

INVASION OF THE FIFTH DIMENSION

Written by

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EXT. LAKE SHORE - DAY

ANGLE in the POV of a cellphone camera held by TODD (24).

NED (fat, 30's) is standing in water up to his waist, attached by ropes to a contraption behind him that resembles a parasail, which is attached to a motorboat containing Todd and another friend CLETUS. It is hot and the three LAUGH a lot, having recently imbibed a substantial amount of alcohol. Occasionally, Todd whips the phone around to show US Cletus and unrelated things.

NED

Okay Cletus, move forward slow to take the slack out. Then, floor it. But wait 'til I tell you.

CLETUS

You tell me what?

NED

To floor it. Todd, you ready with the camera?

TODD

Yeah.

NED

Okay.

He checks the rigging one last time.

NED (cont'd)

Go ahead slow!

Cletus moves the boat forward. He shakes his head, can't believe what he's doing. The line tightens.

NED (cont'd)

Stop!

Ned checks everything one last time, and then gets in position.

NED (cont'd)

Okay. Floor it!

Cletus gives the boat full throttle. Ned jerks forward and noses into the water a few times. As the speed increases, the chute opens and he begins to rise. They WHOOP it up. Faster.

The chute and rigging look dangerous and half-ass, but they slowly lift Ned out of the water. He HOWLS and CHEERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He is flying - not high, 30 or 40 feet - and Todd catches every moment of glory on the cellphone.

The boat nears the shore on the other side of the cove.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH PARK - DAY

ANGLE ANOTHER CELLPHONE CAMERA held by a drunk man at a beach party. Fifteen people are eating and drinking, watching Ned's antics. Like Todd, the drunk whips the camera around to show US things or when he forgets he is holding it.

He focuses on various sun-burned party-goers, who WHOOP, LAUGH and make faces. Then, he moves in on a young guy sitting by himself at a picnic table, NELSON PAXELL (20). Nelson does not appear drunk, sun-burned or particularly interested in the people or party.

DRUNK

Hey Nelson, can you film this thing?

NELSON

I guess.

Nelson takes the cellphone from the drunk. The image wobbles, as Nelson checks it over.

NELSON (cont'd)

So it's on now?

DRUNK

Yeah.

NELSON

Okay.

DRUNK

Thanks.

The image straightens out and WE SEE the drunk walk back to the center of the party.

Nelson ZOOMS IN on Ned, as he approaches.

Ned clicks some switches on a harness. Two rockets that are rigged to the chute ignite with a LOUD THUMP and ROAR. Flames, gas, and sparks shoot out of them. The ROAR increases to a maximum intensity, and then NED releases the rope from the boat. The crowd CHEERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cameras stay with NED, as he shoots ahead. Somehow, the rockets work. They propel Ned like a 300 pound soap-on-a-rope across the beach toward the road. Unfortunately, Ned has forgotten to include a way to properly control the apparatus.

The rockets meander violently, carrying him over a few trees, then quickly down into a few more. The crowd reacts accordingly, as Ned is dragged along, crashing and bouncing through the foliage.

Almost out of camera range now, the rockets lift and drop, slamming Ned against a light pole, then a power pole. The rigging becomes snarled in power lines, sending up huge sparks and claps of THUNDER. The mood of the crowd quickly changes to panic.

The rockets finally break free and fly off in two directions, and Ned falls 100 or more feet, with ropes and rigging trailing behind him.

The crowd SCREAMS and runs toward the road. Nelson places the cellphone on a picnic table, so WE can see the panicking crowd. Then, he walks after them with his hands in his pockets.

EXT. BEACH HIGHWAY - DAY

ANGLE LOW (No longer the CELLPHONE ANGLE), as Ned and the rigging hit and bounce on the busy four-lane highway.

INT. RON'S SUV - DAY

RON PULLMAN is driving along in his oversized SUV, talking on a cellphone, fumbling with the music system. WE can't make out what he's saying over the SCREAMING STEREO.

EXT. BEACH HIGHWAY - DAY

As Ron's car approaches the unconscious or dead lump that is Ned at high speed.

INT. RON'S SUV - DAY

Ron drops his phone, as the SUV's spongy suspension glides easily over O.S. Ned with only a few minor bumps. The brief inconvenience, however, is not enough to distract Ron from his conversation. He fishes around on the floor and finds the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE SIDE VIEW, as a car pulls up alongside Ron and matches his speed. The couple in the car are pointing frantically, trying to get Ron's attention. The driver BLASTS his horn repeatedly, but the sound is barely audible.

Finally, Ron turns his head to the side and sees the couple pointing. He checks the rearview mirror.

ANGLE RON'S POV IN THE MIRROR. The bloody hunk of meat that was Ned is attached to Ron's bumper by a rope, and is bouncing and dragging behind the SUV, leaving a skid mark of red that extends for half a mile.

RESUME RON as he SLAMS on the brakes.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

ANGLE ON a computer screen, as someone surfs a porn Web site cluttered with sleazy flashing ads.

ANGLE ON the user, a large man, drooling over the images. A small fiery dot appears in the window behind him and grows rapidly. The man closes his eyes in ecstasy.

The flaming disk fills the small window, as the ROAR of the rocket increases. Then, In an instant, the sputtering, sparking rocket CRASHES through the window and EXPLODES in a ball of flames.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY

As a scrawny seven-year-old batter waits for a pitch. The ball dribbles in slowly, bounces off home plate, misses the diminutive catcher, flies up and hits the backstop.

UMPIRE

Stee!

ANGRY MAN (O.S.)

That's bullshit!

After a long wait, another pitch enters, sailing over the batter's head.

UMPIRE

Stee!

ANGLE FROM SIDE. The ANGRY MAN is visible in the bleachers, drinking a beer. He wears a skimpy tank-top stretched over a hairy, well-fed body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGRY MAN

No way was that a strike! That ball was over his fucking head! It was a mile over his head! Get some fucking glasses!

The umpire blows his whistle to stop play, and points at the angry man.

UMPIRE

Keep it up asshole and I'll forfeit the game.

The angry man hops down from the bleachers and SHOUTS through the chain-link backstop.

ANGRY MAN

You can't fuckin' do that!

UMPIRE

Try to stop me!

ANGRY MAN

I'll fuckin' stop you! Come here!

UMPIRE

Sit down and shut your fucking face, so we can get on with the game.

ANGRY MAN

I'll sit down when your ass is out of here!

UMPIRE

That ain't going to happen, pal. So sit the fuck down and shut up!

ANGRY MAN

You want to come over here and make me?

UMPIRE

I don't have to.

In an instant, the second rocket flies in out of nowhere and augers into the ground in front of the angry man. On impact, the scene erupts in flames, blowing the angry man back into the bleachers.

Flaming debris flies out and ignites people and everything within 30 feet. Kids and parents panic and SCREAM, run in all directions, every man for himself.

EXT. BEACH HIGHWAY - LATER

The accident scene is a gridlock of slow, smoking cars filled with fidgety kids and inebriated adults. Passengers gawk as they drive slowly by Ron's car, two police cruisers, at least one ambulance, and a throng of grossed-out onlookers, who can't get enough of the grizzly scene.

ANGLE BY RON'S CAR, as an officer approaches Ron, who is still talking on his cell phone.

RON
(To phone)
I'll call you back, okay?

OFFICER
Mr. Pullman?

RON
(To phone)
I... I can't talk anymore. I...
everything is okay. Yes, I'll call
you back.

OFFICER
Mr. Pullman, can we talk?

Ron holds up his index finger.

RON
(To phone)
Listen, I can't talk now. Trust me.
Trust... The man. I don't know. I
didn't even see him. He just came
out of nowhere. Yes. I have to go.

OFFICER
Mr. Pullman, please.

RON
(To phone)
He was tied. Yes. A rope was tied
to him and it got caught in the
bumper. I don't know. I'll call you
later.

INT. BLACK SUV STUCK IN TRAFFIC

As the driver waits impatiently in the heat with six hyper kids. He POUNDS the wheel angrily, HONKS the horn. He looks out the side window.

ANGLE HIS POV an empty, two-way, left-turn lane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RESUME the driver, as he cranks the wheel left, and slams down on the gas. The overweight SUV lurches into the turning lane and flies past several cars.

ANGLE DRIVER'S POV through the windshield, as a green SUV with the same idea, pulls out recklessly in front of our car. The driver SLAMS on the brakes. The tires SCREECH, the rear end breaks away, and WE SLAM into the green SUV, shoving it forward into another car.

RESUME DRIVER as he gets out of his car.

EXT. BEACH HIGHWAY BY GREEN SUV

As the driver approaches the other driver, SHOUTING angrily.

DRIVER 1

Son of a bitch. I hope you know you pulled right out in front of me.

DRIVER 2

This is a left-turn lane, dude. You're not supposed to be doing 50 in it.

DRIVER 1

And I suppose you were turning left. Into what?

DRIVER 2

That doesn't matter.

DRIVER 1

You can't fuckin' make up your own rules.

DRIVER 2

And you were turning left?

DRIVER 1

I was already in the lane and you pulled out in front of me!

DRIVER 2

This is a left-turn lane.

Driver 1 shoves Driver 2.

DRIVER 1

Fuck off, asshole.

Driver 2 shoves him back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WE PULL BACK, as the shoving proceeds, to reveal others getting out of their cars and approaching them. Oncoming traffic slows to get a better view.

In a matter of seconds, traffic is ground to a halt. A hundred cars and ambulances are packed in tightly. No one is moving, the temperature is rising, and tempers are flaring.

ANGLE HIGH ABOVE. WE see the whole picture and the red trail that started it all.

EXT. BEACH HIGHWAY PARTY CROWD

The party-goers are sober now, as police interview a small group. WE MOVE THROUGH the crowd. At the edge of the group, WE SPOT Nelson, leaning against a tree, alone, observing the event dispassionately.

INT. BIG OPINION SET - DAY

As RUSTY KANNON, host of this daily conservative, cable news talk show finishes grilling a liberal guest, JAMES FAVA. As is the case with most of Rusty's liberal guests, he is a wimpy, prissy intellectual with thick glasses.

FAVA

The best way we have right now to save what's left of the native salmon population is to enforce the legislation we already have and the current-

RUSTY

I don't see the problem. We have cans for saving salmon. You can save salmon for years in cans. What's the problem?

FAVA

(Doesn't know how to react)

We. I. The current administration seems bent on eliminating endangered salmon and is unwilling to even listen-

RUSTY

The point I'm trying to make is, you know what the problem is? You don't listen-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FAVA

We do listen, but-

RUSTY

You don't listen to reason. There's no middle road with you. Your only solution for saving salmon is-

FAVA

As I explained earlier, we have many compromise proposals and-

RUSTY

Your only solution is more laws and more regulations that strangle the livelihood out of the local farmers-

FAVA

That's not true-

RUSTY

Put farmers and an entire agricultural industry out of business. Your problem is you are only focused on saving salmon and you're killing the farmers-

FAVA

I don't see how-

RUSTY

We all want to save salmon, but we need balance. Balance. I don't think you know what that is.

FAVA

As I have said over and over-

RUSTY

(To Camera)

We have to take a break. When we return, I'll have some final comments on this whole saving salmon issue. Stay tuned.

ANGLE TV as WE CUT WIDE on the set and the theme MUSIC SWELLS.

ANGLE on the set, as WE SEE what goes on during the break. Fava angrily rips his microphone off, as Rusty nonchalantly stands and grabs a cellphone handed to him by an assistant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FAVA

I don't see what the point is of
having guests on your show, if you
don't let them talk!

RUSTY

I did let you talk.

FAVA

Bullshit.

RUSTY

Thank you for coming on the show.
I'm sorry things didn't work out.
What more can I do?

FAVA

You can let me talk!

RUSTY

Sorry, Mr. Fava. I didn't hear
anything I haven't heard a million
times before.

FAVA

Why? I...

RUSTY

Excuse me, I have a call.

Fava storms off. Rusty pretends to take a call.

RUSTY (cont'd)

Yes. Yes. I agree. Yes.

As soon as Rusty sees that Fava is clear, he hands the cell
phone back to the assistant.

RUSTY (cont'd)

You got a haircut.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

Yeah.

He steps off the set and walks away from her to the studio
door.

RUSTY

Looks better than that fright wig
you were wearing before. Jesus.
(To the floor director)
How much time I got?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLOOR DIRECTOR
Back in seven.

INT. HALL BY STUDIO

As Rusty walks a few doors down to his dressing room. A messenger approaches him.

MESSENGER
Mr. Kannon.

RUSTY
Yeah.

MESSENGER
There's a Gil Perdue here to see you.

RUSTY
Who?

MESSENGER
He said to tell you it's about the delivery and you'd know what that meant.

RUSTY
(Not overly pleased)
Delivery? I don't... Oh yeah. All right, send him back.

Rusty enters...

INT. DRESSING ROOM

The room is more like a second office. He has turned the make-up counter into a desk. Papers, tapes, and promo crap are stacked everywhere and hanging on the walls. The only light is a cheap spring desk light. He picks up the phone and dials.

RUSTY
(On phone, almost tenderly)
Hi. How did it go?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JUDY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

As two small, noisy kids run in circles around JUDY, who is holding the phone trying to serve dinner with no help. The kitchen is part of a small, low-rent apartment. Everything is old and rundown, about to fall apart, including Judy.

JUDY
(On phone)
Not good.

RUSTY
Ah shit.

JUDY
How much time you got?

RUSTY
A minute.

JUDY
Well, that's it then.

RUSTY
What is? What did the tests show?

JUDY
You know what they show.

RUSTY
Tell me.

JUDY
It's the bad kind.

RUSTY
Jesus. So, what's the bottom line?

JUDY
The "bottom line" is I'm going to die in two or three months.

RUSTY
Ah jeez.

She breaks down, can't hold the spatula anymore, has to sit. She is weak, sick, the tears flow.

RUSTY (cont'd)
Judy. Judy. Please take the Goddamn money.

JUDY
No. It's too late anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

It's not. Please. The kids. Your husband.

JUDY

I have to make dinner.

Rusty doesn't know what to say.

JUDY (cont'd)

Thanks for the call.

She hangs up. The CLICK is like a bullet in the head. He sets the phone down, stands, checks himself in the mirror and opens the door.

Standing outside, facing Rusty with a large grin is Gil, holding up a shiny new set of car keys.

GIL

Mr. Kannon. Got something for you.

RUSTY

Thanks.

Rusty grabs the keys and walks away abruptly from Gil back to the studio.

INT. NELSON'S KITCHEN - MORNING

ANGLE ON NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: "President Carr Talks War."

WE PULL BACK to reveal BELLA reading the paper and eating diet cereal at the kitchen table. She is Nelson's heavily tanned and processed, 40-something mother.

Nelson enters without acknowledging her, checks the cookie jar (empty), and opens the fridge. He stares into it a long time, hoping something new and wonderful will magically appear. He closes it and pours a cup of black coffee.

Without looking up from the paper...

BELLA

You gotta eat something.

Her voice is husky and thrashed from years of alcohol and cigarettes. They've had this conversation many times.

NELSON

Mom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLA
Eat something.

NELSON
I'm not hungry.

BELLA
You will be.

NELSON
Then, I'll eat something.

He sips his coffee at the sink.

BELLA
Whatever.

CARLOS enters, HUMMING, wearing nothing but skimpy orange bikini underwear. Carlos is shorter than Nelson and looks younger. He's black and very proud of his best feature, which is prominently outlined by the underwear. Nelson can't look at him. As usual, Carlos is extraverted, annoyingly cheerful, and always running his hands over his body.

Nelson recoils as Carlos pats him on the back.

CARLOS
Hey Nelson, how are you this morning?

NELSON
Fine.

Carlos walks behind Bella and rubs her saggy boobs. Then, he plants a wet kiss on her cheek. She doesn't react. Nelson is grossed out.

