

**The Migration
by
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EXT: DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A sky of infinite stars towers over the tiny headlights of a van traveling through the night on a ribbon of road.

The van is painted with groovy 60's iconography like the 'Further' bus. Stars, and peace signs, and flowers and mushrooms and wizards playing guitars etc.

The license plate reads "Traded everything for love".

Music floats out the van's window on the wind. A voice sings.

VOICE

I came upon a child of God he was
walking along the road
And I asked him, "Where are you
going? And this he told me...

A deer suddenly runs onto the highway. It freezes in the glare of headlights, and the driver swerves hard.

The van SCREECHES and rolls over and over coming to rest along the highway. The deer runs off, safe into the night.

VOICE (CONT'D)

I'm going on down to Yasgur's Farm,
I'm gonna join in a rock and roll
band. I'm gonna camp out on the
land. I'm gonna get my soul free.

The driver, JASPER WILLOW, the long haired male driver of the van groans and touches his bloody head. The windshield is cracked in a giant snowflake pattern in front of him.

The headlights of the van flicker, and the radio warbles. Now the lights and music go dark and silent. Desert wind blows across the highway.

High, bright headlights illuminate the scene.

We hear the sound of Mack truck air brakes SIGHING. RED, A dark figure in a cowboy hat, descends from the seat of the cab and approaches the overturned van. He looks down at the broken and bleeding driver.

RED

Looks like you could use a hand.

He grabs the man's hand and when he does, the Cowboy looks like he's receiving an electric shock. The lights of the van flicker back on and the radio plays once more.

VOICE

We are stardust.
We are golden.
And we've got to get ourselves back
to the garden.

The lights and music go dead. The Cowboy notices a tattoo on the driver's forearm, it reads STARDUST, with little shooting stars and sprinkles emanating from it.

RED

You.

He hesitates. And then he pulls the man from the car and throws him over his shoulder in a fireman's carry. He walks back toward the Mack truck. Opening up the back, he lays the man down inside. The man moans, confused, barely conscious. Suddenly, behind him in the deep darkness we see a hundred white eyes opening, glowing, moving. The injured driver's eyes open wide. He's awake now.

The cowboy closes the big truck doors and locks them up with a BANG. There is a SCREAM from inside. And then terrible RENDING SOUNDS, and the SCREECHING of unknown beasts. A lonely wind whistles over the wide prairie, rustling Red's hair. He looks up at the big sky of stars and tips his hat. He spits a gooey red wad of what looks like chewing tobacco onto the road.

RED (CONT'D)

I'm still here.

He walks back over to the van and looks inside, there's a guitar in a ratty old case. A sticker on it declares "Mean People Suck". Red smiles and takes the guitar. He strides to his Mack truck and climbs back up into the cab, whistling "She'll Be Coming around the Mountain".

MONTAGE

STUMPY, an old man, stands on the porch of his house looking off into the distance. A deformed Kitten with only three legs tumbles and wrestles on the floor, playing with a severed chicken's foot.

Stumpy spots headlights moving on the highway. A convoy of trucks. The old man points with a gnarled hand which is missing fingers.

STUMPY

The Migration has begun.

An inbred looking little boy smiles and runs through a squeaky screen door out into the night. The boy enters the barn and opens a stall. There's a goat there with a red handkerchief tied around its neck. The boy takes hold of a rope on the goat and leads it out to the end of the driveway, where he ties it to the mailbox. He puts a lit flashlight on the ground with its beam of light shining up into the sky.

The giant Mack trucks come around the bend, gleaming in moonlight. The inbred boy lifts his fist in the air and pulls it down, over and over again. Up in the cab of the truck, Red smiles and hits the horn. It BOOMS into the night.

A blur of something incredibly fast swoops down and when the boy looks again, he sees the goat is gone. Nothing left but a shredded piece of rope. The boy screams with excitement and claps.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Several cowboys on horseback pursue a terrified man through a cornfield. They are hooting and hollering and twirling lassos in the air. Several carry flashlights which they use to spot and follow the man as he runs. Beams of light bounce and crisscross in the sky, as the wild pursuit continues.

The cowboys catch hold of the man with their ropes and drag him through the corn. He ends up face down in the dirt. Boots land in the dust next to him. He is screaming and struggling, as the men hold him down. They place a strip of red cloth around his neck. He is hefted up on the back of a horse, and the group YEEHAS! into the darkness.

We PAN UP into the air from the cornfield and see down the road a ways, where the Mack trucks move along a twisty road.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Mack truck comes to a stop along a forlorn looking road. Red looks out of his cab at a sign that says "Weaverville" 12 miles.

