALKERS POUR OUT of the store, FLOOD the TOWN~~.
 No longer infants, but BEAR-SIZED HORRORS.

People spot them - SCREAM and RUN.

A LIQUOR STORE OWNER pulls A HANDGUN, AIMS for one--

It SEES HIM - RUSHES HIM--

The OWNER SCREAMS as NIGHT STALKER SHRIEKS, LEAPS and EATS...

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

TECHNICIAN
 Uh, sir... Something weird's coming up on
 the satellite sweeps.

Warburton comes over. His eyes go wide when he sees:

MAP MONITOR: HUNDREDS OF RED BLIPS APPEAR.

TECHNICIAN (cont'd)
 I think it's them.

WARBURTON
 Where is this?

TECHNICIAN
 20 miles west of the caves.
 Miner, Colorado.

WARBURTON
 How close are they to the town?

TECHNICIAN
Sir, that is the town.

The tech taps keys: the entire area the red blips swarm
FLASHES BLACK, represents the TOWN.

TECHNICIAN (cont'd)
They must have traveled there...
Underground... They found another
opening...

WARBURTON
Jesus...

INT. HOUSE - MINER, COLORADO - DAY

An ELDERLY COUPLE lounge in their LIVING ROOM. A NOISE.

The ELDERLY MAN peeks out a LARGE WINDOW for a look-see when--

CRAASH! A NIGHT STALKER BURSTS through it, GRABS HIM and
YANKS HIM OUTSIDE!

INT. SECOND HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A 9 YEAR OLD washes dishes at the sink when--

A NIGHT STALKER BURSTS through the SINK WINDOW and SNATCHES
HIM AWAY WITH A SCREAM!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The NINE YEAR OLD's thrown to the ground amidst:

A GROUP of HUMAN HOSTAGES: old, young, male, female.
They huddle in fright. The OLD MAN we just saw lies DEAD,
HAND FROZEN over his HEART in a death-clutch.

A GROUP OF NIGHT STALKERS surround them - guards.

MORE PEOPLE are DRAGGED from home, then to the square...

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

WARBURTON
(into radio; to bomber)
Tango 1 & 2: the creatures have surfaced
in grid coordinate 287-344. Proceed there
and intercept--

NEW AIDE
(overlapping)
Sir, there are innocent civilians at
stake--

WARBURTON
Once those things leave that town, bomb
them into the stone age, boys.

AWAC RADAR TECH
(filtered)
Warmonger 1--

INT. AWAC AIRPLANE - DAY

Wall to wall intelligence gathering equipment.
Technicians downlink what they're seeing to base.

AWAC RADAR TECH
 --this is AWAC 517 - nearing contact
 point.

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

AWAC RADAR TECH
 (filtered)
 Passing 3 towns ahead of Miner, with
civilian dwelling in between.

Warburton and the tech look at each other fearfully, then at:

AWAC VIEW MONITOR: An AERIAL VIEW streaking over 3 SMALL
 TOWNS as the AWAC heads for Miner.

Map monitor beside it: THREE MORE BLACK FLASHES appear, in a
 STRING, IN FRONT of the FIRST FLASH to illustrate further.

The RED BLIPS are headed RIGHT FOR THEM.

TECHNICIAN
 Looks like the creatures are gonna head
 right through those towns.

WARBURTON
 We can't bomb them if they do that...

NEW AIDE
 (awed)
 Smart.

WARBURTON
 Where do the towns lead?

The tech brings this up. The BASE ICON starts FLASHING.

TECHNICIAN
 Oh shit: our doorstep.

WARBURTON
 OK, so we evacuate the base, wait until
 they reach it and then blow them away.

TECHNICIAN
 (reassuring)
 Very good, sir.

AWAC RADAR TECH
 (filtered)
 Oh-my-God.

INT. AWAC AIRPLANE - DAY

The radar tech stares at his monitor, PALE.

AWAC RADAR TECH
 Warmonger 1, we've reached the contact
 point - you won't believe this!

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Warburton sees the AWAC MONITOR - and collapses into a chair.

TECHNICIAN
 What do we do now, sir?

Beat.

WARBURTON
Bring my car around.

INT. SEBASTIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Sebastian dumps his drawers filled with ERICA'S NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS. He doesn't look happy about it.

Suddenly - his door FLIES OPEN and--

Erica stands there.

ERICA
OK. Just three questions.

SEBASTIAN
OK.

Erica strides up to him.

ERICA
First one: who's better? You or me?

Beat.

SEBASTIAN
We're both just as good.

ERICA
Interesting.
(beat)
Alright - if you don't know the right answer, what are you gonna do?

SEBASTIAN
Own up to it.

ERICA
Good - same here.

She steps against him - very close now.

ERICA (cont'd)
Final question: if I ask you to do something for me, what then?

SEBASTIAN
If I agree it's for the best - do it with pleasure.

ERICA
OK.
(beat)
Ditto.

Sebastian and Erica TREMBLE near each other.

SEBASTIAN
(shakily)
So - do I pass the test?

Erica leaps onto him - they KISS FIERCELY.

ERICA
I always had a feeling you'd change.
What took you so long?

SEBASTIAN

I actually changed awhile back - I just tried to make it look like an evolving process!

Erica laughs out loud.

ERICA

Well, being the brilliant scientist I am, I sort of noticed. Guess I just tried my best to ignore it. So maybe some evolving did go on...

SEBASTIAN

Maybe we should stop talking.

ERICA

Maybe...

They KISS passionately. A SUDDEN KNOCK on the door.

WARBURTON (O.S.)

Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN

There's no Sebastian working here!

WARBURTON (O.S.)

Well then, is Dr. Sayre around?

EXT. SEBASTIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Warburton stands by the door with his New Aide. Beat.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)

Maybe.

WARBURTON

If so, I have to talk with him.
We failed, see. The Night Stalkers are smarter than us.
(glances at New Aide)
Just like he is.

Beat. The door slowly opens. Sebastian steps out, SMILING.

Erica steps out beside him. Warburton can't help but smile.

SEBASTIAN

Well, I'll say this for you: you certainly know how to get me going.

WARBURTON

Good - then let's go!

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Warburton strides in, Sebastian and Erica trailing him.

WARBURTON

We thought we knew their game: get to the base, wipe out their hunters, and then make little bats to their hearts' content. But then, they surprised us. Now we have no idea what they're up to.

As they reach the main monitors:

TECHNICIAN
Ground units have reached the creature
caravan! We've got video.

On main monitor:

SHAKY HEAD CAMERA VIDEO as TROOPS run up to some BUSHES.
Breaks in the leaves offer views of:

EXT. DESERT EN ROUTE TO BASE - UTAH - DAY

A HUGE RISE - where the first wisps of a DIRT CLOUD appear.
A RUMBLE follows it.

The TROOPS' EYES WIDEN as the RUMBLE CLIMAXES and they see:
THE 300 NIGHT STALKERS SPILL OVER THE RISE AMID CHOKING DUST.