BELLA
Are you going to look for a job today?

CARLOS
I just gave you a kiss, woman, and already you're starting with me.

BELLA
Just asking, Carlos, just asking.
Jesus.

Carlos checks out the cookie jar and then the fridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARLOS

What am I supposed to do? Do you want me to go looking for a job like this?

He gives his bulge a squeeze.

BELLA

(No life)

I suppose not.

CARLOS

Can I take a leak first? Huh?

BELLA

Right.

CARLOS

Can I put on some fucking pants first? I walk into a bank like this, and they'll call the fucking cops.

BELLA

Carlos, it doesn't matter if you're fucking dressed or not. You're still unemployed and you're still doing nothing about it.

CARLOS

Ain't my fault. We've been all through that.

BELLA

Sometime today, it would be cute if you did put on your pants and just took a look around.

Nelson has had enough. He dumps the rest of the coffee in the sink and leaves out the back door.

BELLA (cont'd)

I don't know where you think the money is coming from to pay for the power and the rent and the gas for that fucked up piece of shit car of yours, and all the other shit we have to fucking pay for...

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

The Nerve Center is a dingy, urban joint. Nelson is running the espresso machine, serving a long line snaking out the door. He works quickly, pulling three shots at a time.

A skinny, Goth girl, DEIRDRE GLASS, shuffles up to the counter.

DEIRDRE
(Lifeless, whiny)
Hi.

NELSON
Hi.

She sits, slumped over, assuming her usual life-sux pose. Nelson sets two drinks on the pickup counter.

NELSON (cont'd)
(Announcing)
Double non-fat venti. Raspberry
mocha.

Two people pick up their drinks and leave fat tips.

DEIRDRE
We gotta talk.

NELSON
Okay.

DEIRDRE
I mean like, we gotta talk.

NELSON
Triple tall cappuccino.
(To Deirdre)
Okay.

DEIRDRE
When do you get off?

NELSON
Six.
(Announcing)
Extra hot Americano with room.

DEIRDRE
Fuck it.

She turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Hey, wait.

She turns back.

NELSON (cont'd)

What's going on?

DEIRDRE

What's going on is, it ain't working out.

NELSON

Uh, quad venti.

(To Deirdre)

What do you mean?

DEIRDRE

Nah, fuck it. We can't talk here.

Starts to leave again.

NELSON

Hey, wait.

He sets a drink on the counter for her. She stops and stares at it.

DEIRDRE

I don't know.

NELSON

What?

DEIRDRE

You're working here and I'm over there and we're not like connecting.

NELSON

I thought we were.

A customer approaches Nelson.

CUSTOMER

You gave me foam.

NELSON

Pardon me?

CUSTOMER

Foam. I told her to hold the foam.

Grabbing the cup...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Sorry.
(To Deirdre)
Explain not connecting.

DEIRDRE

Like now.

NELSON

You mean, I don't know what you're talking about?

DEIRDRE

I know that's what you think.

NELSON

What?

DEIRDRE

See, there's no depth.

NELSON

No depth?
(Announcing)
Latte no foam.
(To Deirdre)
What?

CUSTOMER

Excuse me, this doesn't look like a frap.

NELSON

Pardon me?

DEIRDRE

I'll talk to you later... maybe.

She starts to walk away.

NELSON

Wait, Deirdre.

CUSTOMER

Frap? I ordered a frap.

NELSON

We don't make fraps. Excuse me.

He runs around the counter after Deirdre.

NELSON (cont'd)

Deirdre, don't leave me hanging. I thought we were okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE
Yeah, we were okay.

NELSON
Then, what's not connecting?

DEIRDRE
We've like grown apart and that makes me very sad.

NELSON
Don't be sad. Don't be sad.
(Smiling)
We can grow back together.

DEIRDRE
You don't get it.

NELSON
Can you throw me a bone here?

DEIRDRE
You get angry. Like now.

NELSON
I'm not angry. I'm trying to understand.

DEIRDRE
Okay. Connecting means you DO understand.

NELSON
Okay, okay, I see. I DO understand. I do. We DO connect. I've been distracted lately. But we're connected. We are.

DEIRDRE
You're not taking this seriously.

NELSON
I am.

DEIRDRE
I'll talk to you later.

NELSON
Tell me we're okay. I hate it when we're not okay.

DEIRDRE
Whatever. We're okay. Bye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She shuffles off, leaving Nelson extremely confused and upset. He turns around.

ANGLE HIS POV, the work has backed up and halted, everyone is waiting, staring at him.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE TIGHT on President PHIL CARR, as he thinks hard. It is suddenly very QUIET.

CARR

(Prophetically)

Peace. The battle is all about peace. Peace for everyone. Everyone in the world. Peace and, umm, liberty, freedom. Peace and freedom. No, shit, not that. Peace and the ability to choose... choosing for all people everywhere. We'll call it, umm. We'll call it...

WE PULL BACK to reveal Carr sitting at the oval office desk, facing three advisors: BOB BANISTER, ART GOOBER, and Herb Glont.

BANISTER

Operation...

CARR

Operation... Uh, Peace for the world, the world's people, everywhere. Peace everywhere. Peace world. Operation: peace world.

GOOBER

World peace?

CARR

Operation: world peace. Peace for everyone. There you go.

He turns to the advisors.

BANISTER

Is that really the message we want to convey?

CARR

(Frustrated)

I don't know. You tell me, Bob.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANISTER

Well, no.

GOOBER

Mr. President. The polls.

CARR

Fuck the polls.

GOOBER

I know. But perhaps we should
downplay the whole "world" angle.

BANISTER

You know. World domination is a
problem issue now.

CARR

Hmm. I like "peace" though.

BANISTER

Right. Peace is good.

GOOBER

How about something like peace and
diligence, destiny, like peace is
inevitable.

CARR

(Standing)

All right. Let's encapsulize this.
Here's what we're doing.

He paces around the room.

CARR (cont'd)

We're going to enforce peace, give
people everywhere their freedom,
and make sure all those evil empire
nations are all aligned with us and
reading off the same page of the
prayer book. And once we got
everyone all aligned and speaking
the same language, then we will
have lasting peace and freedom for
all people, but not "peace and
freedom." How do you boil all that
down to a nice, two-word sentence
that makes all the pollsters happy?

BANISTER

Yes, that's the challenge.

Carr sits back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR
 (Returning to his
 thoughtful mode)
 Operation. Peace, peaceful,
 peaceful... destiny. Operation:
 peaceful destiny. That's it.

Banister and Goober trade a quick, exasperated glance.

GOOBER
 Good. Why don't I set up a focus
 group and...

BANISTER
 Perhaps we could also have the
 writers brainstorm a few more
 ideas. They could put together a
 list.

CARR
 Peaceful destiny. I think that's
 it. That's the one.

BANISTER
 Okay, so you don't...

CARR
 Fine. Have the agency put together
 a list.

The advisors stand.

BANISTER
 Thank you, Mr. President.

As the advisors file out, WE MOVE IN to Carr, eyes to the
 ceiling, rolling the words around in his head.

CARR
 Peaceful destiny. Operation:
 peaceful destiny. Our destiny as a
 nation, our destiny as a world
 leader. The world's destiny... the
 destiny... of the world.

ANGLE ON Banister, as he catches a glimpse of this behavior,
 then turns and leaves.

INT. BAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Rusty is seated alone at the end of the bar, sucking on a
 Scotch neat, watching the TV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE TV playing Rusty's taped salmon commentary.

RUSTY (ON TV)

I have nothing against saving salmon. Some of my best recipes are salmon. Seriously though, my beef is not with the salmon, it's with the environmentalists who are incapable of seeing both sides of the issue. The liberals talk big about compromising and reaching consensus, until it affects them and their issues.

RESUME RUSTY, as he downs the last ounce in his glass.

INT. BAR RESTROOM - DAY

As Rusty stands at a urinal. An old dude enters and squeezes around Rusty heading for the stall. Then, he stops and does a double-take as he recognizes Rusty.

OLD DUDE

Hey, you're Rusty Kannon. I love your show, man.

RUSTY

Thanks.

OLD DUDE

Wow, never thought I'd run into Rusty Kannon in a place like this.

RUSTY

Likewise.

OLD DUDE

Hey, loved that, what was that, last week you had that guy on, that liberal guy, you know. Oh, what was his name now? Gosh. He was all uppity about that thing them guys were voting on. You know. Man. You tore him a new asshole. It was fuckin' awesome.

Rusty just smiles.

OLD DUDE (cont'd)

Anyway, nice to meet you. Keep up the good work. God bless you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Thanks.

The old dude goes into the stall and starts fussing with the toilet seat papers. Rusty flushes, zips, and goes to the sink.

OLD DUDE (O.S.)

Hey, how about them liberals, huh?
They don't stand a chance with you.
Not a chance. I don't know why they
even try.

Rusty washes his hands, checks himself in the mirror, flattens what little hair he has to work with. Then, he notices a DVD jewel case stuck behind the faucet and picks it up.

OLD DUDE (O.S.) (cont'd)

A couple of weeks ago you had that
Senator woman on. You know, what's
her name. Man, you tore her a new
asshole, huh? She was something.
Environment this and women's lib
that.

ANGLE RUSTY'S POV the case with the text: "Message from the Fifth Dimension." He opens it.

OLD DUDE (O.S.) (cont'd)

She was talking to the wrong man.
She didn't know what hit her. I'd
almost feel sorry for her if she
wasn't such a Goddamn, libber
bitch, if you'll pardon the French.
Damn.

EXT. BUS STOP - LATE AFTERNOON

As Nelson stands, waiting for a bus, upwind from the man on the bench.

The man's eyes open and stare. He looks like he is about to explode, and then stands and attempts to urinate in the street.

A bus pulls up and Nelson boards.

INT. BUS - LATE AFTERNOON

As Nelson walks down the aisle and takes a seat. He picks up some trash on the seat and dumps it on the floor, exposing a DVD jewel case. He picks it up and reads the cover.

ANGLE HIS POV COVER: "Message from the Fifth Dimension."

INT. NELSON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

As the back door opens and Nelson enters. Bella and Carlos are seated at the table finishing a bucket of ribs. They don't notice Nelson.

BELLA

You don't see any problem with keeping your cell phone, even though the phone for the house is shut off?

CARLOS

Hell, no.

BELLA

Incredible. Why?

CARLOS

I don't need no reason. It's my fucking cell phone. I got my business I gotta take care of.

Nelson grabs a rib and a soda from the fridge without stopping on his way to the hall.

BELLA

Your business. That's a joke.

CARLOS

My business is my fucking business.

BELLA

Yes, and while we're on that subject, I thought I told you to tell your fucking business associates to stay away from the house. Herpy or Homey or Himey or Whoopy or whatever his name is came by this afternoon.

CARLOS

Why didn't you wake me up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLA

What did I just say? I don't want them here.

CARLOS

What did you do?

BELLA

I told him to fucking leave and not come back.

INT. NELSON'S ROOM

As he enters. We hear something CRASH in the kitchen. Nelson quickly closes the door.

He turns on his TV. Then, he opens the jewel case from the fifth dimension and inserts the DVD in a player. His cell phone RINGS.

NELSON

Hi.

DEIRDRE (V.O.)

(Down as usual)

Hi.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. 24HR COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Deirdre is seated by herself in a booth, surrounded by empty booths.

DEIRDRE

What's up?

NELSON

Just got home.

DEIRDRE

Listen about today...

Nelson removes everything but his boxers and a tee-shirt, and paces. He watches with interest as weird colors, shapes, and patterns play on the TV screen, with occasional POPS and SPACEY digital sounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

I have needs and it just seems like you're doing okay, but I'm not getting anything out of our relationship. It's all about you.

Nelson has heard it many times before.

NELSON

I'm sorry. How can I change?

DEIRDRE

You can't change. You are the way you are, and I am the way I am. I need someone who's going to be there for me.

NELSON

I thought I was.

DEIRDRE

You are and you aren't.

NELSON

What?

DEIRDRE

Like now.

NELSON

I'm there for you.

DEIRDRE

You're there and I'm here.

NELSON

I can come over.

DEIRDRE

You don't understand. I need someone who does.

NELSON

I'm trying.

DEIRDRE

But you don't get it. We don't connect.

NELSON

Did we ever connect?

DEIRDRE

In the beginning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON
What changed?

DEIRDRE
I don't know.

NELSON
Then, what?

DEIRDRE
I guess I was just expecting more.

NELSON
So, we stopped connecting because I didn't live up to your expectations?

DEIRDRE
There you go twisting everything I say.

NELSON
I'm not twisting.

DEIRDRE
You always try to invalidate my feelings by twisting them into some logical construct.

NELSON
And you always try to invalidate my logical constructs with feelings. Can't we agree to disagree?

DEIRDRE
To a point. But... I can't deal with it anymore. I gotta go.

She hangs up.

ANGLE TV as Nelson starts the DVD. After a moment the funny patterns morph together into the shape of a person.

INT. ROY'S OFFICE

On the television, the person ROY THODE is sitting in a bland room, facing the camera, holding an odd, oversized remote control. Roy resembles Mr. Rogers with a large head and white skin. He looks and acts like a normal human being, but his image is rimmed with a yellow-green glow and when he turns his head, he sometimes appears two-dimensional.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When the image locks in, he speaks. The VOICE has a mechanical, digital edge to it.

ROY

(smiling)

Greetings. My name is Roy Thode. I'm a research scientist from a place called roughly Kdjjtchz. I made the DVD you're watching as an experiment to see if my new conversion device works. If you are watching this now and you can see and hear me, then that is proof the experiment was a success. So, thank you for helping me very much. I want to describe who I am and where I am, but I'm not sure how to do it in a way that you will understand.

The picture suddenly gets brighter and Roy reacts to something happening O.S.

ROY (cont'd)

Okay, also I see my time is up because the converter is overheating. So, quickly, let me just say that I live in another dimension that you cannot perceive - the fifth dimension - and the people in my dimension live actually next to and in the same physical space as you three-dimensional creatures, sorry people, and you're our slaves. Damn.

The image whites out and the DVD stops.

INT. JAPANESE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE TIGHT on a hand reaching in, opening and removing the DVD. WE PULL BACK to reveal a young Japanese man, as he removes the DVD and checks it over. Then, he carefully puts it back in the case. He appears dazed, at a loss for words.

CUT TO:

INT. SCANDANAVIAN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE TIGHT on a female hand removing the DVD. WE PULL BACK to reveal a middle-aged woman with the same perplexed look.

CUT TO:

MORE PEOPLE

Throughout the world, people are doing the same thing, after having viewed the DVD. There are probably thousands, millions more, and they all react the same way, as if something very powerful has happened that they don't know how to process.

INT. RUSTY'S DEN - NIGHT

As he checks it over, and then carefully puts it in the case and places it in a drawer.

INT. NELSON'S ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON TV as the DVD is ending.

ROY

...in the same physical space as you three-dimensional creatures, sorry people, and you're our slaves. Damn.

The screen goes black and turns to patterns.

ANGLE ON Deirdre and Nelson, staring.

DEIRDRE

It's got to be fake.

NELSON

Of course, it is.

DEIRDRE

If it isn't fake... fuck.

NELSON

Exactly.

INT. BOB BANISTER'S LIVING ROOM

The advisor to the President stands with the DVD and slowly returns it to the case. He turns and is surprised to see his wife GWENN standing across the room with her mouth agape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANISTER
You saw it?

GWENN
Yeah. What does it mean?

BANISTER
Beats me. Some kind of prank.

But no one reacts as if it's a prank.

INT. BANK 1 - DAY

ANGLE FROM A SURVEILLANCE CAMERA, as a stupid bank robber holds a gun on a teller. WE are watching a TV comedy reality show called "World's Stupidest Criminals." As the ANNOUNCER pokes fun at the criminals, a canned audience LAUGHS and APPLAUDS.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
What this guy doesn't know about robbing a bank could fill an encyclopedia. Rule 1, don't pull a heist alone.