RED

Home sweet home.

He knocks on the metal of the cab behind him.

RED (CONT'D)

You boys can fly from here.

He reaches down and pushes a button on his dashboard.

The top of the Mack truck slides open like a giant convertible. A hundred giant silhouettes, flying things cut from the fabric of darkness, rise with a "WHOOSH" swirling and twisting together up from inside the truck into the sky. Red lays on the horn, laughing, and whooping.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

HOPALONG, a three legged dog, yelps and growls in his dreams, contorting on the bed, bumping into his master. JOHN SAMPSON, The SHERRIFF, a stone faced old Texan, prods the dog with his toe, and rumbles in a deep, sleep crusted voice.

SHERIFF
Hopalong, Hopalong, You're
dreaming.

The dog wakes up and licks the Sherriff's hand

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
What are you running from boy? In
those dark dreams of yours?"

EXT. HIGH IN THE SKY - NIGHT

VAMPIRE P.O.V.

The sound of GIANT WINGS FLAPPING. Far below, the little towns and solitary farms sleep in the dead of night.

Here and there across the countryside we see faint beams of light shining up into the sky

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Red numbers on the face of an automatic coffeemaker read 5:59 AM. The numbers change to 6:00 AM and the coffeemaker groans to life and begins to percolate.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

A man's bare feet are warmed by the rising sun. Hopalong lies next to the feet, curled up on his back.

The Sheriff sniffs, smelling something good, and yawns.

SHERIFF
Thanks babe.

Birds are singing outside. The Sheriff opens his eyes.
 There's a little bird on the birdfeeder outside the window.
 The bird's feather's stand up straight on his head, like a
 punk rocker.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 Look at this here little fella,
 he's got a funny haircut Hon.

He rolls over and sees that there is no one but the dog
 beside him. Hopalong looks at him with mournful dog eyes.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 Ten years.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The sheriff enters a messy kitchen. Lots of dishes in the
 sink. He picks up the coffee pot and pours himself a cup.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The Sheriff waters flowers outside a small house. He stares
 at a rose. A NEIGHBOR walking his dog down the road waves.

NEIGHBOR
 Morning, John.

Hopalong barks and wags his tail. The Sheriff looks down at
 him and then up at what he's barking at. He sees the neighbor
 and nods his head in recognition.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Sheriff sits in his living room. A blanket embroidered
 with many flowers is draped over the couch behind him.

A grandfather clock in the corner ticks off time loudly.

SERIES OF SHOTS

CLOSE UP

A Mother Mary statue.

Painting of a cross eyed Siamese cat looking at a flying bee.

A statue of Cherubs holding a glass ball.

Rocks and crystals.

A gnome sitting on a mushroom.

Something BEEPS. The Sheriff walks to the microwave and takes out an Egg sandwich. He takes the top piece of bread off and walks across the room.

He stops in front of a large display cabinet full of porcelain salt and pepper shakers. He looks them over like Napoleon surveying his army. There are animal salt shakers, matching penguins, elephants, cats. There are matching cars, stars, fruits and vegetables, people, you name it.

He picks the salt shaker combo of the sun and moon, and uses them to season his sandwich. Carefully he puts them back in their place in the cabinet.

The phone rings. It's JEWEL, a funny firecracker of an older lady, who shouts through the phone.

JEWEL

Where are you?

SHERRIFF

You called me at home.

JEWEL

I mean, where are you in your routine? If you want to get to work on time, you should be in the shower now.

SHERRIFF

I am.

JEWEL

Ok then. See you soon.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Inside an office of a small jailhouse. A messy desk with many papers, a computer. Wanted posters on the walls.

The Sheriff sits staring into space. Hopalong is in a box with a blanket in the corner. There's a sign that says. "Deputy Hopalong- the Bark stops here".

The Sheriff turns on an oscillating fan and it blows on his face. There's a rustling behind him and he turns to see Jewel who lays some papers on the desk in front of him.

JEWEL
Refresher on your coffee?

SHERIFF
No thanks.

JEWEL
You smell good today John. New
aftershave?

SHERIFF
Probably my deodorant. I forget to
put it on most days.

JEWEL
I need you to sign those papers
some time today. Okey-dokey.

SHERIFF
Okey-dokey.

She hustles out.

INT. OFFICE -DAY- SOME TIME LATER.

The Sheriff has stopped writing midsentence and is staring out the window. The piece of paper he's writing on flaps in the wind of the fan.