The ENDLESS CARAVAN moves across the burning desert - an
ocean of two-legged giant bats.

SOLDIER
Holy shit!

SOLDIER POV

of HUMAN BEINGS, at least 50, in creatures' center, moving
with them - the HOSTAGES. Dirty, bruised, bleeding; prodded
roughly by the bats, shambling like Biblical slaves.

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Everyone's PALE as they watch the same thing on the monitors.

SEBASTIAN
They've taken hostages..?

WARBURTON
God in Heaven, what do they want?

On monitor: the CARAVAN STOPS near BUSHES where troops hide.

EXT. DESERT EN ROUTE TO BASE - DAY

The MALE suddenly emerges from within the caravan--

--pushing the NINE YEAR OLD ahead of him, toward the BUSH
SOLDIERS - so they can SEE.

Behind it, Night Stalkers CLEAR to REVEAL THE OTHER HUMANS.

The Male leans into the kid, SNIFFS, raises a CLAW TO HIS
CHIN, gently lifts it as in pre-pep-talk then--

--SCRATCHES HIS CHEEK in one swift, vicious move!

The kid CRIES SILENTLY as behind him, Night Stalkers SCRATCH
the OTHER HOSTAGES in exactly the same way, same spot!

Then - they ALL TURN to look at the BUSH SOLDIERS in unison.

INT. BASE - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

On monitor: the soldiers ZOOM IN SHAKILY on the BATS' FACES--

Soon, EVERY MONITOR in the room is FILLED with BAT FACES -
who seem to STARE DIRECTLY AT SEBASTIAN and ERICA. BEAT.

SEBASTIAN

I'll tell you what they want: they want
us.

Warburton looks at him quizzically.

Sebastian turns Erica's face toward Warburton so he can see
THE SCRATCH on HER CHEEK. Then, points to one on HIS CHEEK.

In b.g.: monitors fill with NINE YEAR OLD'S SCRATCHED CHEEK.

WARBURTON

That's why they took the hostages?

ERICA

They're making damn sure they don't get
bombed. That means holding those people
until they get here safely. Once that
happens and they see that Sebastian and I
are inside, they'll abandon them.
I think. I hope...

WARBURTON

Unfortunately, we can't hang their lives
solely on hope.

SEBASTIAN

You're right. We'll have to make the next
move: rescue those people ourselves.

ERICA

By setting a trap.

WARBURTON

How?

Sebastian and Erica look at each other.
One shrugs, one gives a quick eyebrow-raise.

ERICA

I'd say look to our successes, but all
we've had so far are failures.

Sebastian thinks - then perks up.

SEBASTIAN

That's it! Our failures.

INT. LAB - DAY

CLOSE ON: the faulty PROJECTILE taken from female bat corpse.
Next to it, lies Sebastian's DAMAGED BAT DETECTOR.

Sebastian comes in, fingers spear's STUCK BACTERIA INJECTOR.

SEBASTIAN

My efforts hurt most when my machinery
hasn't worked right. It's a sign: I have
to eliminate the mechanical end to the
solution. It's interfering.

As he moves off, Erica picks up the DETECTOR, looks it over.

Sebastian grab his WAR OF THE WORLDS BOOK on nearby shelf.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 (displaying book)
 The bacteria's still the best way to kill
 the bats. We just have to get rid of my
 complicated launchers and spears... and
 go right to the source.

WARBURTON
 What are you getting at?

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

THE TIME CHAMBER grows majestically as we APPROACH it.

SEBASTIAN
 We'll still be saved by the littlest
 things that 'God's put upon this earth' -
 we'll just have to do God one better--
 (points to chamber)
 --and turn the little things into big
things.

ERICA
 You wanna evolve the bacteria into its
 future form..?

SEBASTIAN
 Think about it: its whole purpose is
 breaching a living system, automatically
 targeting the most vulnerable areas, and
 then working them until the system's
 completely destroyed. So an evolved super
 strain would be better at doing all those
 things by nature! We wouldn't have to
 worry about any man-made screw-ups then:
 just leave the job to the bacteria
 itself!

WARBURTON
 You wanna create more future critters to
 deal with, is that what you're saying?!

SEBASTIAN
 It's what I'm insisting.

Warburton looks to Erica.

ERICA
 And what I'm agreeing with.

WARBURTON
 And once they've hopefully killed off the
 bats, just what do we do about them?

SEBASTIAN
 You wanted to bomb stuff! If we trap the
 bats, the bacteria will be trapped by
 default, and then you can satisfy your
 urge.

ERICA
After we've gotten out of here.

WARBURTON
 OK - where and how do we trap every
 thing?

At the CONTROL CONSOLE, Sebastian brings up a BASE MAP.

View settles on A CAVERNOUS ROOM that VARIOUS TUNNELS radiate out from, serving as the base's main hub.

SEBASTIAN
 (pointing to room image)
 The main hall's plenty big enough to accommodate our guests. Nice amenities too:
 (points to spots on map)
 Sealable entrances and--
 (traces route with finger)
 --an air vent leading directly to this room.

He looks up, points to a GRILL in the CEILING above CHAMBER.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 We'll just pump the bacteria out of the chamber and into that vent. It'll travel through and come out right in the main hall--

ERICA
 And right on top of those damn Night Stalkers!

SEBASTIAN
 And then you'll see some welcome extinction!

WARBURTON
 (points to chamber)
 And to get the germs from there--
 (points to grill)
 --to there - and keep 'em contained?

Sebastian looks around - spots several METAL SHAFTS extending FROM CHAMBER to a WALL; points at them.

SEBASTIAN
 These pumps normally drain water from the chamber. We can fit one shaft over the vent and seal it good. Close the others off completely.

WARBURTON
 While you're on a role: how do we lure the bats into the main hall?

SEBASTIAN
 Way ahead of you--

Sebastian steps before a COMPUTER CAMERA, taps keys.

A WALL SCREEN near the console: as SEBASTIAN'S FACE fills it. Sebastian points to the camera - HIS IMAGE points back.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Video intercom system. They want us? We'll broadcast our images from corridor to corridor and make the Night Stalkers come.

WARBURTON
 Well, now that we've solved every problem but the one first proposed, we can come full circle: how do we rescue the hostages?

SEBASTIAN
Gentle negotiations?

Erica fiddles with detector she's brought along, turns knob.

The DETECTOR SQUEALS - everybody COVERS their EARS.
Erica makes it stop, looks at them triumphantly.

ERICA
I wouldn't completely turn your back on your mechanics just yet. You think that squeal hurt you? Well, it hurt the Night Stalker even more back in the cave. That's because, when your detector got damaged it turned into a mechanical version of a tiger moth's defense system. When the moth detects a bat in pursuit, it uses an organ to make ultrasonic sounds which scares the bat away. So, we'll just build a jumbo version we can use to cripple the Night Stalkers with--

SEBASTIAN
--Giving us time to get the hostages away from them!