The robber is tackled from behind by an overweight rent-a-cop. He drops his gun and they slide across the floor.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Rule 2, always watch your back.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK 2 - DAY

ANGLE ANOTHER SURVEILLANCE CAMERA, as five robbers point guns nervously in all directions.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
These robbers have the opposite problem.

One robber turns quickly and runs into another one, and they all fall like dominoes. The audience goes wild.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Rule 3, watch where you're going.

CUT TO:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

ANGLE SURVEILLANCE CAMERA, as a stupid robber holds a gun on the clerk.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This robber proves that no matter how well you plan a stick-up, you can end up shooting yourself in the foot - literally.

As the robber tries to grab the wad of cash, the gun goes off accidentally and shoots him in the foot. As he dances around in pain, trying to hold on to the cash...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...Or shooting yourself in the head.

The gun goes off again and blows the top of his head off. The brains and goo splatter, the audience goes wild again.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This robber comes with his own defense and prosecution.

He lies on the floor, twitches a few times and dies. The scene replays several more times in SLOW MOTION and the audience can't get enough.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. AUDITION HALL - DAY

Another reality show in which young people compete to be pop idols. The kid singing is butchering a song.

SINGER

You light up my life. You give me hope, to carry on-

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITION HALL - LATER

On one of three judges.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE 1

Your voice is horrible, you are repulsive to look at, you lack any sort of talent, and you probably have a really awful personality.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. NEWS STUDIO

A TV news magazine show, as a GENERAL is being interviewed.

GENERAL

-phase of operation: peaceful destiny is confining the terrorism and violence in these countries. And we do that by removing the evil regimes that foment unrest and restrict the freedom of its citizenry.

CUT TO:

EXT. MID-EAST BATTLEFIELD - DAY

As American troops in Hummers and tanks blast away at guerilla groups.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

In the second phase, order is brought to the country through a continued military presence.

GENERAL (V.O.)

Over time, the positive elements help build a new infrastructure and economy.

ANGLE NEWS CAMERA, as American businessmen shake hands with smiling locals.

GENERAL (V.O.)

And the negative elements are eliminated.

INT. NEWS STUDIO

On the General.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 General, who decides which elements
 are positive, and which are
 negative?

GENERAL
 We do.

EXT. MIDDLE EAST SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

A mass celebration takes place with happy locals dancing in
 the streets, waving American flags.

CUT TO:

INT. BIG OPINION SET

As Rusty grills another defenseless liberal.

PRIUS
 We need to protect those
 individuals - hard-working American
 citizens - who cannot afford
 healthcare.

RUSTY
 I don't understand. We have
 Medicare and Medicaid, and God
 knows how many other government
 giveaways for the homeless and the
 indigent or whatever they're called
 now-

PRIUS
 But what about those in the middle?

RUSTY
 This is the greatest country in the
 world. We have the best, most
 advanced healthcare system and
 facilities. People from-

PRIUS
 If you're rich-

RUSTY
 (Shouting over him)
 People from all those countries
 with socialized medicine rely on
 our free market system. Without a
 free market-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIUS
All I'm saying is-

RUSTY
Without a free market system, we
would not have the quality
healthcare that we take for
granted.

PRIUS
And everyone should have access to
it.

RUSTY
They do.

PRIUS
If they can afford it.

RUSTY
You can't have your cake and eat it
too. You either-

PRIUS
People are dying in this country-

RUSTY
Quality healthcare costs money.
Without free market healthcare, we
and the rest of the world would not-

PRIUS
What makes you say that?

RUSTY
Someone has to pay for it. You're
trying to tell me we would be
better off paying higher taxes and
putting the government in charge of
our healthcare?

Prius regroups.

PRIUS
Yes-

RUSTY
I don't think so.

INT. RITZY RESTAURANT LOBBY - DAY

As Rusty and lobbyist STEVE SHARP enter from the bar and head
toward the front door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARP

I got to hand it to you. It's not easy to make Joe Six-pack understand the finer points of the nation's healthcare system.

RUSTY

Thank you, Steve. I think most people come around eventually, if you're logical with them.

SHARP

Who are you kidding? People want something for nothing. It's human nature. People are idiots. Your gift is understanding how to mine the common man's boundless repository of defects. And that is a gift.

RUSTY

I suppose I have more faith in people than you do.

SHARP

Yeah well, faith is a good thing. Use it if it works for you. The way I look at it, if the voting public could really be trusted to make wise decisions, I'd be out of a job, huh?

Sharp winks, as he holds the door open for Rusty.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

As they leave the restaurant. Rusty hands his claim check to the valet at the curb.

SHARP

By the way, how is that car working out for you?

RUSTY

(Embarrassed)

Uh, it's fine. Thank you. But it wasn't necessary.

SHARP

Cost of doing business. I get paid to make sure the healthcare industry gets a fair shake.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARP (CONT'D)

Don't take it so seriously. They
can afford it.

Sharp gives Rusty a wink. Rusty doesn't know how to respond.

SHARP (cont'd)

In the long run, everyone benefits.
Right?

RUSTY

(Feeling used)
Right.

SHARP

You okay?

RUSTY

Yeah.

SHARP

Cool. Listen, I got to run. I have
another meeting inside. Enjoy the
day. Thanks again.

RUSTY

Yeah, thanks for lunch.

Sharp shakes Rusty's hand and heads back inside. Rusty turns to the curb, as his shiny new Caddy pulls up. The valet gets out and holds the door for him. Rusty just stares at it.

INT. DC DELI - DAY

ANGLE CLOSE on a napkin dispenser as a hand reaches in and lifts it, then lifts the sugar packet container.

WE PULL BACK to reveal Bob Banister checking around the top of the table. It is lunch and the deli is crowded and noisy. He checks under the table. A waiter appears.

WAITER

Have you had a chance to decide?

BANISTER

Yeah. I'll have a turkey with swiss
on marble rye - hold the mayo - and
coffee.

The waiter leaves and Banister rechecks the table. Something doesn't add up. He stands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WE FOLLOW HIM, as he walks around the deli, discretely checking other tables, occasionally getting a puzzled look from someone.

At one table, he runs into JIM, a business associate.

JIM
Hey, Bob.

BANISTER
Jim.

JIM
What's up?

BANISTER
Oh nothing. I, uh, left an umbrella here. Thought I might find it.

JIM
Hah, good luck.

He goes back to his table, feeling ridiculous. The waiter drops off his coffee and Bob reaches for the sugar packets. He notices something.

ANGLE HIS POV. Under the container is another jewel case.

RESUME BANISTER, as he checks around him for suspicious individuals. Then, he picks up the case. It looks the same as the other one.

He slips it into a wide pocket of his suit coat.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

ANGLE ON a clump of trash, as Nelson picks it up off the seat and tosses it to the floor. There it is, another DVD.

ANGLE ON Nelson, as he picks up the case and studies the cover.

INT. RUSTY'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rusty is sitting in his recliner in a cramped, messy room, finishing a frozen chimichanga. He sets the plate on a TV tray, and goes to the TV.

He picks up a DVD case, takes out the DVD and pops it into the player. The same weird colors and patterns appear. He goes back to the recliner, and stares at the screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE TV, as the screen slowly MORPHS into...

INT. ROY'S OFFICE

Roy sits, facing the CAMERA.

ROY

Hello, I'm Roy Thode. Thank you once again for helping me test my converter. I know you all have questions, and so I'll try to answer as many as I can. I believe I have repaired the problem with my converter, but it is still untested... actually this is the test. So, anywho... it appears that my last DVD, where it was a triumph for me, was off-putting to many viewers.

The CAMERA stays with him as he gets up and walks to his desk.

ROY (cont'd)

I apologize. I should've planned what I was going to say. So, to help with my presentation today, I am using a technology familiar to many of you called...

He clicks a button on a small remote.

ROY (cont'd)

PowerPoint.

A cheesy PowerPoint slide pops up on a screen behind him.

ROY (cont'd)

In the fifth dimension, of course, we do not require visual aids like this, so bear with me. First, am I telling lies?

On the screen, "Am I telling lies?" animates on.

ROY (cont'd)

The answer is...

He clicks the button, and "No" animates on. He seems fascinated by this primitive technology and uses it to excess throughout.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROY (cont'd)

Now, I know 3D creatures, sorry people, require proof because there is so much about their, your, world that is confusing and unknown. Unfortunately, I cannot show you what we perceive as 5D people because you would have to be one too. And I can't really perform any visual tricks, because the only way we can communicate to you is through your minds. What you call your unconscious mind is actually your portal into the fifth dimension. So, all I can do is plant a thought or emotion in your head, so to speak. I've already done that with these DVDs. That's why you found them, and are playing them now. Curious, I know.

He watches his animation of a cutaway of the human head, with arrows illustrating thoughts entering the unconscious, then changes the slide.

RON

So anyhow, I want to make one more point and then close the presentation for today. The point is about... control. In the first DVD, I mentioned that you're our slaves. Well, that upset several... thousand of you. And so I wanted to expand on that a bit. You see - I hope this comes out right - you see, we control you, so you will do our work for us. In exchange we give you a reason for living. The upshot of all this is that for thousands of years, 3D people have grown stronger, more industrious, and very creative, while we 5D people have become weaker, more inept, and kind of dull and boring. Many 5D people fear and envy 3D people for this reason. Our primary method of controlling you is to keep you in a constant state of fear and confusion. You can never get close to evolving your mind to a higher state, because we inject emotional suggestions in your mind that cause you to...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He clicks the remote each time to animate bullets on the screen.

ROY

Do stupid things; constantly quarrel amongst yourselves; compete compulsively; fear the unknown; drink alcohol; take drugs; and so forth. The truth is, you are perfectly capable of evolving your minds, even to the point of perceiving the fifth dimension, but of course we can't have that.

(Laughs)

For example, your war in the middle east will never end, because we caused you to create the war in order to confine your thoughts to worldly matters. You see? Without the war, you wouldn't be as productive for us and that would pose a threat to our survival.

Click: "In conclusion"

ROY (cont'd)

Anywho, I hope that clears up some of your questions. And I see my converter is beginning to overheat once again, so good-bye for now and thank you once again for taking part in this test. Oh, incidentally, I have also implanted the thought in your minds that you should not reveal this DVD to anyone outside your immediate circle of friends and family. Thanks and bye-bye.

His image morphs into shapes and the DVD ends.

EXT. NEWSPAPER STAND - DAY

As a vendor sells tabloids by the handful to a pushy crowd. Someone takes a paper and WE HOLD on the headline: "Invasion of the Fifth Dimension!"

ANGLE ANOTHER HEADLINE: "Human Race Controlled By Aliens."

PANIC MONTAGE

QUICK CUTS of sound bites from TV news stories.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BITE 1

I found it just sitting there on my desk at work.

BITE 2

It was in my inbox.

BITE 3

On the subway, both times.

BITE 4

The first time, I thought it was just dumb luck. But the second time it happened, that was a little creepy.

BITE 5

He said he used his power of suggestion to get us to look at it, and it worked. What's not to believe?

BITE 6

I really did feel an overwhelming, sort of, urge.

INT. NEWS STUDIO

A still of Roy is projected behind the news anchor.

NEWS ANCHOR

It is unknown exactly how many people received the DVD, but the number could be in the millions. Reports from countries around the world confirm the massive distribution. Giant DVD retailer Vidorama maintains that such a mass distribution would by all measures be next to impossible to pull off, even with existing commercial retail channels.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. NEWS STUDIO 2

NEWS ANCHOR 2

Federal authorities are asking anyone who has received a DVD to surrender it to the FBI for analysis. It is not clear at this time if there is any link to terrorist activities.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

EXT. LARGE OFFICE BLDG. - DAY

As a reporter faces the camera.

REPORTER 1

The Internet logjam caused by millions of people downloading the DVD has caused the network to slow to a crawl throughout the world.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. ROY THODE'S LIVING ROOM

A 3D person with the same name, as he is interviewed while sitting in his recliner holding a large mail bag.

REPORTER 2 (V.O.)

Roy Thode of Columbus, Ohio isn't so sure he likes all the attention.

3D ROY

I've got hundreds of letters asking about the fifth dimension. It was funny at first, but it's gotten a little old. I just have to wonder if that guy in the DVD isn't for real, because there really are a lot of stupid people out there.

EXT. VIDEO STORE - DAY

As mobs of sweaty, stupid people stand in hot lines buying DVDs and other Roy Thode items.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Nelson is pulling espressos, as Deirdre flies in, full of energy.

DEIRDRE
Have you seen this?

She holds up a tee-shirt with a photo of Roy Thode, and the slogan: "Won't you be my slave?".

NELSON
Yeah.

DEIRDRE
This is insane. They should not be doing this.

NELSON
People are blowing it.

DEIRDRE
We got to do something.

NELSON
What?

DEIRDRE
I don't know. Start a movement.

NELSON
Do you know how to start a movement?

DEIRDRE
No, but I'll bet there are others that feel the same way. Maybe we could contact them, get the word out, put together a rally, call the press. You know. Do a protest march downtown or something.

NELSON
Okay.

DEIRDRE
Do you feel it too?

NELSON
I guess I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE

People aren't taking it seriously.
They're reacting like it's some
stupid TV show.

NELSON

Like people always do.

DEIRDRE

Yeah. Like people always do.

He sets a triple venti down, and they look at each other for
a long moment.

NELSON

Deirdre, what are we protesting?

DEIRDRE

(Sitting, deflated,
confused)

I don't know. But it's wrong. Isn't
it?

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON Bob Banister as he looks at the Carr OFFSCREEN, with
the same confused look.

CARR (O.S.)

Would you repeat what you just
said, Bob? I'm not sure I got it
right.

BANISTER

Sure. Umm. I feel it would be
better to, uh, come right out and
admit the... error in judgment,
rather than do another photo op on
a battleship. I feel-

ANGLE 2-SHOT.

CARR

You said "cornball."

BANISTER

Uh, did I? What I meant was... The
timing of the photo op might have
the opposite effect considering-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR

Bob, the President does not do cornball photo ops.

BANISTER

Of course. I'm sorry, sir.

CARR

That disturbs me, Bob. I've been getting the idea lately that you're not on board 100%, as far as being a team player. If you think my ideas are cornball, then we have a problem.

BANISTER

You don't have a problem with me, sir. It just came out. I'll go ahead set up the photo-

CARR

If you think it's a cornball idea, then I don't want you setting anything up. I'll get Pete to work on it.

Bob shows real fear.

BANISTER

All right.

CARR

Bob, we have to be 100% dedicated and working together 100% or we start sending the wrong message, and I can't afford that. Especially from my PR guy. I'm sensing a disconnect here. What's going on?

BANISTER

Nothing, sir.

Carr studies Bob long and hard.

CARR

All right. Thank you.

Bob stands and walks out with weak knees.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are off. We can just make out the silhouette of Rusty sitting in his office chair. It's QUIET.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He is still, eyes are closed. Suddenly the door flies open and the fluorescents flash on. Rusty squints, rubs his eyes.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

Rusty. Sorry, I didn't know you were here. You're on in ten minutes.

She grabs a folder on the make-up table.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT (cont'd)

Chalmers still wants to talk to you before we start.

RUSTY

What about?

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

He's concerned.

RUSTY

Fuck him.

She looks him over quickly.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

Are you okay?

RUSTY

(Standing)

Yeah... I just... Long night.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

Do you need anything?

RUSTY

Coffee would be good.

She runs off. Rusty shuffles to the door and starts to open it. Then he stops, leans against it and closes his eyes.

INT. BIG OPINION SET

Rusty is with Chalmers, who is on a high-speed caffeine buzz. Rusty listens with no energy or interest - his brain is Jell-O.

CHALMERS

The only reason I consented to do your show was because your Producer made certain guarantees. I want you to know I'm walking the instant you violate any one of them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHALMERS (CONT'D)

The interview will be over. I'm telling you this up front, in case you have any questions or problems with this. If you do, we can stop the taping now and avoid any embarrassing scenes.

(He waits)

Do you?

RUSTY

What was the question again?

CHALMERS

Did your Producer relay to you my concerns?

RUSTY

Umm, maybe.

CHALMERS

What is this?

RUSTY

What?

CHALMERS

I want a straight answer, that's what, or I'm walking.

Rusty sits, rubs his forehead.

RUSTY

I don't normally do this. It's a little confusing.

CHALMERS

Do what?

RUSTY

Whatever you're talking about.

Rusty's Producer GLENN approaches, worried.

GLENN

Hi, Mr. Chalmers. How's it going?

He shakes hands with Chalmers.

CHALMERS

It appears Mr. Kannon was not told about our agreement.

Glenn swallows hard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLENN

(To Rusty)

Well, we did talk about it.
Remember?

RUSTY

What is all this Mr. Kannon, Mr.
Chalmers shit? Sounds like fucking
Masterpiece Theater.

CHALMERS

(To Glenn)

You see? That's exactly what I was
talking about.

Rusty's Assistant breaks in, holding Rusty's cell phone.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT

Excuse me, Rusty.

He turns to her, annoyed.

RUSTY'S ASSISTANT (cont'd)

It's your brother-in-law. It sounds
urgent.

Rusty takes the phone and walks away from them.

CHALMERS

I don't need this.

Chalmers walks in the other direction. Glenn throws up his
hands.

INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

As Rusty walks at a fast clip, reading the room numbers. The
hospital is old, dingy, underfunded. Patients are parked
along the sides.

Rusty stops at 319. The door is open. He steps in.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

He recognizes the kids playing on the furniture by the
window. He approaches them, then peers around the curtain by
the window bed.

Judy is lying there with an IV stuck in her arm. Her husband
MARTY, an unemployed, blue-collar worker, is standing next to
her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY
What is this?

JUDY
What the hell?

She turns to Marty.

MARTY
I called him. Don't be upset.

JUDY
You called him?!

MARTY
Yeah, I thought he should know. But
I didn't think-

JUDY
Marty, for God sakes.

RUSTY
Hey. I just came by to see-

MARTY
Judy, Judy, calm down. Rusty, come
on.

Marty grabs Rusty's arm and rushes him to the corridor.

JUDY
(Shouting)
We talked about this, Marty. You're
going against my Goddamn wishes. I
have to be able to trust you.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Marty pulls him down the corridor to a waiting area.

MARTY
(Highly agitated)
You shouldn't have come. I
shouldn't have called you. It's
probably no big deal. They think it
might be a reaction to the
medication. She got a little sick.
That's all.

RUSTY
Marty, what the fuck is going on
here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTY

What do you mean, what's going on?
She's fuckin' dying.

Marty breaks down.

RUSTY

Marty, I know that-

MARTY

I don't know what to do? It just happened all of a sudden. Everything was okay and then she's fuckin' dying. I don't have a job. Maybe I'll have some construction work next week, maybe I won't. Who knows? Who knows how much this is going to cost? I can't pay for it. Where the fuck am I supposed to get the money to pay for goddamn CAT scans and blood work-ups and all the other crap? How am I supposed to take care of the kids and work? Jesus Christ. She's fuckin' dying.

RUSTY

Hey, calm down.

MARTY

How the fuck am I supposed to calm down?

RUSTY

(Grabbing his shoulders)
I mean it, goddamn it. Calm the fuck down or I'm going to belt you. Get a grip.

MARTY

Rusty, Jesus.

Marty cries on Rusty's shoulder. He's taken off guard.

RUSTY

Okay, this is all very simple. I got the money. You take it and get a goddamn real oncologist, not some county quack, and you get this thing fixed.

MARTY

She won't let me take it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

She will now. This little game has gone on long enough.

MARTY

No, she won't. I know her.

RUSTY

So do I, she's my goddamn sister.

MARTY

This is just too fucking intense. You and your goddamn sister are so fucking pig-headed... And I'm stuck in the middle. What am I supposed to do?

Rusty starts for the room.

RUSTY

I'll talk to her.

Marty grabs him.

MARTY

No! God! Do NOT talk to her. You'll end up, I don't know... Just, please, don't talk to her, don't call her, don't look at her, don't come over, don't do anything with her. Just stay away. Stay away. Please!

Rusty turns back.

MARTY (cont'd)

I'm sorry, man. But I can't deal with you two. We got to get through this somehow. Somehow. And all you two can think of doing is arguing about... bullshit. My wife is going to die because we don't have fucking health insurance.

RUSTY

She's going to die, because she won't take the money I'm offering her.

MARTY

You know her. She's got it in her head... If you weren't so pro-industry or anti-socialist or whatever... I give up.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTY (CONT'D)

You guys don't see, it doesn't have anything to do with politics and money. The problem is... she's dying. That's it. She's my wife and your sister, and she's dying.

Marty lets go of his arm. Rusty lowers his head.

MARTY (cont'd)

I called you because... I thought you should know. But please...

RUSTY

(Beaten)

I'll stay away.

MARTY

You understand, I hope. She can't get upset. I'm not even sure your money would help now anyway. She's very sick.

Marty chokes back tears. Then, he turns away from Rusty and heads back to the room. Rusty just stares.

INT. NELSON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Bella opens the front door, revealing two policemen, PANE and STARR.

OFFICER PANE

Bella Paxell?

BELLA

Yes.

OFFICER PANE

I'm Officer Pane. This is Officer Starr. We-

BELLA

He's right there.

Carlos is standing in the doorway to the kitchen, drunk, wearing nothing but his orange underwear, and brandishing a gun. His jaw drops.

CARLOS

What the fuck?

The officers enter and approach him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER PANE
Put the gun down, please.

CARLOS
What the hell's going on?

OFFICER PANE
Just put the gun down.

INT. NELSON'S KITCHEN

As Nelson sits on the counter eating a leftover chicken leg. He listens to the confrontation O.S.

CARLOS (O.S.)
Would somebody tell me what the fuck-

OFFICER PANE (O.S.)
Down on the floor.

CARLOS (O.S.)
What do you mean-

OFFICER PANE (O.S.)
Get on the floor, face down. Now.

INT. NELSON'S LIVING ROOM

As Carlos assumes the position, but wobbles badly from multiple beers.

CARLOS
Bella, what the fuck did you do?

BELLA
I told you I'd call the police, if you didn't get rid of that gun.

CARLOS
I was cleaning it.

BELLA
Right.

Pane cuffs Carlos, then stands him up.

CARLOS
This is really fucked up, man. I was just cleaning my gun and the next thing I know I'm being pushed around-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER PANE
What's your name?

CARLOS
Carlos Pettibone.

OFFICER PANE
All right, Carlos. You're coming
with me.

CARLOS
I didn't do nothing. Are you
arresting me?

OFFICER PANE
We're just going to talk.

CARLOS
I didn't do nothing. Nothing. We
were just having a little talk and
I was going to clean my gun-

OFFICER PANE
Save it Carlos.

Pane escorts him out the door. Starr approaches Bella.

OFFICER STARR
Okay, you want to tell me what
happened?

BELLA
We were having a... discussion
about some... financial matters.
Basically, he won't get off his ass
and look for work and so we were
discussing that. And I mentioned I
was... considering... asking him to
leave - this house is mine - and
that... upset Carlos and he went in
the bedroom there and I heard a gun
go off, so I called 911 and then he
came back in with the gun and
threatened to... become abusive
with it.

INT. NELSON'S KITCHEN

Nelson has heard enough lies. He hops down from the counter
and goes out the back door.

EXT. BLUE COLLAR RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Nelson walks down the driveway toward the street. As he approaches the street, he sees Pane with Carlos.

ANGLE HIS POV, as Pane shoves Carlos against the cruiser across the street and starts speaking to him with threatening gestures. Pane turns away from Carlos to grab the radio mike. As soon as his back is turned, Carlos runs, heading straight down the center of the street.

Pane drops the mike, pulls out his pistol and fires a round over Carlos's head. Carlos ducks, but doesn't stop.

Starr approaches Pane from the house, and the two take chase.

RESUME NELSON as he trails after them on the sidewalk, keeping to the shadows.

ANGLE FOLLOWING Pane and Starr. A block away, Carlos is running with all his might, but the alcohol has its affect. He trips and falls flat on the street. As he tries to stand, Pane catches up to him and shoves him back down.

Now we see what Pane and Starr are really made of. Pane buries his heel in the side of Carlos's face. Starr cinches the cuffs on tighter. Carlos SCREAMS in pain and shows some resistance. That is all the provocation Pane needs. Pane whips out his nightstick and jabs him hard in the kidneys.

OFFICER PANE

I'm in no mood fucker. Just try it.

Carlos goes limp.

OFFICER PANE (cont'd)

Now get up slow.

Carlos stands, his face and stomach scraped raw and bleeding.

OFFICER PANE (cont'd)

Walk asshole.

Pane grabs his arm and pulls him along forcibly toward the cruiser. Pane is hopped up, his nerves ready to pop.

CARLOS

(Under his breath)

Fuckin' pig.

In one lightening fast move, Pane swings his stick around 360 degrees, full-force into Carlos's mid-section. Carlos doubles over, unable to breathe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON Nelson, as he watches from the shadows. His face is tight.

INT. BUS - LATE NIGHT

ANGLE CLOSE as a hand lifts a clump of trash and dumps it on the floor.

ANGLE NELSON. He moves furiously from seat to seat on the empty bus, tossing trash, looking between cracks. Nothing. Finally, he gives up and sits, scoots next to the window. He feels something, looks down. A jewel case has fallen into the crack between the seat and side of the bus.

He carefully slides his two index fingers between the crack, and pulls it out. Like a junkie needing a fix, he checks the cover, opens it up. Then, he pulls the cord to stop the bus.

INT. ROY'S OFFICE

As the colored patterns morph into Roy, seated as usual facing the CAMERA.

ROY

Hello, I'm Roy Thode. Thank you once again for helping me test my converter. It appears many of you need more proof that I am actually speaking to you from the fifth dimension. That's understandable. Lack of trust and dishonesty are two traits we have successfully bred into you. Therefore, to prove what I'm saying, I've hidden the camera in a lunchbox and I'm going to show you around the office where I work.

He picks up the lunchbox, and the ANGLE changes as he aims the CAMERA at different things.

ROY (cont'd)

Anywho, let's see. First I'll show you the converter. There it is.

The converter is a strange collection of translucent mounds with different shapes that glow and change colors.

ROY (cont'd)

That took me a good three years to develop. This is my office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He PANS his desk.

ROY (cont'd)
 Next, we'll go down the hall to a meeting room where the elders discuss the state of our relationship with the 3D slaves, that's you. I'm telling you this because once I walk out there I won't be able to talk directly to you.

He opens the door to the hall.

INT. FIFTH DIMENSION OFFICE HALL

As WE enter, still from the ANGLE of the lunchbox. The hall is long, beige and windowless, with lines of 5D people moving here and there. Everything is bland, from the people to the architecture - no creativity, nothing stands out.

The 5D people don't walk with one foot in front of the other, but stand straight and float an inch above the floor, as if gliding on smooth wheels. They wear bland clothes, like brown sweaters and patent leather shoes.

As Roy passes people...

MOE
 Morning Roy.

ROY
 Moe. How's it going?
 (Passing Steve)
 Morning Steve.

STEVE
 Roy, can I talk to you sometime today about that crundoy box?

ROY
 Sure, Steve. Send me some e-mail.

STEVE
 Got it.

ENOCH
 Morning, Roy. Sick of our cafeteria food, huh?

He CHUCKLES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROY
What? Oh this.

He raises the lunchbox, so WE can see Enoch.

ROY (cont'd)
(Ha ha)
Yes, I am.

As Enoch floats away, Roy WHISPERS to the lunchbox.

ROY (cont'd)
That was Enoch. He's head of the
division. Have to keep on his good
side.

WE come to a large gray, double door, marked: "Elders
Conference Room." Roy enters.

INT. FIFTH DIMENSION ELDERS CONFERENCE ROOM

As usual, nothing fancy here - a long conference table with
ten or so old, bland men. The head guy LARRY stops and turns
when he sees Roy.

LARRY
Morning Roy.

ROY
Larry.

LARRY
Help yourself to a maple bar, and
have a seat.

ROY
Sounds good. Thanks.

Roy goes to a credenza and grabs a maple bar, then sits at
the other end of the table. He sets the lunchbox on the table
so that WE can see what is going on.

LARRY
Now, getting back to your question,
Frank. Yes, 3D's are less prone to
exercise their free will when they
are in a continual state of fear
and anxiety, but the free will
itself is not diminished.

FRANK, a younger, cockier elder, stands and walks around the
group at the head of the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

I disagree, Larry. Free will is created by an individual 3D, and it can just as easily be destroyed.

The others are mildly shocked at the use of such a visually provocative term.

LARRY

You're wrong.

FRANK

Larry, if a 3D never has an opportunity to exercise his free will, it will wither and die.

Points to areas on a world map.

FRANK (cont'd)

In areas all over the world, we have effectively eradicated free will with greed and fear, which leads to poverty and depression. These people are no more likely to make a free choice than the cattle they breed, whether they're starving to death in Mogadishu, or sucking up Coors Light in Kansas City.

LARRY

You're wrong, but come to the point.

FRANK

The point is, they are holding themselves hostage with their own weapons. By simply increasing the fear level, they will not destroy each other. On the contrary, they will eventually lose all free will, and then we will have complete control. No more escalations as we saw in the 20th century.

The group is stirred to life by Frank's talk and MUMBLE excitedly.

LARRY

Thank you, Frank.

Frank sits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LARRY (cont'd)
That certainly gives us some food
for thought.

Larry takes a bite of his maple bar. An elder CARL speaks to Roy.

CARL
(Soto voce)
Hey Roy, what's for lunch? Had
enough of the cafeteria food, huh?

ROY
Yes.

Carl's face fills the FRAME as he looks in the hole that the lens is shooting through.

CARL
Hey Roy, what's that?

Carl's eyes grow wide and his smile drops. The video ends abruptly.

EXT. NEWSPAPER STAND - DAY

As people mob the stand, buying tabloids.

ANGLE OVER THE SHOULDER of a reader, the headline: "Humans Cattle for 5D Invaders."

ANGLE ANOTHER HEADLINE: "Aliens Breed Fear into Humans"

INT. FAKE OVAL OFFICE

On television, a Saturday Night Live-style skit is in progress. A comedian dressed up as Carr with a Mr. Rogers sweater gives a speech directly into the CAMERA.

CARR IMPERSONATOR
It has come to my attention that
many of you do not consider my
decision to bomb the crap out of,
the poop out of the capital of
Magumba to be sound and my reaction
to be somewhat ill-conceived.

He stands and steps to the side of the desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR IMPERSONATOR (cont'd)
 To help me weasel out of this error
 in judgment, I am going to use a
 technology familiar to many of you.
 It's called...

The audience roars with LAUGHTER.

CARR IMPERSONATOR (cont'd)
 Power hungry, power grabber, power
 mad... Hell, I don't know what it's
 called.

A PowerPoint slide starts up behind him ala Roy Thode.

CARR IMPERSONATOR (cont'd)
 First, am I telling lies? Not
 really.

ANGLE ON A SECTION OF AUDIENCE, as two rows of people dressed
 like Roy Thode stand and CHEER.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE

On television, as the real Carr stands at the Presidential
 podium, sweating, answering a probing question.