WARBURTON
OK, so lemme review the plan in its correct order: we use your pretty faces as cheese for the maze, lure the bats into the main hall, spring this frequency deal on 'em, grab the hostages while they're having hearing problems, trap 'em, then release the monster germs which'll melt the bats, and let us fly off into the man-made sunset of a full bomber's payload?

This is the plan. Beat. Warburton's AIDE leans in.

NEW AIDE
Sir, we've only got 3 hours before they come knocking...

WARBURTON
Well, we're doomed to failure, but it'll sure be spectacular.

SEBASTIAN
(big)
Oh yeah!

SEQUENCE OF BATTLE PREPARATIONS : OUTSIDE MAIN HALL

At OPPOSITE END of the HALL ENTRANCE, a GIANT FREQUENCY MAKER - like a high-tech satellite dish - is placed up on the wall.

We FOLLOW a TECHNICIAN holding a THICK CABLE plugged into the gizmo down ANOTHER CORRIDOR that leads to

MAIN GENERATOR ROOM

which technician enters, stops before the MAIN GENERATOR.
He PATCHES the CABLE into a RECEPTACLE.

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR

SEBASTIAN
(into walkie-talkie)
Commence test.

MAIN HALL

A cavernous room. The base's main hub. Several entrances radiate out from it to other parts of the base.

We RISE PAST SOLDIERS putting up FLAT WALL SCREENS toward:

MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER

Perched high above, a HUGE WINDOW looking onto the floor.

Monitors with COMPUTER-CAMS. Technicians.

TECHNICIAN
(into headset, to
Sebastian)
Roger that. Testing in One, Two...

He presses a button--

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR

The FREQUENCY MAKER SQUEALS LOUDLY. People COVER THEIR EARS.

MAIN HALL

SQUEALS STAB all the way into this space. Soldiers stop to COVER THEIR EARS also.

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR

SEBASTIAN
(into walkie)
Cut it! Cut it!

FREQUENCY MAKER DIES. Sebastian looks at techs sheepishly.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Successful test.
(beat)
Now let's get the scary part out of the way.

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

All the TIME CHAMBER'S PUMP SHAFTS are SEALED save for--
ONE SHAFT techs POSITION OVER the CEILING GRILL, AFFIX IT--
LATER

Sebastian, Erica, and techs watch from control console as:

A SOLDIER brings a BIOHAZARD CONTAINER up to the chamber - places it AGAINST an OPENING in its side.

A WHOOSH as container's sucked in. SECOND WHOOSH & BEEP as--

ON COMPUTER MONITOR: SMALL RED DOTS APPEAR and FLOAT AROUND in a 3D DISPLAY of the TIME CHAMBER'S INTERIOR.

A MESSAGE FLASHES: EVOLUTION SUBJECT ACQUIRED.

TECHNICIAN
(to Sebastian)
Ready to evolve pathogen, Doctor.

Sebastian nods. His hand hovers shakily over the LEVER.

SEBASTIAN
(beat)
I can't do it - I can't let it get worse...

ERICA
Don't worry. We'll stop this.

He looks into her eyes.

SEBASTIAN
Ok - but I'm gonna hold you to that.

Erica reaches over, lays her hand on Sebastian's and together-
They ease the lever up and the loud hum sounds

THROUGH CHAMBER WINDOW

They see familiar FLASH. SMOKE BILLOWS.

NUMEROUS DARK BLOBS seemingly SPROUT from the chamber walls like horrid GROWTHS - SMOKE BLOCKS THEM FROM VIEW.

In a second, the procedure's over. Silence.

The humans wait for the smoke to clear. It doesn't.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
I don't think we'll see anything unless we go over there...

ERICA
(beat)
Damn it.

They both walk up to the GLASS. Still nothing.

ERICA (cont'd)
Maybe you should put your hand on the glass...

Sebastian looks at her strangely, lifts his hand when--

A SLUG-LIKE HORROR BLASTS FROM THE SMOKE, STRIKES THE GLASS--
--BREAKS THROUGH IT PARTWAY--

Sebastian grabs A POLE, JABS IT INTO the AMOEBA CREATURE, shoves it back through the glass--

--A DRIPPING SPIKE JUTS FROM AMOEBA'S UNDERBELLY, tries to SPEAR anything it can find--

Sebastian turns back to the techs, SCREAMS:

SEBASTIAN
THROW THE VIEW SHIELD!

A METAL SHEET SLIDES UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF VIEWPORT'S GLASS--

Sebastian fights to keep the AMOEBA in the chamber, SEES it--

--a GIANT SLUG, slimy; translucent; ringed by short, quivering FEELERS; two long, thin TENTACLES LASH OUT from its HEAD; STEAMING FLUID drips from its SPIKE-PROBOSCIS ONTO Sebastian's POLE--

--EATING IT like ACID until it's ALMOST GONE when--

The metal SLIDES HOME - completely COVERING VIEWPORT'S GLASS.

Sebastian and Erica PANT HEAVILY as they stare at chamber.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Did you see that thing?!

ERICA
I saw that proboscis...

SEBASTIAN
(looking at dissolved pole)
Something tells me it'll do.

SUDDENLY - a DENT APPEARS IN THE METAL, startles them!

Then - NUMEROUS DENTS spread rapidly.

Sebastian and Erica hurry back to the control console.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Jesus, how many did we end up with?

TECHNICIAN
Looks like about, oh, a MILLION...

On monitor: COUNTLESS RED CHUNKS SUFFOCATE the chamber image.

ERICA
At least they'll match the bats in number...

A KLAXON BLARES.

TECHNICIAN
Our guests have arrived.

SEBASTIAN
Then let's start the finish.

SEQUENCE ENDS

EXT. MAIN GATE - BASE - DAY

The Night Stalker caravan stops before the imposing entrance.

The MALE takes point, throws its head back. Shrieks.

In response, the main gate SLIDES OPEN with a WHIRR.

The Male scans the interior, not sure where to go when--

A WHISTLE SOUNDS.

The Male whips to look at:

A MODULE AWAYS AHEAD

where Sebastian and Erica step out of A DOORWAY.

SEBASTIAN

HEY, UGLIES!

The MALE SHRIEKS - and ALL THE NIGHT STALKERS charge at them.

The scientists TURN AND HAUL ASS into the base.

Moments later, the bats reach module, follow them inside.

We glimpse THE HOSTAGES amid the SWARM - RUNNING to avoid being trampled, swept along in a monstrous, living river.

INT. BASE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Wall-to-wall Night Stalkers.

They stop when they get to A FORK into SEPARATE CORRIDORS.

The Male surveys both directions.

Visible at the end of one is a VIDEO INTERCOM WALL SCREEN.

The Male takes a couple steps in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION when--

Sebastian and Erica's IMAGES APPEAR in the wall screen.

SEBASTIAN'S IMAGE

Yoo-hoo!

The Night Stalkers see this, shriek and head for the images.