CARR
 We are not reacting to fear, we are
 reacting to evil dictators that are
 out to destroy us. I want to make
 that perfectly clear. It is the
 evil regimes that are breeding
 fear, not us.
 (Smiles, as if the answer
 is obvious)
 We're the good guys. We have free
 will. They don't. They're after our
 freedom, to destroy our free will.
 If we don't protect it, they will
 succeed.

INT. BIG OPINION SET

Rusty is taping an interview with MARV PREEN. A title is
 SUPERIMPOSED over Marv: "Expert on extraterrestrial life."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PREEN

I see absolutely no evidence to support the claim that this Roy Thode and the other characters involved in these videos are in any way real. The only tangible evidence at all are the DVDs, which we have examined in depth and concluded are in no way unusual. Any trickster with an amateur understanding of film production could have easily created the videos.

RUSTY

(Smiling)

Well, that's comforting to know. I'm sure all of us feel a lot safer knowing that an expert, such as yourself, has carefully examined the evidence and concluded that we have nothing to fear from some fifth dimensional creatures.

Preen takes the statement as praise and smiles smugly.

RUSTY (cont'd)

But why do you think so many people believe this Roy Thode?

PREEN

I don't know, but the mass hysteria has gotten out of hand. People are attacking the President's policies based on what they hear on DVDs that they find in trashcans and on bus seats. It's ridiculous and dangerous.

RUSTY

But you didn't answer my question. Why do you think people believe him?

Preen is caught off guard.

PREEN

I don't know. I'm not an expert on why people do what they do-

RUSTY

Mr. Preen, millions of people disagree with you. Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PREEN

I'm not sure-

RUSTY

What makes them wrong and you right?

PREEN

I've been studying extraterrestrial life for twenty years-

RUSTY

And found nothing, right?

PREEN

Uh, correct. We have found no proof-

RUSTY

Has it ever occurred to you that maybe you were looking in the wrong places, that maybe you are an expert on something that doesn't exist - nothing?

Preen is aghast.

RUSTY (cont'd)

Do you think maybe, and I'm just throwing this out there, maybe people believe the aliens because they are saying something that people want to hear? Maybe they are giving people a reason for all the madness in the world. Maybe all we have to do is to stop listening to fear, stop allowing fear and greed and stupidity to control us. Maybe we should just put down our guns and stop surrendering to fear, face our enemies and say we're not afraid.

PREEN

As I say, I'm not an expert-

RUSTY

No, you're not.

INT. TELEVISION CONTROL ROOM

Rusty is pacing. Glenn and a young, well-dressed putz from the network BENNETT STOOL are seated next to the show's Director.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOOL

Put down our guns and stop
surrendering to fear?

RUSTY

Right.

STOOL

You said that?

RUSTY

I did.

STOOL

Hmm. How can putting our guns down
not be surrendering? Am I missing
something?

RUSTY

Does the network have a problem
with me saying that?

STOOL

Rusty, uh, the network, your
viewers, have a problem with the
liberal bias of that statement. We
support the conservative view that
one uses guns to fight an enemy-

RUSTY

Ben, I was just-

STOOL

Bennett.

RUSTY

I was just throwing ideas out
there, stirring up the pot, getting
free people to think. Is that
wrong?

STOOL

It's wrong if it alienates your
audience. Remember who pays the
rent.

Rusty's blood starts boiling. He leans in.

RUSTY

Mr. Stool, truth pays the rent.
That's what the audience wants and
that's what I give them. If that's
not something the network can live
with, then we have a problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rusty flies out the door before he decks the guy.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

As Carr paces angrily.

CARR

They're accusing ME of bending to fear. Fear! Me! Jesus! Guys, I'm afraid we have a battle ahead of us with this goddamn fifth dimension bullshit. Can you explain to me how pulling out of Magumba with our tail between our legs is facing fear?

Carr waits for the right answer. Bob takes a tenuous stab at it.

BANISTER

I believe the prevailing thought is that fear is CAUSING us to fight. If we did not allow fear to control us, we would not need to fight. Something like that.

Carr stares daggers through Banister.

CARR

Bob, me and you have to talk.

BANISTER

I'm sorry. I was just clarifying what-

CARR

(Shouting)

You were taking their side. Your job is to take MY side. Your job is to spin this so people believe we are fighting for peace over there. Giving up is not facing our fears. Jesus Christ! It's a simple matter of turning a few words around. And that's your job, to make sure the words are turned the right way, so this administration looks good. Is that something you can handle?!

Bob stares at his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR (cont'd)

Let's all get on the same page here. I want you to bring back ideas on how to-

BANISTER

(Standing)

Mr. President the solution for our current problem is not more spin. The Goddamn spin is going so fast no one knows what our policy is on anything. The solution is the truth. Tell the truth.

CARR

And I suppose you're going to tell me what the truth is.

BANISTER

Fear was used to sell operation: peaceful destiny to the American people. And the only winners in it are a handful of very large businesses that are making very big profits off weapons production and empire building. By spinning things, you, we are only burying ourselves deeper in lies, and eventually the whole thing is going to explode.

CARR

I think you'd better-

BANISTER

You're right. I'd better get out of here before I get sick.

Banister storms out before he completely breaks down. Carr glares at the remaining advisors.

CARR

Anybody else have any ideas?

They say nothing and show nothing.

EXT. TACO JOINT - NIGHT

Bella and Carlos are facing each other at one table. Deirdre and Nelson, who really don't want to be there, are sitting at another. It is momentarily quiet as the group downs their burritos. Then, Bella cuts through the SILENCE with her drunken, Tennessee Williams distressed damsel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLA

This is nice.

No comments.

BELLA (cont'd)

We really should do this more often. Get the whole family together. Back when Nelson was just a little guy, we'd go out all the time. Remember, hon?

Nelson grunts.

BELLA (cont'd)

(Sighing)

Nice places too. All the time. Those were the days.

They all brace for the punchline.

BELLA (cont'd)

Oh well. Too bad. C'est la vie. It's all gone now. All gone. All I have left are memories... and an occasional chimichanga.

CARLOS

You better be glad you got that chimichanga. Not everyone is so lucky.

BELLA

Oh, I'm lucky all right.

CARLOS

You know, you're messed up woman.

BELLA

Tell me something I don't know.

CARLOS

Well, get yourself un-messed up. Living with you is like living with a goddamn cat with a rat shoved up its ass. We can't have one nice time together without you running off at the mouth with a bunch of mean-spirited, negative shit.

BELLA

Do you want to know why I'm messed up, Carlos?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARLOS

No.

BELLA

From years of living with no money,
no one who cares-

CARLOS

I don't want to hear it. I've heard
it a million time and I'm fucking
sick of it. Why can't we have one
dinner, one peaceful time without-

BELLA

(Losing the damsel)

I'm not the one who's NOT getting a
job and who eats all my food and
never lifts a finger to help out-

CARLOS

Stop it. Shut the fuck up. Just
shut up.

BELLA

Can't you tell I'm miserable here?
Doesn't that register anyplace?

He gets up, tosses his food dramatically.

CARLOS

That's it. I'm out of here.

He turns. Nelson suddenly stands.

NELSON

No one's out of here.

Carlos stops and turns.

CARLOS

What?

NELSON

Sit down.

He does.

CARLOS

You can't tell me-

NELSON

Shut up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLA
Nelson, this is between-

NELSON
Mom, shut up.

They are too shocked and drunk to know how to react.

BELLA
You shouldn't talk to your mother
that way.

Nelson SLAMS his fist down hard on the table and food goes flying. Then, he slowly walks to their table, reaches out with both arms, and rests his hands on their shoulders. With the inner strength and patience of a Buddhist monk...

NELSON
Guys, I've been doing a lot of
thinking lately. I used to think
your constant fighting would
eventually lead to some kind of
resolution, that maybe your
relationship was just going through
a phase and someday you'd figure it
out. But I've changed my mind.
(Becoming an evangelist)
I've seen the light. The answer has
always been right there, but maybe
I didn't see it because I didn't
want to, or maybe it was just too
unbelievable.

He sits on the stool between them, maintaining the trance.

NELSON (cont'd)
You see, the truth is, you're not
in control of the situation or
anything else. You're never going
to stop fighting because you don't
know how. You're just going to keep
fighting until one of you finally
drops dead. Rather than rise up and
take charge of the situation,
you're allowing the situation to
take charge of you. You can't stop.
You never will.

CARLOS
I can stop if I want to.

NELSON
That's what I'm saying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He moves around, works the crowd, spreads the message to the five or six others trying to eat.

NELSON (cont'd)

But it's not just you, it's all of us. We are slaves and we can't seem to break free. We're never going to stop fighting and hating and thinking only of ourselves and doing stupid, horrible things to each other. Never. It's never going to get better. When we think one thing is getting better, another thing just gets worse. And we can't stop the cycle. Why? Because we don't want to. We blind ourselves. It's never ending, self-perpetuating. And we can't blame Roy Thode or the devil or God or our parents or our girl friends, because we each have the free will to stop, but we don't. We don't and so we'll always be slaves and we'll always be miserable.

Back to Carlos and Bella.

NELSON (cont'd)

So, you two just keep right on fighting if it makes you feel comfortable. But could you do me just one favor?

CARLOS

Whatever.

NELSON

Stop deluding yourselves into believing that it will ever lead to anything. You have the power to stop, but you never will. Admit it. Be happy that you have at least one thing in common - sort of a really fucked-up goal.

Nelson walks off, leaving Bella and Carlos staring across the table at each other. After taking a moment to process what just happened, Deirdre notices Nelson has left and runs after him.

EXT. BUSINESS STREET - NIGHT

Nelson walks purposefully down the sidewalk fronting small shops, most of them closed. Deirdre tries to catch up.

DEIRDRE
Hey, slow down.

He doesn't.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
Nelson. Come on.

He stops. She runs around him and looks him in the eye.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
What was that?

NELSON
That was me.

DEIRDRE
Wow. Uh...

He steps around her and continues walking.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
Hey, Nelson.

NELSON
What?

DEIRDRE
I think what you did was amazing.
I've never seen you so... It kind
of makes me hot. You know. What's
going on? What's in your head? I'm
like excited.

He slows, so she can catch up.

NELSON
Things have suddenly become very
clear. The human race is completely
fucked up.

DEIRDRE
Yeah.

NELSON
Our battle is not with a bunch of
third-world dictators. Our battle
is with them, the fifth dimension.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE

Yeah.

NELSON

It's with those forces that turn us against each other and ourselves with fear and hatred. We're so messed up, we couldn't get it straight if we wanted to - which we don't. We have to fight it. But our minds are so filled with conflicting thoughts, we can't. We don't know where to start. We can't think clearly. All we can do is fight and drink beer to ease the pain.

DEIRDRE

But we can't control the fifth dimension.

He stops and grabs her shoulders.

NELSON

Yes, we can. We can.

DEIRDRE

How? With some magic portal?

NELSON

In a way. We are their slaves. They depend on us. They can't survive, if we decide to be free.

DEIRDRE

Right. But how?

NELSON

We can't do it as individuals.

DEIRDRE

(Excited)
A movement!

He starts walking again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

It needs to be big. Millions of people, all protesting, breaking free, deciding as one huge group that they're not going to listen to the thoughts, they're not going to allow fear and hatred and greed and all the other thoughts to control them. And then it will grow to billions, billions of people. When we get to that point, we will know what freedom feels like, what it really feels like to be human.

DEIRDRE

(Jumping out of her skin)
My God, I can picture it. This is the most exciting thing I've ever heard. I think I'm going to explode.

She does. She reaches around Nelson and kisses him forcibly, deeply. She writhes against him, grinding against his leg. He reciprocates.

She wrestles him to the ground and they roll around in a small patch of dead grass and dried dog turds. She starts PANTING loudly, MOANING. She pulls away from him and is overtaken by a massive climax. She is shaking and buzzing with life.

She stands, pulls Nelson up. She is out of control, and capable of saying and doing crazy things. She runs her eyes over him hungrily.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

You inspire me.

She gets up on a bus stop bench.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

(To the world)
We can cast off the chains of oppression and be free!

The bus arrives. Nelson gets on. Deirdre runs after him.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Nelson finds a seat. Deirdre sits across from him.

DEIRDRE

Where do we start?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Start what?

DEIRDRE

The movement. We need a rally, the press...

NELSON

Form a group of five people who received DVDs, and grow from there. All you need is the energy of the group.

DEIRDRE

Okay, you, me. We only need three more.

NELSON

Four more. I've got other plans.

DEIRDRE

No. What? Nelson.

NELSON

I need to be alone for awhile.

DEIRDRE

How long?

NELSON

I don't know. I can't time it. I need to be free of time and people and all this.

DEIRDRE

To do what?

NELSON

I need to, I don't know, meditate or something, get way beyond where I am now.

DEIRDRE

You mean, like a Buddhist monk?

NELSON

Maybe.

DEIRDRE

Don't you know?

NELSON

If I knew I wouldn't need to get away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE

But what about the movement?

NELSON

You know what to do.

He suddenly stands as if driven by some unseen force, walks toward the back of the bus, stops about half way, and reaches down to a seat. He dumps a handful of trash on the floor, and there it is, another DVD.

EXT. TACO JOINT - NIGHT

Bella and Carlos are still in the same position, staring across the table at each other. After a long beat, Carlos reaches for Bella's hand.

CARLOS

He's wrong.

INT. ROY'S MOUNTAIN CABIN - DAY

Colors and patterns MORPH into Roy facing the CAMERA. He is unshaven, hair is long and unruly. Though he wears the same clothes, he lacks the usual enthusiasm. A window in the BACKGROUND overlooks a stark, high-altitude landscape.

ROY

Hello, I'm Roy Thode. Thank you once again for helping me test my converter. Today I'm speaking to you from a high mountaintop, far removed from my civilization. Why am I here? Well, it's difficult to explain. In my dimension, we have no notion of time. All events, sort of, occur simultaneously. As you were watching the last DVD, I was already on trial for what happened after the second DVD. Does that make sense? I hope I'm not confusing you. Anyway, I am being punished now for inventing the converter and communicating with the third dimension. Our form of punishment is somewhat different from yours. In our world, people aren't rehabilitated, they are... exiled. Freedom is the most severe punishment that can be imposed, and... that's what I have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks out the window and his throat tightens.

ROY (cont'd)
I am free to do whatever I want
except rejoin my society.

He picks up the CAMERA and shows US out the window.

ROY (cont'd)
In a way, it is beautiful, as
beautiful as any hell can be. Oh,
I'm not going to suffer physically.
I have plenty to eat. Here's my
stove and food supply, and the
cabin is heated. So, I'll be well
taken care of, for however many
years I have left to live. They
allowed me to keep my converter.
They figured I couldn't do any more
damage than I've already done. So,
anywho...

He puts the CAMERA down and faces US.

ROY (cont'd)
I don't know if you are capable of
understanding this, but... in your
world, the worst part of
incarceration is having your
freedom curtailed. To us, it is
knowing that... we are bad.

Again, he has to stop and collect his composure.

ROY (cont'd)
I guess that's it. My energy source
is limited, so I need to get to the
point. I have had a change of
heart, and I've developed a
fondness for the people of your
dimension. I have decided to use
all of my internal power to counter
the enslaving thoughts that my
people, or the people that used to
be mine, inflict on you. I am going
to send suggestions to stop fear,
greed, and hatred. But I don't
believe I can be very effective on
my own. If you want to help, that
would be appreciated. In our
dimension, we don't have a word for
this act of... sending suggestions.
But your word for it is prayer.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROY (CONT'D)

If you know how to pray and would like to help, then please do so.

He runs out of things to say, reaches OFFSCREEN and the image MORPHS into patterns and goes BLACK.

INT. RUSTY'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As he puts the DVD away. He picks up a half-killed glass of whisky and belts it, then grabs his cell phone. He hesitates, paces, starts to dial and stops, pulls out a cigarette, lights it, takes a drag. Then, he holds the phone out and stops. He closes his eyes, lowers his head, and says a SILENT prayer. Then, he dials.

MARTY (V.O.)

(Somber now)

Hello.

RUSTY

Hi. Marty, I hate this. I got to talk to her.

MARTY (V.O.)

Rusty, I-

RUSTY

Hear me out, okay? This is hard for me. Something's happened to me, I've changed. I mean, I really have. I can't explain it, exactly. But I need to see her and apologize or whatever. I don't know. All that stuff is in the past now. The only thing that matters is that... she's happy and well, and I'll do anything. I mean it. It's just me now. There's no... attitude or ego or axe to grind. How do I explain it? My show was cancelled.

MARTY (V.O.)

I'm sorry.

RUSTY

No, it's okay. I don't need it now. All I need right now is to see my sister and somehow make things right.

MARTY (V.O.)

I'm glad. I really am. But she can't talk now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Why the hell not? Why-

MARTY (V.O.)

She's sleeping. She's still in the hospital.

RUSTY

I thought-

MARTY (V.O.)

She was supposed to come home, but things keep getting worse.

Neither of them can speak.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

As Rusty opens the door to 319 and looks in. It is QUIET. The lights are low. He walks softly to the last bed and peers around the curtain.

Judy is lying there. She is peaceful and still. The machines have been turned off, the IV removed. He steps slowly to her side and lifts her cold hand. He has waited too long. The moment has past. All that he can do is cry and hold her.

INT. HOSPITAL PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

As Rusty shuffles down a long row of empty stalls to his car. He presses the remote control and the Caddy beeps. He opens the door and the ALARM goes off. He closes the door and presses the remote again. Nothing. He presses all the buttons, trying to stop it. Nothing.

He paces around the car. No clues. The ALARM echoes wildly in the garage. He gives the car a kick. He SLAMS his fist on the hood. The acts only appear to anger the car more, intensifying the mocking SOUND. He kicks the car repeatedly, harder and harder. His leather shoes make long black dents in the doors. He pounds the windows. Nothing helps, nothing will stop it.

He picks up a metal pipe leaning against the wall, and begins SLAMMING it against the car. His anger grows with every strike. The heavy pipe deforms the body, the trunk pops open. He aims for the windows and SMASHES them all in, SMASHES the flashing headlights. He ROARS like a caged beast, as all of his pain is released. Then, in one final cathartic act of retribution, he thrusts the pipe through the hood.

EXT. BUSINESS STREET - NIGHT

Traffic is light. All the stores have been closed for hours. Rusty walks alone purposefully, head down, hands in his pockets. He slows as he approaches a defunct furniture store. Butcher paper covers the windows, but lights can be seen inside.

He turns and walks between buildings through a passageway filled with tall dead weeds.

EXT. FURNITURE STORE REAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

As Rusty approaches. He tries the door. It's unlocked. He opens it and walks in.

INT. FURNITURE STORE STOCKROOM - NIGHT

As Rusty makes his way through the empty room to the showroom door.

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

As Rusty enters. WE are suddenly inundated by the SOUND of a hundred or more people packed in tightly, conversing excitedly. Rusty scans the room. A band is playing somewhere. He heads toward the activity on the other side of the store.

WE FOLLOW Rusty, as he moves quickly through the crowd. He is taken aback by the scope of the gathering.

A stage comes into VIEW. A large banner stretches across the wall at the back. In an angry font: Stop It Now! The press has staked out good spots near the stage. A cameraman points out Rusty and a group converges on him, flashes blazing.

A hand reaches in, clutches Rusty's arm and turns him. It is Deirdre.

DEIRDRE
(Shouting over the din)
You're an hour late.

RUSTY
Sorry.

She leads him onto the stage and goes to the podium. The crowd CHEERS. She smiles and holds her hands up to quiet them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE
 (Into the mike)
 Our guest of honor has finally
 arrived.

Another wave of CHEERING.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
 May I introduce conservative TV
 commentator... former conservative
 TV commentator...

Another wave.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
 Rusty Kannon!

The crowd goes WILD. Rusty approaches the mike. He is floored
 and a bit frightened. In an instant, we see a transformation
 in him. All the pain and confusion he has felt gets swept
 away by a new sense of purpose.

RUSTY
 (Into mike)
 Wow. This is unbelievable.

Another wave.

RUSTY (cont'd)
 We are here tonight because we have
 all experienced something very,
 very powerful; something that has
 given us a whole new perspective on
 the world; something that has
 changed our lives entirely. There
 is only one thing powerful enough
 to do that. It's called... the
 truth. After I heard the truth, I
 was suddenly no longer a
 conservative or a republican or a
 pro-lifer. I was also not a liberal
 or a democrat or a pro-choicer. I
 was just a person who knew the
 truth. And once you know the truth,
 there is no notion of multiple
 points of view any more. There just
 IS. Roy Thode is not a god, far
 from it. He is not the mystical,
 magical ruler of the heavens or the
 healer of all our suffering. He
 does not pretend to be a messiah or
 have any special powers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (CONT'D)

He is merely an unwitting messenger, who just happened to be in the right place at the right time. And when the message came, those who listened were transformed.

INT. BOB BANISTER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE TV as the speech continues.

RUSTY

(On TV)

Now, we can clearly see what is right... and what is wrong. We can see the result of fear and hatred and greed and evil and stupidity, and we know what we have to do... Stop it now. Stop it now!

The CROWD CHANTS: Stop it now!

ANGLE ON Banister and his wife as they watch the TV.

ANGLE TV, a reporter voiceover comes in over the SHOT of Rusty on the stage.

REPORTER 3 (V.O.)

The Los Angeles group Stop It Now includes former conservative TV commentator Rusty Kannon.

TV CUTS TO:

ANGLE ON Rusty after the speech as he is interviewed.

REPORTER 3 (O.S.)

Would you characterize Stop It Now as an antiwar movement?

RUSTY

We characterize ourselves as crusaders of the truth. We believe that when people see the truth, they won't need wars. They will be able to settle their differences peacefully.

ANGLE Banister, as he turns to his wife.

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - DAY

The storefront is in full swing. The room is filled with people talking on phones at desks and meeting around folding tables. The energy is high.

Deirdre is sitting at a large corner desk made of two doors on sawhorses, talking on her cell phone.

DEIRDRE

(On phone)

Most people are using cell phones now. The landlines were jammed all morning. We got 50,000 e-mails last night before the servers broke down. Things are moving so fast, we can't keep up. We need ideas, some way to reach millions, not thousands. Then, we need to figure out what to tell them. We have the energy, but the message needs to be sharper.

She turns, sees someone sitting in a chair waiting for her. All we see is the back of their head. She holds up her index finger - one minute.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

(Into phone)

Yes, yes. Call my cell phone.
Thanks.

Hangs up and turns to the man.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

Yes?

The man gets up and extends his hand.

BANISTER

My name is Bob Banister.

Her jaw drops.

DEIRDRE

Not... My God, you are. What can I do for you?

BANISTER

I'm here to help.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - NIGHT

A large crew is televising a live speech. Carr is at his desk, facing the Teleprompter, with a very studied, concerned expression. The floor manager gives him the cue.

CARR

My fellow Americans, I come before you tonight to ask for your courage, as we once again engage an enemy of freedom, and a brutal and evil dictator. Mambuwasi Chingaderra and his *regime of thugs and murderers* must be eliminated. There will be no peace in the country of Magumba as long as he is allowed to reign with his *legions of terror*. We have credible intelligence that he is building nuclear weapons, and amassing a huge stockpile of biological and chemical weapons, and it is only a matter of time before he unleashes his *arsenal of destruction* on the world. You could be the next victim. This *desperate psychopath* cares little about the consequences of his actions. He will stop at nothing to achieve his *despotic* goal of world domination, including slicing the throats of your children and laughing maniacally as their innocent lives slowly drain away one precious drop at a time, while you watch helplessly, screaming and crying. Operation: Peaceful Conclusion will commence within the next few weeks and will be targeted at removing the evil regime first and foremost. The battle will be swift and decisive.

INT. FURNITURE STORE MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

As Banister, Deirdre, Rusty, and a few others work late into the night on a coffee buzz. Banister is pacing, talking on a speaker phone.

BANISTER

We got to stop him, Art.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

As ART GOOBER sits at his desk. The office is small and cluttered.

GOOBER

And how the hell would I do that?

BANISTER

I wouldn't expect you to do it. Get help from Clarkson. He can't be in favor of this.

GOOBER

No, but maybe I am.

BANISTER

What? How can you-

GOOBER

Bob, I like my job. Carr won't tolerate another one of you. I'm easily expendable-

BANISTER

I thought you had bigger balls than that.

GOOBER

Maybe I don't disagree with the President. Maybe I feel it's time to kick some ass in Magumba. What could it hurt?

BANISTER

Art, you know it's all about clearing a path for business interests to plunder the diamond mines and oil. It has nothing to do with freeing the people. It has to stop-

GOOBER

Yeah, well it ain't going to be me. Only a fool would do what you suggest, Bob. Think about it. Think what you're asking me to do.

BANISTER

I'm asking you to do the right thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOOBER

You're asking me to fuck myself,
commit suicide. I don't want to.
Sorry. You can if you want. There's
absolutely nothing in it for me.

BANISTER

There is. There's integrity.
There's saving human lives, saving
a nation, saving the fucking world.

GOOBER

Oh stop. Give me a break. What have
you been smoking, anyway? What are
you even doing? Are you recording
this? Because you have to tell me
if you are.

BANISTER

(Deflated)

No. I'm not recording this.

GOOBER

I gotta go. Good luck, man.

He hangs up. Bob looks up at the group. Suddenly something
locks into place in his head.

BANISTER

He's right.

DEIRDRE

How can you say that?

BANISTER

What I asked him to do... It
doesn't make sense. He would have
to be crazy to do that.

Banister sits in a folding chair, pulls out a cigarette.

RUSTY

Bob, do you ever feel like you're
being controlled?

Rusty saunters over and sits on a table next to Banister.

BANISTER

What do you mean? No, I...

RUSTY

Think about it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANISTER
(Thinks some more)
My God.

Banister, the big advisor from Washington, suddenly feels very embarrassed and small.

RUSTY
We've all been through it. We've all found ourselves doing crazy shit. I torpedoed my own job. Jack here gave up a successful appliance business. Bob, we're casting off the shackles of slavery only to be enslaved by freedom. But at least, now we are aware of the irony, and that we have a choice. And we have chosen this.

BANISTER
I feel... violated.

RUSTY
That's natural. You'll get over it.

BANISTER
So, let me get this straight. You people believe that this Roy Thode character is for real?

DEIRDRE
Roy Thode showed us that we human beings are incapable of understanding reality. We can only believe. So, that's what we do.

RUSTY
We don't know if the fifth dimension exists or not, and we never will, but it doesn't matter.

Banister looks around the table at the eyes peering into his soul.

BANISTER
I uh... I'm going to have to think about this.

RUSTY
(Patting him on the back)
You do that. But don't take too long. We have a job to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Banister stands and heads for the door. The group continues with business.

DEIRDRE

Jack, you were talking about fliers.

JACK

Yeah, I have a friend who runs a printing business. I'll talk to him.

RUSTY

I don't know. Aren't we just wasting our time with fliers? How many can we reach?

JACK

We need to hit people at a number of levels.

DEIRDRE

He's right. All levels.

Banister opens the door.

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

As Banister leaves the meeting room and steps out into the large, dark, empty space. It is QUIET. His footsteps ECHO as he walks across the room, head down. He looks lost, out of place without a tie and briefcase.

EXT. FURNITURE STORE REAR ENTRANCE - MORNING

As Banister steps out. The sky is turning red with the morning sun. He has to squint. He stands a moment and watches the light define the back alley he has never seen. In the light, WE SEE that his hair is tousled, face is full of stubble, and his white shirt has coffee stains.

He slings his suit jacket over his shoulder and walks slowly down the alley toward the light.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - MORNING

The same sun rises over a high rocky peak, devoid of all vegetation except for the shortest, sturdiest trees. A small tent sits next to a boulder. A man is sitting on the boulder in the lotus position.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As WE MOVE IN, we SEE the man is wearing only a pair of boxer shorts. His hair is unkempt, hasn't shaved in a few weeks. His eyes are closed, he is still, facing the sun. CLOSER. It is Nelson. WE CONTINUE the slow MOVE IN until his face fills the frame.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NELSON'S MIND

It is clear, white. WE HEAR a PULSING, RUSHING SOUND, like distant waves. Then, gradually we begin to make out a human form turning slowly in space, moving closer. The form stretches out slowly from a fetal position. It is not a baby, it is a man. The eyes are closed. Gradually objects around the man become visible - a bed, a log wall, a wood stove. The objects become a room. The man becomes an object in the room.

WE hear BREATHING, a HEARTBEAT, as the objects slowly become real and stop spinning. The heartbeat quickens. We MOVE closer. The man is lying in the bed. He is old with long hair and a beard. WE MOVE IN to the man's face, closer and closer. WE know who it is. When his face fills the frame, his eyes suddenly pop open and stare directly at US.

ROY
(Panicked)
Who are you?

The heartbeat stops, the image turns white again.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - MORNING

ANGLE TIGHT on Nelson as his eyes pop open. He is sweating, breathing rapidly. He looks around, lost. Once he begins to gather his senses, Nelson looks out toward the sunrise and his face shines with serenity.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. U.S. MILITARY BASE IN MAGUMBA - DAY

A large military transport plane touches down on a dirt airstrip. WE PULL BACK to reveal more planes unloading, a line of fighter jets and helicopters, and a large temporary base buzzing with activity.

INT. BASE COMMON AREA - DAY

ANGLE CLOSE on a large group of elite soldiers, green berets and rangers, waiting restlessly under an immense tent. They are all macho and pumped for battle, posturing and flexing. Wood crates filled with weapons are stacked everywhere.

ANGLE CLOSER on a group of three soldiers. SOLDIER 1 is playing with an automatic weapon, a half spent cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth.

SOLDIER 1
Where you from?

SOLDIER 2
(Thick Southern drawl)
Pascaboolo, Mississippi.

SOLDIER 1
That's too bad.

SOLDIER 3
Hey, fuck off.

SOLDIER 1
You got a problem with me. Come on.

SOLDIER 2
Hey, save it for the skinnies.

SOLDIER 1
Yeah, I'm gonna whup me some skinny
ass.

Pulls back the charging handle on the gun, K-K-K-K-KLACK.

SOLDIER 3
That's what we're here for.
(To Soldier 2)
Hey, what's that?

SOLDIER 2
Nothin'.

SOLDIER 3
Yeah, it is. Let me see.

Soldier 3 grabs a small photo from Soldier 2. Soldier 1 takes a peek.

SOLDIER 1
Who's the babe?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER 2

My girlfriend. We were goin' to get married. Now... I don't know.

SOLDIER 3

(Punching him on the shoulder)

Hey, don't start with that shit. We're going to kick us some skinny ass and be home in three weeks. You'll see. You'll get married.

Soldier 1 sits and looks around.

SOLDIER 1

(With meaning)

We'll all get married.

ANGLE WIDE, as some officers approach the group.

GENERAL

(Shouting)

Hey, listen up.

The talking stops and all eyes fix on the General. He's a tough guy with multiple nasty scars and a mean battle face. He owns the crowd with his glare, walks slowly purposefully in front of them.

GENERAL (cont'd)

We just got the word. We move on the capital city Kawapotsi at oh-eight-hundred tomorrow. It won't be easy. Loyalist troops are everywhere. The only way you'll know for sure if a skinny is a bad guy, is when he starts shooting at you. Then, you either kill him or he kills you. Simple. Our mission is to locate Chingaderra and pull him out, cut off the head of the snake. The only way we can do that is by catching him with his pants down. Get the picture? We work fast and focused. We move in, complete the mission, and move out. And we WILL succeed. There is no other option. That is all.