SERIES OF SHOTS - VARIOUS CORRIDORS

As Nights Stalkers weave through base corridors--

Chase the SCIENTISTS' IMAGES on WALL SCREENS throughout.

SEBASTIAN'S IMAGE (cont'd)

Getting warmer!

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

CLOSE ON: a COMPUTERIZED BASE MAP shows bats nearing hall.

Sebastian and Erica stand before a COMPUTER-CAM, sending their image through the base.

SEBASTIAN

Damnit, I've run out of taunts.

ERICA

Sebastian, who cares?

Sebastian looks sore. Smiles conspiratorially.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

As Night Stalkers turn a corner, they arrive at another wall screen where they find themselves face to face with image of:

SEBASTIAN GIVING ERICA BUNNY EARS WITH HIS FINGERS.

They continue on, come upon the next wall screen to find:

Sebastian now giving Erica DEVIL HORNS.

They continue on--

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

As Sebastian makes a new gesture, he brushes Erica's hair--
She turns, sees him screwing with her and PUSHES HIM HARD.

ERICA
Damnit, Sebastian!

Sebastian loses his footing, falls and--
RIPS some WIRES from the console causing--

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR FORK - DAY

The image in the next wall screen the bats reach to DIE_____.

They stop - see they've reached ANOTHER FORK.
Look in both directions. Stymied about what to do.

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Erica rushes to the control console.

ERICA
Ohshit! The video feed!

Sebastian gets up, rushes after her.

SEBASTIAN
Get it back online!

They both crouch, grab wires, scramble to re-connect them.

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR FORK - DAY

Night Stalkers herd in the direction opposite wall screen--

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Sebastian strains to connect final wire--

SEBASTIAN
I can't reach it!

Erica crouches beside him, reaches--
Grabs the wire from his hand - strains harder and--

INT. SECOND CORRIDOR FORK - DAY

Just as the Night Stalkers move into the wrong corridor:

Sebastian and Erica's relieved faces fill the wall screen_____.

SEBASTIAN'S IMAGE
Haven't lost interest in us, right?

The Male turns, sees Sebastian and SHRIEKS LONG. It charges
through its fellow bats after the image. The rest follow.

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

ON MONITOR: The bats reach the corridor outside main hall.

SEBASTIAN
(into mic)
They're here. Is your team ready?

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MAIN HALL - DAY

Bats gather across from hall entrance - fortify guard on hostages, SPLIT THEM UP into TWO GROUPS - FRONT and CENTER.

REVEAL HIDDEN PASSAGE in ONE WALL where:

A TEAM OF SOLDIERS HIDES, armed, ready to burst out...

WARBURTON
(into headset)
Whenever you are.

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

SEBASTIAN
Then standby - here goes.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MAIN HALL - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

The bats VOCALIZE at EACH OTHER. Planning? Then - a WHIRR.
They turn to see:

The hall entrance door SLIDE OPEN, revealing:
Sebastian and Erica standing there, scared stiff.

A bat/human standoff then - the Night Stalkers CHARGE--

SEBASTIAN
(into headset)
Now!

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

Techs THROW A SWITCH and--

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR,

THE GIANT FREQUENCY MAKER SQUEALS and--

The Night Stalkers go CRAZY.

The ones guarding the CENTER HOSTAGES RETREAT from THEM--

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(to Warburton)
Now, Warburton! Now!

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR,

WARBURTON'S TEAM BURSTS from its HIDING PLACE, SURROUNDS the center hostages as the BATS WRITHE AROUND THEM.

The bats at the FRONT writhe LESS SO, taking the pain.

They growl in fury at the others' failed efforts. TIGHTEN THE CIRCLE AROUND THE FRONT HOSTAGES, won't let them be rescued!

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
Damn it!
(to techs)
Turn up the frequency!

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

The Techs comply and--

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR,

FREQUENCY RISES PAINFULLY, causes EVERYONE - PEOPLE
(hostages, troops, Sebastian and Erica) AND NIGHT STALKERS -
to DROP AND WRITHE--

The hall becomes a hideous carpet of TWITCHING BEINGS!

A TWITCHING NIGHT STALKER looks up and sees:

TWITCHING NIGHT STALKER POV

Beyond a FRESH WALL PARTITION: a STRONGLY THROBBING SHAPE.
PULSING, STROBING - like a neon insect lamp.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(writhing also, to techs)
Turn it down!

A moment later, the FREQUENCY DROPS - TOO MUCH--

The Night Stalkers REGAIN THEIR COMPOSURE as--

Warburton hauls himself up quick, stands his ground--

WARBURTON
(re: hostages, to troops)
Get 'em outta here!

Troops hurriedly usher center hostages toward secret passage--

The Twitching Night Stalker SCRABBLES UP and CHARGES THROUGH
THE PARTITION it was looking at, revealing:

The corridor heading toward the main generator room.

MAIN GENERATOR ROOM,

Twitchy Night Stalker bursts in and finds what it was seeing:
The GENERATOR - which IT DESTROYS in a WHIRL OF VIOLENCE--

CUTTING THE POWER TO THE FREQUENCY MAKER, SHUTTING IT DOWN.

IN MAIN HALL CORRIDOR,

The AIR IS SILENT.

The Night Stalkers, fully recovered now, spot:

WARBURTON'S TEAM IN THEIR MIDST - with THEIR HOSTAGES!

The BATS SNARL - RUSH THE TROOPS!

Half stand and FIGHT THE BATS, half rush hostages to PASSAGE--

Troops GO DOWN but--

Warburton gets hostages into passage safely, shuts PANEL on
SNAPPING JAWS OF A STRIKING NIGHT STALKER!

The bats SCREECH IN ANGER at this blow, re-group and see:

Sebastian and Erica lying on the floor by the hall entrance.

The Night Stalkers ROAR FURIOUSLY and RUSH FOR IT--

IN MAIN HALL,

Sebastian scrambles to ENTRANCE KEY PAD, HITS A BUTTON as:
The bats REACH the entrance - DOORS SLIDING SHUT ON THEM and:
The SCREAMING FACES OF THE REMAINING FRONT HOSTAGE GROUP--

FRONT HOSTAGES
PLEASE GOD SAVE US--

They disappear from view behind THICK GRAY METAL...

Sebastian and Erica lay panting heavily.

IN SECRET PASSAGE,

Warburton leans against a wall, catching his breath.
Troops comfort hostages behind him. Everyone beat to shit.

WARBURTON
What the hell do we do now, Sebastian?!

IN MAIN HALL,

Sebastian looks down at the floor - spots THIN OPENINGS in
the METAL, BLACKNESS BEYOND. Smiles.

SEBASTIAN
I've got an idea!

MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Sebastian and Erica rush in as Timelab Tech REPORTS:

TIMELAB TECH
Dr. Sayre! We've got problems!

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

Every tech is fixated on the metal keeping amoebas in chamber
- SAVAGE BLOWS from within warping it.

TIMELAB TECH
These damn things want out!

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

SEBASTIAN
Don't worry - we're about to grant their
wish.

Sebastian looks at monitor showing main hall corridor:

ON MONITOR: Night Stalkers ram into the sealed door
repeatedly, can't get in, look around - find security camera.

They growl and then - SNAP strategically at front hostages.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
(to Warburton)
The bats are getting snippy with the
hostages, guys.

INT. ACCESS ROUTE UNDERNEATH FLOOR - DAY

Warburton and his troops rush down a NARROW PASSAGEWAY.
THIN LIGHT STREAMS stab down from OPENINGS above their heads.

WARBURTON
We're almost there.

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

ON MONITOR: When bats snip this time - they DRAW BLOOD.

SEBASTIAN
Damn it, we can't wait. I'm letting 'em
in, sealing 'em up.

WARBURTON
Go ahead - I'll squawk when we're inside.

SEBASTIAN
Yes - NO! No squawking - they'll hear
you. Signal me silently.

WARBURTON
How?!

SEBASTIAN
I don't know - dazzle me.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MAIN HALL - DAY

Night Stalkers about to hurt hostage when - door slides open.

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

Night stalkers move in. We see command center window is
COVERED. WALL SCREENS EVERYWHERE.

As Night Stalkers move in, SEBASTIAN'S VOICE FILLS HALL.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)
Ladies and gentlemen: you will be rescued
shortly. Please hold hands and move to
the center of the hall near that large
grid in the floor.

As hostages enter amid bats, they look down to see a HUGE
OCTAGON-SHAPED ACCESS PANEL in the floor several feet away.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
A rescue team is on its way and will
evacuate you through that access panel.
They'll use smoke as cover so don't let
go of each other. And try not to give
them away. Please bear with us... Thank
you.

The hostages hold hands - INCH toward the ACCESS PANEL.

The last Night Stalker files in and--

The door SLIDES SHUT. Night Stalkers spot this, SHRIEK, pace--

Sebastian scans the main hall closely.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
C'mon Warburton, c'mon Warburton...

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

FLOOR ACCESS PANEL

From between the GRID SLATS, A SILENCER BARREL INCHES OUT--

INT. ACCESS ROUTE UNDERNEATH MAIN HALL - DAY

Warburton's team has arrived at the grid.
He aims a SILENCER GUN into the room. Pulls the trigger--

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

ERICA

Look!

Sebastian locks on:

A WALL SCREEN ACROSS THE WAY - getting RIDDLED with BULLETS.
Sebastian smiles, lunges at a SWITCH - HITS IT and--

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

Every screen in room fills with SEBASTIAN AND ERICA'S IMAGE!
The bats freak - ABANDON HOSTAGES, ATTACK EVERY IMAGE--

As they do - SHATTER SCREENS - we rise to one, close on it,
TRAVEL THROUGH IT, turn to face bats and realize we're in:

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Looking out the glass of the viewport! The humans are in
plain sight!

As Erica sees a bat shatter a screen near theirs:

ERICA

I like this idea less now.

SEBASTIAN

(re: hostages)

You'll like it more in a minute - watch!

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

WITH HOSTAGES as they look at

THE FLOOR GRID NEAR THEM

as it SLOWLY RISES UP - EYES VISIBLE.

MULTIPLE GUN BARRELS POKE OUT OF THE HOLE and - FIRE AT ONCE--
POOF! POOF! POOF! POOF!

METAL CANNISTERS STRIKE floor around the hostages, CRACK OPEN
- SQUIRT CLOUDS OF SMOKE, FILL THE ROOM!

All the bats are temporarily focused on the screens as--

Warburton's team BURSTS from the floor grid--

Half RING hostages in a defense pattern, while half lead them
DOWN into the access route as smoke obscures them from view!

Several bats finally notice the BILLOWING SMOKE, turn, see a
LARGE CLOUD where the hostages were, SHRIEK, HEAD for it--

IN SMOKE, visibility worsens as hostages are ushered into
floor, COUGHING.

LAST HOSTAGE, JOHN - CHOKING - LETS GO of woman's hand he's holding, puts it to his mouth. Then - he gets separated.

Just before the woman steps into the opening, she realizes John's gone, STOPS, grabs a troop.

WOMAN
Where's John?!

Warburton turns back to the smoke--

John looks around anxiously, unable to see anything.

JOHN
Help!

Warburton and two troops venture into the smoke--

As John pirouettes, looking for people, he spots THEIR SHAPES coming at him, heads toward them, reaches them--

Runs SMACK INTO A NIGHT STALKER, which rears to strike when--

ITS HEAD'S BLOWN OFF by Warburton, who grabs John and hauls him back toward the grid, troops covering them--

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

Another FORCEFUL BLOW almost takes chamber's metal shield off. The amoebas are coming out - like it or not.

All the TECHS crowd at the lab entrance, aching to bail. The LAST TECH still at the console screams into a microphone:

LAST TECH
They're breaking out!

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

SEBASTIAN
(to last tech)
Hold on!

IN MAIN HALL,

As people go, more bats LUNGE OUT of the GLOOM, SNAP AT THEM--

The troops narrowly avoid them, reach the grid, usher John inside, then scramble into it themselves.

Warburton makes sure all his boys get in, turns to the last one and sees:

A NIGHT STALKER CUT HIM OFF before he gets to the grid, leap onto him, and start eating.

Warburton hurries into the hole as another bat SNAPS AT HIS FACE - yanks GRID DOWN with both hands, sealing the opening.

ALL THE BATS CROWD OVER the floor grid, SHRIEKING IN FURY.

They REACH BETWEEN its SLATS, try to pull vent open again as--

ACCESS ROUTE UNDERNEATH MAIN HALL,

Warburton and troops try to hold it shut - break out WELDING TORCHES, FLARE THEM, SEAL GRID'S EDGES!

WARBURTON
 (to Sebastian)
 THE HELL ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

SEBASTIAN
 (to last tech)
 OK - pump the amoebas in!

IN TIMELAB,

The last tech SMASHES a BUTTON and--

PUMPS WHIR. Techs watch the PUMP SHAFT going from chamber's
 TOP INTO THE CEILING VENT SHIVER as AMOEBAS SHOOT through it--

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

Scientists' ears perk as a strange BANGING fills the room.
 They look to the VENT high on the wall where the sounds from.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 Here they come.

IN MAIN HALL,

The Night Stalkers strain to lift the grid together--

ACCESS ROUTE,

Prevent ITS EDGE from getting sealed as they tug on it--
 Soldiers strain to shut it when--
 The bats let go and the GRID SLAMS INTO PLACE--

Soldiers' torch beams MEET - the grid is SEALED!

WARBURTON
 Go, go!

The troops and hostages rush off down the tunnel.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 (into radio)
 Sanders, come in. We're en route with
 hostages. Prepare for immediate evac.

EXT. BASE HELIPAD - DAY

A HUGE TRANSPORT CHOPPER waits to take survivors to safety.

CHOPPER PILOT
 Roger that. We'll be ready for ya.