A soldier raises his hand.

GENERAL (cont'd)

I don't want your fucking questions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The General leaves with purpose.

ANGLE on the three soldiers, as they react. Fear and losing are not in their vocabulary.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Carr is pacing anxiously, as Goober and Glont enter.

CARR
Have a seat.

The two sense negative tension as they sit in their usual spots.

CARR (cont'd)
I gave the order.

GOOBER
To begin deployment?

CARR
To move on Kawapotsi.

Goober's jaw drops.

GOOBER
Sir, I thought we were going to
time this with the poll results-

CARR
Fuck the polls.

GOOBER
But the backlash. We had planned a
campaign-

CARR
Fuck the campaign.
(He regroups)
Sorry fellows. I know you guys put
a lot of effort into this, but we
can't wait. The military needs to
go in now. I can't afford to have
this turn into another goddamn
Somalia.

GOOBER
Right, that's why we were going to
wait... to see.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR

Naw, fuck it. We're stuck in the middle of this thing. Got troops and equipment committed, the senate's screaming about the budget, American's want results, the enemy is regrouping, the polls are going every which way, and my vacation starts next month. It's now or never.

GOOBER

When are they-

CARR

Tomorrow at... ah fuck it. I forgot about the time change.

He looks at his watch, counts with his fingers.

CARR (cont'd)

About twelve hours from now.

GOOBER

So, what do you want us to do?

CARR

You're asking me? That's your job.

GOOBER

Right. Any suggestions?

CARR

Yeah. As soon as we know the mission is underway, I need to go live.

GOOBER

Right. So we'll plan for an announcement in what, 15, 16 hours?

CARR

Better keep the time open.

GOOBER

Right. The crew will be on standby. And I'll work on your speech.

Goober and Glont stand. Carr is turned away from them.

CARR

Better write two versions.

Goober stops in his tracks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOOBER

Sir. Can I ask for you to be candid with me for a moment?

CARR

About what?

GOOBER

What kind of position are we in regarding the winnability of this mission?

CARR

What kind of question is that?

GOOBER

It would help me in writing the speeches.

CARR

(Quietly)

Of course, things are going as planned.

GOOBER

Thank you.

Goober and Glont are not so sure.

TV COMMERCIAL

A loud, insipid pizza commercial suddenly assaults our senses. A family sits around a coffee table pulling slices heaped with melted cheese that stretches for six feet.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ten pounds of cheese on every pizza, guaranteed.

Even though the stretched cheese refuses to break, the family begins ingesting it and attempting to swallow it whole. One kid pulls a slice into another room.

A fat adolescent slouches with stretched cheese covering his front, and running down his gullet.

FAT ADOLESCENT

(Gagging in ecstasy)

Now, that's a cheesy pizza.

The family is comatose, watching the tube, with cheese stretched over them and into their mouths.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The death by cheese pizza. What a way to go.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

A TV sitcom about a large low-brow family. The room is filled with stuffy old ladies watching a violin recital. WE MOVE IN ON JANICE, the sitcom star, seated with her husband BIFF and six small boys all squeezed into ill-fitting suits. They fidget and pull on their clothes. The MUSIC is unbearably tedious.

JANICE

(Whispering to Biff)

What did you guys eat for dinner?

BIFF

The rest of that chili.

Janice nods, then looks confused. Then, her eyes grow wide.

JANICE

Not the chili in the green bowl.

BIFF

Yeah.

JANICE

Oh my God.

The audience knows, and the canned LAUGHTER goes wild.

BIFF

What's wrong?

JANICE

That wasn't exactly chili.

ANGLE ON one kid as his stomach begins to liquefy. His eyes bulge. He looks like he's about to explode. Then, he rises up and emits a massive, wet FART. The LAUGH TRACK goes crazy.

ANGLE ON the other kids and Biff as they too make funny faces and FART LOUDLY. The old ladies are mortified. Janice is deeply embarrassed.

Finally, the fartorama overtakes the performance, and the old ladies and musicians vacate in a huff. The stuffiest OLD LADY of all approaches Janice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD LADY

Well, the very idea. Ms. Smythe, this is the most disgusting display I have ever witnessed. You can be assured that you will not be invited to join the Cotillion Assembly. Good day.

As she prances off. Janice is hangdog. Then after a moment, she lifts her head...

JANICE

Yeah, well maybe I don't want to join your goddamn old lady club.

The old lady turns back, jaw dropping. The audience APPLAUDS.

JANICE (cont'd)

You can shove your club right where the sun don't shine. Come on, guys.

OLD LADY

Well, I never.

JANICE

Well, maybe you should.

One last FART. Another wave of LAUGHTER. Janice and the guys troop out, leaving the old lady dumbfounded.

CHANNEL CHANGES
TO:

INT. NEWS STUDIO

On TV, as a national anchor intros a story.

NEWS ANCHOR

Former public relations advisor to the President, Bob Banister, spoke with the press today about his reasons for leaving the Carr administration. Clint Mastiff has the story.

CUT TO:

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - DAY

On television, fifty or so members of the press are packed in close to the stage, as Banister speaks at the podium. The camera is angled to make him look like a kook.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLINT MASTIFF (V.O.)

Banister appears to have left his plush white house job to take up with the antiwar group, Stop It Now, which consists primarily of followers of Roy Thode, the alleged alien from the fifth dimension. In a press gathering held at the Stop It Now headquarters near Los Angeles, Banister spoke out against the President's policies.

BANISTER

We as a nation, as citizens of the world have the ability to choose. The success of Operation: Peaceful Destiny was based on a bet that we cannot make choices, that we will not be able to stop allowing fear, greed, hatred, and stupidity to control us.

SHOTS of Stop It Now members chanting excitedly.

CLINT MASTIFF (V.O.)

Stop It Now like most of the Roy Thode cults that have sprung up around the world consists primarily of people who found the DVDs that were allegedly produced by the allusive leader. Banister claims to be among those, but waffles when questioned about his allegiance to the cult.

ANGLE Banister in a one on one interview.

BANISTER

One does not follow Roy Thode in the traditional sense of following a charismatic religious leader. He has some good ideas and he speaks the truth. When anyone is bold and wise enough to speak the truth, he is bound to attract people who are interested.

MORE SHOTS of members in a large meeting. The cutting is focused again on making the people look like nuts. Those SHOTS are juxtaposed against similar scenes from the Jim Jones massacre.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLINT MASTIFF (V.O.)
 Truth or not, followers of Roy
 Thode show a devotion that compares
 favorably to most other mass
 religious movements of the past,
 including the Jim Jones ministry in
 which hundreds of followers
 committed suicide rather than give
 up their allegiance to a leader.
 One thing is certain, the movement
 is infectious.

The last SHOT shows dead bodies littering the cult grounds.

CHANNEL CHANGES
 TO:

BLACK

As the TV is shut off.

CUT TO:

INT. FURNITURE STORE MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

As Banister and Rusty face the black TV screen.

BANISTER
 (dejected and pissed)
 The machine cannot be stopped.

RUSTY
 Sure, it can.

BANISTER
 It's vast, it's living, its
 tendrils reach from the White House
 through the media and into the
 minds of all Americans, and we
 carry it around the world. It's a
 monster that feeds off the worst
 qualities of man. And it cannot be
 stopped, because people are what
 they are.

RUSTY
 People can be changed. We changed.

BANISTER
 The machine is too powerful. It
 will adapt.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BANISTER (CONT'D)

It will stop at nothing to survive.
We are destined to be its slaves.

Rusty stands and heads for the door.

RUSTY

Are you done?

BANISTER

(Surprised)

Yes.

RUSTY

Good.

Rusty leaves.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

It is a bright, clear day. The figure of Nelson is planted again on the boulder.

ANGLE CLOSE ON Nelson. His eyes are closed. He is still and peaceful. A light breeze stirs his long hair, his beard is full, his face is drawn from lack of food. After a long breath, his eyes open slowly. Weeks have gone by and now Nelson is returning to earth. He looks around. Everything seems new. He is back, and he is full of energy and wisdom.

He stands slowly and walks to his tent, puts on his pants and shirt, and begins to pack.

EXT. MAGUMBA MILITARY BASE - DAY

Tension is on red alert. Vehicles are lined up and prepared to move out.

ANGLE ON CHOPPER pilot. His helicopter is spun up and he is waiting for the word.

ANGLE TROOPS in a tank. They too are waiting silently.

ANGLE TROOPS lined up in a transport vehicle, waiting. Soldier 1 and Soldier 2 are sitting close to the front. They turn to each other and share a macho handshake.

VARIOUS OTHER ANGLES of men, sitting, grinding their teeth, their battle faces ready, their weapons loaded, waiting for the "go" code.

INT. MILITARY WAR ROOM

A dark room filled with tense soldiers on standby, radar screens churning the skies, everything in place. The General is on the phone, waiting. Then...

GENERAL
(On phone)
Yes sir. Yes sir.

He sets the phone down and gives the word to a soldier with a microphone.

GENERAL (cont'd)
Peters. Give the order.

Immediately, Peters opens the mike.

PETERS
Tango Foxtrot Zebra. Repeat: Tango
Foxtrot Zebra.

EXT. MAGUMBA MILITARY BASE

WE MOVE from vehicle to vehicle as gung-ho CHEERS erupt and the army starts rolling. The military CHEERS slowly blend with the SOUND of a large crowd CHANTING, "Stop it now."

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

As Rusty stands at the podium leading the CHEER. The place is packed to above capacity. It is hot and the excitement level is through the roof. A band is pumping the crowd with energetic MUSIC.

The CHANT dies down as Rusty steps away from the podium. Deirdre approaches him.

RUSTY
Where's Banister?

DEIRDRE
His rental car broke down near LAX.

RUSTY
Jesus Christ. The people want Bob
fucking Banister. What are we going
to tell them?

DEIRDRE
Don't yell at me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Well, maybe Jim can talk about finances for awhile.

DEIRDRE

Yeah, that'd get them excited.

RUSTY

You got any better ideas?

DEIRDRE

We got the momentum, but nothing to talk about.

RUSTY

Good, talk about that. I'll try to think of something.

DEIRDRE

You want me to go up there? What do I know about giving speeches?

RUSTY

You've been doing okay so far. Just let it happen.

DEIRDRE

You let it happen.

She turns, he grabs her.

RUSTY

Deirdre, come on. This is all yours. You created it. Fuck Banister. Who needs him? You got to do it.

DEIRDRE

(Gritting her teeth)
I got to do it.

RUSTY

Go on. They're waiting for you.

DEIRDRE

They're waiting for me. Fuck it, they're waiting for Banister!

RUSTY

Fuck Banister. Who needs him?

DEIRDRE

Fuck Banister!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

There you go!

DEIRDRE

Fuck Banister!

She breaks away from Rusty and repeats "Fuck Banister" as a mantra as she approaches the mike. The crowd sees her and a CHEER rises. Deirdre stares straight into the heart of the beast and breathes in the glory. She raises her hands to quiet the crowd.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

Bob Banister has been delayed.

BOOS and HISSES rise.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

Umm, I want to thank you all for coming. This is a momentous occasion. We are making history! We are attempting to do the impossible and it's not easy.

The CROWD CHUCKLES.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

We aren't merely attempting to stop a war, we are attempting to change human nature. We are asking people to stop doing what they do best. We're asking them to give up cigarettes, alcohol, caffeine, heroin, and chocolate all at once. Have you ever tried to stop chocolate?

Another TITTER. She knows that she is beginning to lose them.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

Umm, I'd like to bring Jim Garfield up here now.

CHEER.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

He would like to update you on... some of the financial details we have going on now. Jim?

She looks for Jim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE (cont'd)
 Is Jim out there? Jim Garfield?
 Jim? I guess Jim is... Oh there he
 is.

Jim steps on the stage and approaches Deirdre.

JIM
 (Frightened, to Deirdre)
 You didn't tell me. I don't have...

DEIRDRE
 Jim. No one does. We're vamping
 now. Do what you can.

Jim looks like he is going to have a heart attack, as he
 steps toward the mike.

JIM
 Thank you.

FEEDBACK.

JIM (cont'd)
 Umm. We currently have \$43,129.17
 in our savings account. I need to
 pay the electric bill, but that's
 not that much. I guess we're doing
 okay. We could always use more
 money if you care to donate some,
 just so we can have a bit of a
 cushion.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI - DAY

As Humvees and tanks roll through the dirt streets of this
 third-world capital. The gunfire starts. It seems to come
 from everywhere: rooves, shops, windows, doorways.

A tank rotates and BLASTS a huge hole through a three-story
 building. Locals run out, SCREAMING and bloody. A six-year-
 old kid lobs a grenade into the back of a troop carrier, and
 the explosion sends fragments and body parts everywhere. It's
 hell.

It's clear the battle is not going to be a slam-dunk, that
 the bloody fighting will continue until nothing is left
 standing.

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

Jim is wrapping up. No one is listening to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM

And so, if we choose to invest some of that 43-thousand, we could have a nice little nest egg in a few years. Of course, that is assuming we don't need to spend it.

Deirdre breaks in.

DEIRDRE

Thank you, Jim. That was Jim Garfield with the financial report. So, uh...

As Deidre attempts to reinvigorate the crowd, she looks down. Nelson is approaching the stage. She hardly recognizes him. She stares, unable to speak. The crowd sees her reaction and follows her sight line. Nelson continues up to the podium.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

(To Nelson)

Nelson, what uh... Do you want to speak?

He nods.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

All right.

(Into mike)

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the founder of Stop It Now, who has been...

She turns to him.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

(To Nelson)

Where have you been?

NELSON

Thank you.

He takes the mike. We can't tell if he is filled with inspiration or about to have a psychotic episode.

NELSON (cont'd)

I have good news. I have been to a mountaintop and I have waited with patience and looked within my soul, and I have discovered a few important things I would like to share with you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (CONT'D)

We are all needed at this very moment to stop a bloody and unnecessary battle in Magumba. President Carr has sent in troops to capture the leader, but the plan is not working. The Americans have been ambushed and neither side is going to stop fighting until there is nothing left to kill. I can't tell you how I know this, because you probably wouldn't believe me. But you will find out about it soon enough. The other thing I want to tell you is that we can stop it now.

The crowd starts chanting. Nelson quiets them.

NELSON (cont'd)

In Roy Thode's last DVD, he suggested that we pray. We are going to stop the battle by praying.

The spell is broken. LAUGHTER arises from the throng. Deirdre and Rusty shake their heads.

NELSON (cont'd)

I'm serious. It's our only chance to save thousands of lives. We can do it. We can make the choice to stop the madness.

Deirdre comes up behind him.

DEIRDRE

Nelson, it's not going to work. Maybe you... need a little rest and some food. Why don't you let me-

Nelson points her out.

NELSON

Here's a woman who believes that praying does not work! Praying works. Praying is what you do when you believe!

He speaks with such conviction, the crowd becomes still again.

NELSON (cont'd)

It has to work. It has to work, because we have to believe.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (CONT'D)

It's all we have, and it's all we need. We have to believe that the people of this planet can take charge of their lives and stop listening to the voices in their heads that tell them we have no choice, that they will be slaves forever to the voices deep in their minds that never stop. Like a whip. Like the stinging whip of a slave master that lashes out again and again.

He pauses and scans the faces. He owns the crowd. They are SILENT and waiting for the answer.

NELSON (cont'd)

But you know what? You know what? There is a way to cast off those chains and meet the slave master face to face - look him in the eye and say "no way, it's gonna stop and it's gonna stop right now!" What does it take to do that? Hmm? An act of congress? A nuclear bomb blast? Waiting for someone to give us a sign? No, no and no. Here's what it takes. Courage. It takes knowing you're right, and knowing you've had enough, and standing up to the slave master, and saying Stop It Now! We have the choice. We can choose! Give up and accept the worst of humanity. Or stand up and embrace the best. Who believes? Raise your hands. Who believes? If you don't believe, then what the hell are you doing here? Good.