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

THE BANGING FROM THE VENTS ECHOES IN THE CAVERNOUS SPACE.

Bats STARE up at the CEILING as--
 The banging reaches a LOUD CLIMAX then - STOPS.

The Night Stalkers keep staring. For a moment, all is quiet.

Suddenly - AMOEBAS BURST OUT OF THE VENT IN THE CEILING
 DIRECTLY OVER THE BATS - RAIN DOWN IN A HORRIFIC SHOWER!

The amoebas SWARM the bats like giant flying leeches!

Their dagger-proboscis PIERCE HIDE, PUMP ACIDIC ENZYME which--
 --DISSOLVES THE BATS FROM INSIDE-OUT - their melting organs
 and bones pour out of their eyes and mouths like perverted
 tears; hissing steam from their dissolving bodies billows.

Horrific, high pitched bat shrieks of pain choke the room.

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

SEBASTIAN
 (into radio)
 It's working!

ACCESS ROUTE,

WARBURTON
 Good. As soon as it's done, get to the
 chopper.
 (different frequency)
 Tango 1, as soon as we're all out of
 here, you're go to commence strafing run.

INT. TANGO ONE FIGHTER JET - IN FLIGHT ABOVE BASE - DAY

TANGO ONE PILOT
 Roger, Warmonger One.

INT. MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Erica and Sebastian marvel at the whizzing amoebas.

ERICA
 Jesus! They shouldn't be able to fly!

SEBASTIAN
 The unexplored evolution of a genetically
 engineered life-form...

INT. TIMELAB - DAY

Techs spot the sides of PUMP SHAFT STEAMING and CORRODING.
 An AMOEBAS PROBOSCIS STABS through ever-more buttery metal!

LAST TECH
 Get to the main hall!

They all rush out without looking back into

THE HALL

Last tech brings up rear. STOPS halfway, turns to look at--
 THE RED DOOR LOCK he forgot to throw.

He looks after his retreating colleagues, back at the lock.

Beat. HE CHARGES BACK TO TIMELAB'S ENTRANCE, reaches it--
 Glances into the lab and spots--

The PUMP SHAFT SPLIT OPEN and AMOEBAS FLY OUT AND ZIP TOWARD
 HIM LIKE KILLER DANDELION FLUFF!

Tech reaches to push the BIG BUTTON when--

AN AMOEBAS SKEWERS HIS HAND WITH ITS PROBOSCIS, CORROSIVE
 ENZYME DISSOLVING IT IN SECONDS!

Tech's scream is cut short as SECOND AMOEBA SKEWERS HIS HEAD--
The REST FLY PAST - toward the MAIN HALL...

IN MAIN HALL COMMAND CENTER,

Sebastian and Erica watch the bats dissolve.

Melting body STEAM mixes with gas cannister smoke - creates impenetrable cloud which eventually OBSCURES VIEW COMPLETELY.

The scientists inch toward GLASS to get a final look when--

MALE NIGHT STALKER BURSTS THROUGH THE SMOKE, slams against it - amoeba stuck to its face, dissolving it!

Sebastian and Erica jump back--

Male desperately tries shaking amoeba off, fails, gurgles in agony - then SLIDES back down into the smoke...

SEBASTIAN

Ohshit!

SEBASTIAN'S POV

Of AMOEBAS slithering along the floor toward:

The GRID HOSTAGES ESCAPED THROUGH - squirting ACID-ENZYME OVER IT, DISSOLVING THE METAL and--

--disappearing under the floor, into the base --!

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)

(into radio)

Warburton! The amoebas found your escape route! They've gotten out of the main hall!

ACCESS ROUTE,

WARBURTON

(into radio)

Damn! Then get to the helipad in a hurry! We gotta get outta here so they can bomb the base!

IN COMMAND CENTER,

SEBASTIAN

Let's go!

INT. BASE CORRIDOR - DAY

As Sebastian and Erica turn a corner, they run smack into:

TIMELAB TECHS, panting heavily.

SEBASTIAN

We gotta get outta here!

(beat)

Where's Lederer?

A WIRY TECH turns to look in the direction they came from.

WIRY TECH

He was right behind us--

WHAM! AN AMOEBA TAKES HIS HEAD OFF - he crumples to floor!
 The other AMOEBAS FROM THE LAB spill into view, after humans.
 As they run for it, the techs lag behind - AMOEBAS TAKE THEM
 DOWN ONE BY ONE.

As amoebas GAIN ON SEBASTIAN AND ERICA, Sebastian grabs her,
 pushes her through a DOOR into--

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - DAY

Where he careens in after her, SLAMS door on STRIKING AMOEBA!
 The DOOR BUCKLES from amoeba barrage, but HOLDS - for now...

ERICA
 Great - we're trapped!

ACCESS ROUTE,

Warburton et al reach BASE EXTERIOR ACCESS VENT in tunnel
 ceiling. As they usher hostages UP into it, RADIO CRACKLES.

SEBASTIAN
 (filtered)
 We have a little problem. The amoebas
 have us trapped - in a closet.

WARBURTON
 Can't you get through them?

SEBASTIAN AND ERICA

look around the confined space for weapons.
 Best choice is between a MOP and a BROOM.

SEBASTIAN
 We seem to be pressed for weapons.

WARBURTON

is at a loss.

WARBURTON
 Well... what should we do, Sebastian?
 Tell us what to do.

SEBASTIAN AND ERICA

Look at each other pointedly, then at the
 CLOSET DOOR - BUCKLING SEVERELY from great amoeba stress...
 Beat. Erica gives Sebastian a half-smile. He returns it.

SEBASTIAN
 Get the hostages out.
 (beat)
 Make sure none of those amoebas get off
 this base...

WARBURTON

Stares at the radio for a pregnant second. Then - action:

WARBURTON
 Affirmative!
 (to Aide, re: hostages)
 Get them to the chopper - and wait.
 Sebastian, where are you?

SEBASTIAN
 C-Wing.

WARBURTON
 Well, sit tight. We're coming after ya!

SEBASTIAN
 looks unconvinced - especially since the door is CREAKING.

SEBASTIAN
 No rush...

WARBURTON
 turns to a few NERVOUS TROOPS.

WARBURTON
 C'mon.
 They follow him as Aide ushers last hostage up vent in b.g.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 Tango 1, standby until I clear the bomb
 run. I repeat, standby.

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - DAY

Sebastian and Erica nonchalantly plant themselves in a
 corner. Conversation punctuated by frequent DOOR BANGS.

ERICA
 So, what are you gonna invent next?

SEBASTIAN
 I'm having trouble coming up with ideas.
 You should help me out.

ERICA
 Ok.

SEBASTIAN
 (with a smile)
 Automatic...

ERICA
 (with glee)
 Butt!

SEBASTIAN
 Fluorescent ...

ERICA
 Booger!

They both laugh their asses off.

SEBASTIAN
 You know that Simpsons too.

ERICA
 God - I love that show...

SEBASTIAN
Well, how about a portable...
satellite... TV so you could watch it
wherever: in the bush, the frontier, the
fiord...

ERICA
Eh - we'll just get a motor home with a
dish...

Sebastian smiles quietly at her. His face trembles slightly.

UNANIMOUS BLOWS TO THE DOOR MAKE THEM TURN THEIR HEADS.

SEBASTIAN
Man, I wish Julian were here...

BANG. They curl up in each other's arms.

ERICA
Me too...

BANG. SQUEEEAAAK. The door's almost off its hinges.
The amoebas are coming in.

They look back into each other's eyes. Their last time?

SEBASTIAN
That book was the best present I ever
got.

ERICA
You're welcome.

AN AMOEBAL PROBOSCIS PIERCES THROUGH THE DOOR - DRIBBLES
CORROSIVE ENZYME onto the floor. It HISSES.

SEBASTIAN
OK - being defeatist isn't working.

ERICA
(agreed)
Let's get out of here instead!

They erupt to life - scramble through the closet's contents.

They spot: a big BOTTLE OF HYDROGEN PEROXIDE.
An INSECT SPRAY GUN.

EXT. BASE HELIPAD - DAY

The NEW AIDE reaches the CHOPPER, hostages in tow.

CHOPPER PILOT
(handing aid headset)
Call for you, sir: Pendleton.

NEW AIDE
(grabbing headset)
Go ahead, Mr. Pendleton.

INT. WASHINGTON PARTY - DAY

NSA HEAD PENDLETON stands outside the entrance to a HUGE BALL
ROOM - a high profile political party going on behind him.

An AIDE stands next to him, holding a SUITCASE with a RED
PHONE set in it. Pendleton whispers into it angrily.

PENDLETON
 What the hell's going on over there?
 Why haven't you taken out the target?

NEW AIDE
 We're holding until--

PENDLETON
 Damn it - I'm getting heat from the
 President to nip this in the bud. He
 doesn't want anymore of those creatures
 getting loose! Level that base, Major!

NEW AIDE
 Sir, the general and the scientists are
 still inside--

PENDLETON
 Acceptable losses. We'll name a school
 after them.

NEW AIDE
 Sir, I--

PENDLETON
 Here's the deal, Major: if your bomber
 won't follow orders, I'll send another
 one who will! Out.

EXT. BASE HELIPAD - DAY

Pendleton SIGNS OFF. The Aide curses - grabs his hip radio.

NEW AIDE
 (to Warburton)
 General, come in!
 (no answer)
 General!
 (nothing)
 Shit!

EXT. NEVADA BASE - RUNWAY - DAY

A grim fighter pilot, HARGIS, straps himself into a JET SEAT.

MOMENTS LATER, his FIGHTER JET is OFF and FLYING - for UTAH.
 Its bottom pregnant with MISSILES.

INT. JANITOR'S CLOSET - DAY

Erica brandishes the SPRAY GUN, Sebastian hefts the BROOM.

ERICA
 (re: spray gun)
 Think this stuff'll do anything?

SEBASTIAN
 You kidding?
 (kicks now-empty bottle)
 This bottle's been here since World War
 II! Bet your sweet ass on it!

They face the door, brace to burst from the closet.

SEBASTIAN (cont'd)
 (into radio)
 Warburton!
 (no answer, to Erica)
 (MORE)

SEBASTIAN(cont'd)

We'll get outta here, meet 'em halfway.
You ready?

ERICA

Nope.

SEBASTIAN

Good, me neither: here goes!

Sebastian KICKS THE DOOR OPEN--

AMOEBAS SWARM--

Erica FIRES a THICK BLAST OF FLUID from the SPRAY GUN which--
HITS THE NEAREST AMOEBAS HEAD ON, SHRIVELS THEM IN MID-AIR!
They WITHER to CRUSTY HUSKS in seconds, fall - DEAD.

Erica fires another blast at the swarm - it retreats some.

Sebastian SWATS BACK several cocky amoebas with HIS BROOM--

Together, the two burst from the closet into--

INT. BASE - VARIOUS CORRIDORS - DAY

They use temporary distance from amoebas to RUN LIKE HELL--

Amoebas GIVE CHASE - BUZZ AFTER THEM LIKE INSECTS.

The humans experience a few CLOSE CALLS as they run--

Amoebas almost get them -- Sebastian TRIPS, LOSES BROOM --
Erica yanks him away just as AMOEBAS DIVE BOMB -- They run on
-- Amoeba LATCHES ONTO SPRAY GUN, CORRODES IT, SHRIVELS --
They LOSE AMOEBAS AROUND A CORNER--

Sebastian and Erica scan their surroundings, catch their
breath - no sign of the amoebas...

SEBASTIAN

We're home free...

They turn to run - come face to face with:

~~THE MALE NIGHT STALKER, half its face grossly dissolved away~~!

It SHRIEKS and SNAPS AT THEM!
They barely avoid it, RUN AWAY - back toward the amoebas.

The Male chases them, snapping at their heels--

The humans desperately try to find the exact spot they lost
the amoebas at - turn corners sharply, pick halls quick, run--

The Male gains and finally--

TRAPS SEBASTIAN AND ERICA IN A DEAD END.

The Male slowly approaches them, REARS to strike--
Sebastian and Erica notice STEAM RISING from FLOOR where:

AMOEBAS BURST FROM ANOTHER ACCESS VENT, CLOUD THE BAT!

The Male runs off, SHRIEKING - the amoebas chase after it,
miraculously spare the humans, who waste no time and RUN OFF--

--RUNNING SMACK INTO WARBURTON AND HIS TEAM.

WARBURTON
Jesus!

SEBASTIAN
Nope - we're still alive.

WARBURTON
And the germs?

ERICA
Alive and coming.

WARBURTON
Then we should be--

SEBASTIAN
--going. Yeah.

Warburton clicks his radio. Troops ring and guard them.

NEW AIDE
(filtered)
--General!

WARBURTON
Yes?!

NEW AIDE
(filtered)
Thank Christ! Pendleton's sending
another bomber to blow up the base.
He called you 'acceptable losses!'

WARBURTON
Sonuvabitch! What's the ETA?

NEW AIDE
15 minutes.

WARBURTON
We'll probably be there in 14!
(to others)
Let's go!

SUDDENLY - AN AMOEBA STREAKS TOWARD WARBURTON'S HEAD--

He DUCKS, NARROWLY AVOIDS IT--

Warburton spins after it, lifts his RIFLE, BLASTS IT APART!

The platoon spins in the direction it came from to find:

THE AMOEBA SWARM HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THEM.

TWO TROOPS take point before the others - HUGE TANKS on their
backs, BIG NOZZLES in their hands: FLAMETHROWERS.

The troops PISS FIRE at the oncoming germ creatures!
They GO UP LIKE MOTHS, MAKE WEIRD SCREECHING SOUNDS.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
(to everyone)
MOVE!

The group RACES OFF.