Slowly every hand raises high and a CHEER RINGS out.

NELSON (cont'd)

There's a bloody battle going on right now in Magumba. We believe it can stop, stop right now, without hesitation. All it takes is enough people to believe, believe it is possible, it is inevitable; it is impossible for this battle to take place if the people doing the fighting stop listening to those voices that enslave them. We pray that they stop listening, now. Right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nelson opens his eyes and sees hundreds of people standing with their heads bowed, waiting for something to happen. He steps away from the mike.

NELSON (cont'd)
(To himself)
What am I doing? This is crazy.

Deirdre approaches him.

DEIRDRE
Nelson, what's wrong?

NELSON
What's going on?

DEIRDRE
You are leading the group in prayer.

NELSON
What the hell? I can't do that.
This is ridiculous.

DEIRDRE
You're doing fine. They want you to continue.

NELSON
Continue what?

DEIRDRE
They want you to end the battle in Magumba.

NELSON
How?

DEIRDRE
By praying.

NELSON
That's ridiculous.

DEIRDRE
I must admit, it sounded a bit farfetched at first, but now... you got us to believe it can work, so you have to continue.

NELSON
I have to tell them it was a mistake... I was wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE
 (Grabbing his arm tightly)
 Nelson.

NELSON
 What?

DEIRDRE
 I don't think so.
 (Squeezing the blood out
 of his arm)
 You march your ass right back over
 to that mike and finish this thing.
 And at the end of your prayer, if
 that fucking battle isn't over,
 you're going to be in a shitload of
 trouble. Do you hear me? Do you
 grasp the depth and breadth of what
 I'm saying. There's no backing out,
 there's no alternative. You have
 one choice: pray your ass off. So,
 you'd better make it work.

She releases him. His eyes take in the massiveness of the crowd - his mind, the massiveness of his commitment. He approaches the mike, closes his eyes.

NELSON
 (Quietly)
 We're not here tonight looking for
 simple answers. We're here to tell
 the world, it has to stop now, it
 can and it will and it must. May we
 have the strength to believe like
 we've never believed before. Repeat
 after me.

After each phrase Nelson waits for the audience to repeat.

NELSON (cont'd)
 I believe that we have the power...
 to stop listening right now... to
 those voices that enslave us... and
 to start believing in the goodness
 of all mankind. Say I believe...

The crowd is transfixed, SILENT. They refuse to stop their concentration.

After a wait, something does happen. The air above the crowd begins to glow deep violet. The violet brightens with wisps of electric clouds. Still, no one dares to open their eyes.

EXT. FURNITURE STORE - NIGHT

The purple electric clouds rise from the building and expand outward.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

Carr is seated with four military advisors. He looks scared.

CARR

I don't understand. You gave me
your assurance.

The man he is addressing does not take to being cornered.

MILITARY ADVISOR 1

Sir, I gave you an estimate based
on optimum conditions. This
situation is not optimum.

CARR

How did it become not optimum,
General?

MILITARY ADVISOR 1

With all due respect, this is a war
and any number of scenarios are
possible.

CARR

It sounds to me like bad planning,
General.

The advisor stands, seething.

MILITARY ADVISOR 1

We laid out the options, Mr.
President, as you may remember. The
Secretary of Defense... asked us to
eliminate... what he considered
unnecessary expenses - all our
contingencies. He wanted a very
lean force and felt confident,
against our better judgement-

CARR

So, we're fucked.

The military man says nothing.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREETS - DAY

WE MOVE down a dirt street, ravaged by battle. The convoy of humvees and tanks cannot continue. The street is littered with the bodies of soldiers, civilians, animals - anything caught in the crossfire.

The soldiers who have not been torn apart by the continuous stream of bullets and bombs have hunkered down in the shops and homes.

A downed Blackhawk helicopter blocks an important intersection, stopping all means of egress. Every living thing in the battle zone is trapped.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI ALCOVE

Two American soldiers are pressed against a wall, scared shitless.

SOLDIER 4
They're all dead.

SOLDIER 5
How can you tell?

SOLDIER 4
The Hummer's blown to shit and nothing's moving.

SOLDIER 5
Who's firing?

SOLDIER 4
Skinnies on the roof.

SOLDIER 5
What are they firing at?

SOLDIER 4
Nothing. Not one fucking thing.

SOLDIER 5
We're fucked.

SOLDIER 4
Pretty much.

EXT. ROOFTOP EMPLACEMENT

Two loyalists are hammering away at the dead street with two automatic weapons mounted on tripods. One of them stops and peers over the edge of the roof.

LOYALIST 1
Why did you stop?

LOYALIST 2
There's nothing to shoot at.

LOYALIST 1
They're still out there.

LOYALIST 2
No. They're all gone. Look.

Loyalist 2 stops shooting and peers over the edge.

INT. CORNER SHOP

Three GIs are lying low under the busted out front window. A fourth GI (GI 2) suddenly flies in from the back room and slides across the floor to the window.

GI 1
What did you find?

GI 2
The convoy can't move. Every road is blocked. Skinnies are everywhere.

GI 1
Okay. We'll wait for reinforcements.

GI 2 shakes his head.

GI 1 (cont'd)
What?

GI 2
I don't know how they're going to get to us. The skinnies got anti-aircraft sites all along the street.

GI 1
Yeah, well. What the fuck are we supposed to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GI 2
Wait it out.

GI 1
Yeah, wait it out.

INT. SECOND STORY HOME

Three loyalists scan the street from a bombed-out living room. One of them is still shooting at phantoms with an automatic rifle.

LOYALIST 3
Stop shooting, Habass.

LOYALIST 4
The infidels killed my family. I will not stop until they are all dead.

LOYALIST 3
But there is nothing to shoot at.

He stops and scans the street. The other two turn in and sit with their backs against the wall. Something has changed.

LOYALIST 5
I'm tired.

LOYALIST 3
So am I.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREETS

It is SILENT and still.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI ALCOVE

The two have lowered their weapons and are waiting for the inevitable.

SOLDIER 4
My back hurts.

SOLDIER 5
I know.

SOLDIER 4
I think I'm going to go sit down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER 5

There ain't much room here.

SOLDIER 4

Yeah. I'm thinking of sitting over there.

SOLDIER 5

In the street?

SOLDIER 4

Yeah. There's some shade on that curb.

SOLDIER 5

Umm, but, umm...

Soldier 4 tosses his gun down, walks out in the open and sits on the curb. A moment after he sits, a RIFLE SHOT blows the top of his head off.

INT. SECOND STORY HOME

Loyalist 4 lowers his rifle. The three look out the window.

LOYALIST 3

You shot him.

LOYALIST 4

Of course.

LOYALIST 3

He threw his weapon down. Maybe he was surrendering.

LOYALIST 4

The infidel Americans never surrender. They are like a plague. We must kill them all.

LOYALIST 3

Look.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREET

ANGLE POV of the Loyalists as Soldier 5 tosses his gun down and wanders into the street. He appears lost, as if all common sense and fear have been erased. He wanders over to the body of Soldier 4 and sits next to him. He takes out a rag and wipes his forehead.

INT. SECOND STORY HOME

Loyalist 4 takes aim.

LOYALIST 3
 (Calmly)
 Don't do it, Habass. He's not
 hurting anyone.

Loyalist 3 sets his weapon on the floor, stands and walks
 out. Loyalist 5 follows.

EXT. ROOFTOP EMPLACEMENT

The two Loyalists are resting.

LOYALIST 1
 I'm hungry.

LOYALIST 2
 Yes. I could use a drink.

The two stand and head for the stairs.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREET

All the chaos and killing have stopped. Slowly, one after the
 other, soldiers step out of the shops and homes, and walk
 peacefully down the street.

INT. CORNER SHOP

The GIs are looking through the baked goods behind the
 counter.

GI 1
 What's that?

GI 2
 Looks like a bagel.

GI 3
 Found some cream cheese, I think.

GI 1
 What the hell would they be doing
 with cream cheese?

GI 3
 Probably made from goat's milk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The store owner pokes his head in from the back room. GI 3 sees him.

GI 3 (cont'd)
Hey guys, look.

The three watch him as they step around the counter. The owner walks over to an ancient espresso machine. He points to it and turns to the soldiers with a smile. They smile and nod, reach into their pockets and pull out some local cash.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREET

Loyalist 4 is standing over Soldier 5, who is still seated next to his buddy with the blown-off head. The Loyalist tosses his gun down, Soldier 5 gives him a weak smile.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BATTLEFIELD - DAY

A promo for an action war movie: continuous montage of short clips showing things exploding and men getting blown apart.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
(Heavy, tough)
What would happen if everybody in
the world was your sworn enemy?

TOUGH GUY 1
There's nowhere to go, but I'm on
the way.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
And you have one choice: kill or be
killed.

Tough Guy is pressing a large pistol against the temple of a fat, sweaty guy.

TOUGH GUY 1
Give me one reason why I shouldn't
pull this trigger.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
When everything falls apart, what
do you do?

QUICK CUT TO:

NEWS BULLETIN GRAPHIC

NETWORK ANNOUNCER

We now interrupt our regularly
scheduled programming to bring you
this news bulletin.

INT. NEWS STUDIO

An anchor is listening to his earpiece as we cut to him.

NETWORK NEWS ANCHOR

Ladies and gentlemen, we have just
received word that the President is
about to give an unscheduled
announcement concerning, uh, late-
breaking events in operation:
peaceful conclusion. I see the
announcement is starting. So, we
now take you to the White House.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

Again, Carr faces the nation with a concerned face.

CARR

My fellow Americans, it is again
with a heavy heart that I come
before you...

INT. FURNITURE STORE SHOWROOM - NIGHT

The crowd has thinned out considerably. A hundred or so worn-
out people lounge around, sitting on the floor, on tables.
Deirdre and Nelson are sitting on the edge of the stage, too
tired to stop.

DEIRDRE

I can't get over what you did
tonight.

NELSON

Likewise.

DEIRDRE

I think there were probably over a
thousand people here. What do you
think?

NELSON

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE
I'm tired. You tired?

NELSON
Not really.

DEIRDRE
So, want some coffee?

NELSON
Deirdre.

DEIRDRE
What?

NELSON
Remember when we first started
going out?

DEIRDRE
Yeah.

NELSON
I want that again.

DEIRDRE
What do you mean?

NELSON
You know.

DEIRDRE
Tell me.

NELSON
Like, we were happy and got along
and just did things without having
to have reasons.

DEIRDRE
I still don't know what you mean.

NELSON
Yes, you do.

DEIRDRE
Maybe.

NELSON
Where are you going with this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEIRDRE

I just want to hear you say it. You can fucking communicate all this cool shit to a thousand people, and you can't even tell me what you want. I'm always guessing with you-

Before she can get it out, he wraps his arms around her and they kiss passionately and deeply.

DEIRDRE (cont'd)

Okay. Now I know.

ANGLE ON Jim Garfield as he bursts out of the office into the main room, calling...

JIM

Deirdre, Nelson. The President is on the TV.

DEIRDRE

Why?

JIM

He's talking about the war in Magumba.

Nelson jumps up on the stage, grabs the mike.

NELSON

Hey everybody, Carr is giving a speech about the war.

(To Jim)

Can you bring the TV out?

JIM

I'll try.

Nelson grabs the mike and walks toward the office, as Jim rolls the TV out. Nelson holds the mike against the TV speaker. People gather around and watch.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

ANGLE ON CARR as he continues.

CARR

-Soldiers fought valiantly and gave their all to locate Chingaderra, but they were not able to complete their mission.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR (CONT'D)

The peacekeepers were forced to slow their advance as they encountered heavy resistance from the loyalist army of the evil dictator. At this point, it is not known how many casualties there are on either side. However, let me make one thing perfectly clear. We will not back down. We will advance until we have...

Carr suddenly stops and stares blankly at the screen.

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE ON TELEPROMPTER as Carr stares at an empty screen. Producers and crew start panicking, then words appear: "wrap it up."

RESUME CARR

CARR (cont'd)

We will continue to advance until we have... won the battle and... did what we went there for... to Magumba. I will, uh, let you know if anything else happens. So, umm.

ANGLE TELEPROMPTER

As more text appears.

RESUME CARR

CARR (cont'd)

Here's something else I want to say.

Carr studies the text, and reads slowly as it appears.

CARR (cont'd)

The battle has ended. The mission, however, was not successful. The loyalists laid down their arms along with the American soldiers and neither side is claiming victory.

A CHEER rises up from the crowd, as Carr finishes. Carr is visibly upset, looks off-camera and shoots daggers at someone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARR (cont'd)

That is all for now. We'll keep you updated. Thank you.

RESUME Nelson and Deirdre, standing by the TV hugging. Everyone is excited and CHEERING. Rusty and Banister approach them, and join the hugfest. Others join in.

EXT. KAWAPOTSI STREET

People are gathered in the street, conversing, eating, and assessing the damage.

ANGLE ON a loyalist and soldier standing over the mutilated body of a loyalist.

SOLDIER 6

I'm sorry.

LOYALIST 6

I am too.

ANGLE ON a soldier who has been cut in half and is dying rapidly. A Loyalist kneels beside him and places a wet rag on his forehead.

LOYALIST 7

I take full responsibility for your suffering, and ask for your forgiveness.

SOLDIER 7

I forgive you. I'm not afraid.

LOYALIST 7

I don't hate you.

The soldier dies.

ANGLE ON two wounded enemies walking casually up the street.

LOYALIST 8

Have you ever been to Kawapotsi?

SOLDIER 8

No, this is my first time.

LOYALIST 8

Well, let me show you around. Have you had lunch?

SOLDIER 8

No, we just got here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOYALIST 8

There's a fine little café right around the corner that makes a hell of a good lamb stew - if it hasn't been blown up. Do you like lamb?

SOLDIER 8

Yes, I do.

The two stroll by.

ANGLE ON an American officer and a Loyalist leader. Bodies are being loaded into a truck in the BACKGROUND.

AMERICAN OFFICER

So, if it's not too much trouble. I could sure use a hand here with these bodies.

LOYALIST OFFICER

And I can expect that you will help us rebuild our city?

AMERICAN OFFICER

Of course.

They shake hands and start to work.

AMERICAN OFFICER (cont'd)

By the way, that evil dictator of yours. Are you folks really happy under his leadership?

LOYALIST OFFICER

(Shrugging)

He ruled through fear, like most leaders, including yours I believe.

AMERICAN OFFICER

Touché.

LOYALIST OFFICER

I don't believe we will have much trouble with Chingaderra now that he can no longer use that weapon against us. If he causes us any more trouble, we will kill him.

The two share a laugh.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - SUNSET

The sky is colored in deep reds and blues as the sun recedes. Nelson is seated in the lotus position, deep in meditation.

INT. NELSON'S MIND

The withered, dying body of Roy Thode lies still on a straw bed.

ROY

We've accomplished a lot. I'm very pleased.

NELSON (O.S.)

What will happen to you?

ROY

I will die. We fifth-dimension people don't take well to freedom. It's all right, though. I was bad for going against my people, but I was good for helping yours.

NELSON (O.S.)

What happens after you die?

ROY

Someone will come and recycle me.

NELSON (O.S.)

I wish I could have gotten to know you better.

ROY

Me too.

NELSON (O.S.)

There is one question I have. In your second DVD you mentioned that in exchange for our slavery, your people gave us a reason for living. What is your reason for living?

ROY

Hmm, I don't know. To control you, I suppose. Good question.

Roy's eyes close and he dies.

NELSON (O.S.)

Roy. Roy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The image of Roy fades away.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP

As Nelson's eyes open slowly. The last bit of the sun has just gone below the horizon. Nelson stands, stretches, picks up his backpack, and starts walking slowly back down the mountain.

FADE TO BLACK.