As the AMOEBAS FOLLOW, at intervals, the TROOPS PAUSE, WHEEL--

BLAST FIRE AT THE AMOEBAS - AMOEBAS BACK OFF - GROUP RUNS ON.

The GROUP CUTS THROUGH--

INT. LAB - DAY

As they go, Erica spots:

The "War of the Worlds" book on a shelf.
She discreetly GRABS IT, STUFFS it in HER SHIRT.

INT. BASE - HELIPAD EXIT CORRIDOR - DAY

The group turns a corner, spots:

THE DOORS TO THE BASE HELIPAD AT THE END OF THE HALL!

WARBURTON

Go! Go!

They race for the EXIT, REACH IT, BLAST THROUGH to--

EXT. BASE HELIPAD - DAY

The outside. Across the way sits the WAITING CHOPPER.

WARBURTON

Let's go.

Sebastian turns back to the doors to see:

THE AMOEBA SWARM INCHES FROM REACHING THE EXIT!

Sebastian SLAMS the doors on them - they BUCKLE.

Everyone turns to stare at the commotion.

SEBASTIAN

Help me secure the door! We can't let the
amoebas get into the open!

Some troops PRESS AGAINST the BULGING DOOR.
Others scramble to find something to bar it with - until--

AN APPROACHING ROAR BUILDS.

Warburton turns and spots:

The SECOND BOMBER, approaching like a death messenger...

WARBURTON

Aw hell...

The others spot it also, REACT with impotent terror--

The jet SWOOPS IN LOW, its MISSILE SHAFTS OPEN - all looks
lost when suddenly--

--TANGO ONE STREAKS PAST UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE to it, BUZZING--

SECOND BOMBER, who WOBBLER - fights to re-gain control.

IN SECOND BOMBER,

SECOND BOMBER PILOT

(to Tango One)

What the hell are you doing?!
Are you crazy?!

IN TANGO ONE,

TANGO ONE PILOT
 (to Second bomber)
 Hargis! They would send an asshole like
 you!

SECOND BOMBER PILOT
 Back off! I've got a job to do!

Hargis comes around for a second pass when--
 --Tango One gives him another AERIAL SHAVE!

TANGO ONE PILOT
So do I!

AT THE EXIT,

The group sees the dogfight of diversion.

Warburton LAUGHS ALOUD.

WARBURTON
 God bless you, Jervis!
 (then, he BEAMS)
 I got it!

He grabs a FLAMETHROWER SOLDIER, spins him around, yanks his
 FLAMETHROWER PACK OFF--

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 (to others)
 Help me wedge it against the door!

Troops gather and, as one, RAM the PACK against it, WEDGE the
 TANKS between the NARROW CONCRETE WALLS SURROUNDING the EXIT.
 This temporary barricade JITTERS - but HOLDS. Secure enough.

WARBURTON (cont'd)
 Now c'mon!

The group abandons the exit, RACES across the tarmac toward--

The TRANSPORT CHOPPER - troops beckoning them furiously--

AT THE EXIT,

In no time, the BARRICADE BREAKS - DOOR BURSTS OPEN and--

--THE AMOEBAS EMERGE LIKE A SWARM OF GIANT FLIES!

The two JET PILOTS see this cloud of horrors and:

TANGO ONE PILOT/SECOND PILOT
 Holy shit!

Second pilot flies lower to bomb the cloud when--

Tango One flies BELOW IT and NUDGES IT UP and OUT OF THE WAY!

TANGO ONE PILOT
 Not yet!

WHAM! AN AMOEBA STRIKES HIS WINDOW - CRACKS IT SEVERELY -
 SMEARS LIKE A MONSTER BUG!

TANGO ONE PILOT (cont'd)
 (under his breath)
 Hurry the hell up, General...

Warburton and the rest reach the chopper, LEAP ABOARD--

IN TANGO ONE,

TANGO ONE PILOT
 (to second bomber)
 OK - bombs away, jerkoff!

BOTH BOMBERS COME AROUND for THE DEATH PASS--

INT. TRANSPORT CHOPPER - DAY

The CHOPPER LIFTS OFF, TAKES TO THE AIR as--

EXT. BASE - DAY

The JETS SIMULTANEOUSLY RAIN MISSILES ON THE BASE!

They HIT, EXPLODE. WAVES OF FIRE VAPORIZE THE BUZZING AMOEBAS INSTANTLY!

Some try to ZIP AWAY in DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS - to no avail. They are FOUND BY FIRE and PERISHED FURIOUSLY!

INT. TRANSPORT CHOPPER - DAY

The humans watch FLAMES EAT THE AMOEBAS out the open door. They relax, sigh. It's over. Then--

HUGE CLAWS BURST THROUGH the FLOOR, RAKE TRAILS IN IT, then OPEN IT SAVAGELY, LIKE A TIN CAN!

The people FREAK as--

THE MALE NIGHT STALKER RAMS ITS SCARRED HEAD INTO THE CRAFT!

Sebastian locks eyes with it--

It SHRIEKS, pushes FURTHER INSIDE--

Sebastian scrambles amid CHAOS, searches, FINDS:

A FLARE GUN - which he TURNS on the MALE and AIMS STEADILY.

The MALE SEES the GUN BETWEEN ITS EYES. ITS GRIN VANISHES.

SEBASTIAN SMILES, and with no small amount of balls, says:

SEBASTIAN
Get outta my time, you damn ugly bat!

He FIRES - BLOWS THE NIGHT STALKER OUT OF THE CHOPPER!
 Sends it DOWN INTO THE BILLOWING FLAMES - where it's SWALLOWED UP, SNUFFED FOREVER!

Sebastian and Erica EMBRACE. Now it's over.

EXT. DESERT SURROUNDING BASE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

REPORTERS and HUNDREDS OF CITIZENS GATHER behind MILITARY BLOCKADES, SOLDIERS holding them back.

The CHOPPER TOUCHES DOWN.

HOSTAGES FLOOD OUT - rush to blockades, forcefully reunite with relatives - HUG, KISS, CRY.

A weathered Sebastian and Erica limp out, holding each other.

As they near the crowd, they are greeted by CHEERS.

They only pay attention a second, then turn to each other.

ERICA

You forgot something.

She pulls out the "War of the Worlds" book.

Hands it to Sebastian, who looks at it and then back at her.

SEBASTIAN

Never. Not once.

They share quiet smiles.

Suddenly - REPORTERS SWARM THEM, shove MICS in their faces.

REPORTER

Doctors, doctors! Is the threat finally over?

Still looking at Sebastian:

ERICA

The near future's still ours.
Let's be smart about it.

Sebastian gives the look back full bore.

SEBASTIAN

Let's not.

He grabs Erica, takes her in his arms and KISSES HER GOOD.

WIDE

On the CHEERING group of humans, the base EXPLODING, b.g.

TILT UP as the two bombers STREAK PAST OVERHEAD with a ROAR - like angels on the shoulders of the human race.

FADE OUT.

THE END