He looks down at the front of his desk. There are more salt shakers. A little windmill and a Don Quixote figure. A drunk and his jug of whiskey, and a male bear. But only one bear. The Sheriff moves papers around on his desk. He looks around and behind things. Nothing. He looks on the floor behind the garbage can and sees the female bear broken into several pieces.

He takes in breath sharply. He picks up the pieces and gets out some glue.

The phone rings. He ignores it or doesn't hear it.

Jewel leans into sight in the doorway.

JEWEL
Lunch time John. You want to go
with me to the diner?

SHERIFF
No, I brought a lunch. Thanks.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

The Sheriff sits by a plot with two graves, eating his lunch out of a paper bag. He tosses small pieces of bread to birds.

He lies down on the empty space of grass next to the graves he's visiting, and looks up at the clouds.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

The sheriff unlocks the door and comes back in. He sits down at his desk. He looks at the little bear salt shaker.

Clicking the mouse on his computer he heads to Ebay. He types in the words. "Salt and Pepper Shakers...Bear".

Jewel sticks her head into his office.

JEWEL

You on the internet in there?

SHERIFF

Nope.

He clicks it off.

JEWEL

We don't have the budget for the bandwidth Sheriff. Especially if it's not police business, pal. You lookin at dirty movies in there?

SHERIFF

No!

JEWEL

Well it's time to do your duty. Go drive around in the squad car and look for 'evil doers'. Come on, get out of here. You're like a plant sitting there and growing. Even plants need air. And sun. Get out in the sun!

He puts on his hat and heads out.

SHERIFF

Ok. Ok.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The Sheriff drives down the road in his police car. Hopalong is in the backseat smiling and panting in the heat, wearing a red bandanna.

The Sheriff slows down as he passes three big black Mack trucks parked alongside the road.

SHERIFF

Son of a bitch! There they are again!

He pulls the squad car over, slamming on the brakes. Dust and dirt flies up. He gets out of the car and hitches up his pants. He grabs his ticket book off the front seat, and opens up the door for Hopalong to follow him. The dog won't come out.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

C'mon Hopalong. Hopalong. Where's my backup? I need backup on this one.

The dog cowers and growls.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

What's the matter with you boy?

The Sheriff heads over to the first Mack truck. He notices a strange symbol on the side of it painted in red. It looks to be some sort of Japanese calligraphy or an astrological sign.

The Sheriff knocks on the window. No response.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Hello! Hello! How many times I got to say you can't park here? Hey!

He climbs up and opens the cab of the first truck. Taking a big black flashlight out of his holster, he bangs on the wall of the sleeping compartment behind the big rigs seats.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Wake up Sleeping Beauty! You got to move this here dinosaur. You can park at Momma's cafe. Two miles down on the right. You can't miss it. Get yourself some coffee so you can WAKE UP and move on down the road. Ok? Hello! Don't make me drag you out of there.

Silence from the sleeping compartment. The Sheriff tries to find a way to open it but it's a sheer wall of metal.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

How the Hell does this thing open?
You want a ticket you got a ticket.
One hundred thirty five dollars and
twenty cents. Have a nice day,
asshole.

CLOSE UP: the Sheriff's watch. As he checks the time to write on his ticket. 12:30 PM.

The Sheriff climbs down from the cab. He puts tickets on all three trucks, muttering to himself under his breath.

In the back of the police car, Hopalong's ears perk up. He begins to growl.

HOPALONG'S POV

He is staring at the side of the nearest truck.

CLOSEUP - HOPALONG'S EYES

HOPALONG'S POV

The camera zooms in slowly towards the truck. As we draw closer the volume of STRANGE SOUNDS increases. As if we are beginning to hear what Hopalong hears. A terrible scraping sound like nails on a chalkboard, a deep wet gurgling.

Hopalong's ears twitch and he whines.

The Sheriff steps in a gooey something in the dirt.

CLOSE UP - CLOTTED MASS

What appears to be strawberry flavored chewing tobacco. He is disgusted, and wipes his heels along the gravel.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Nasty habit.

His police radio squawks.

JEWEL

Where are you?

SHERIFF

Out on the North Fork. Our old
friends in the big black trucks are
back.

(MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

I gave them some nice lottery tickets. And the winner of the money is the county.

JEWEL

Those guys never pay the tickets.

SHERIFF

Really?

JEWEL

Nope. I can see it in the system. Citations just disappear. Must be blowing somebody down at the courthouse.

SHERIFF

That's not proper linguistics for the radio, dispatch.

A car ZOOMS! Past him on the road, rocking him with its wind.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

SLOW DOWN!

He looks down the road after the car and then runs to his squad car. Hustling the dog in the back he fumbles for his keys, and finally starts the car. He sees a long expanse of empty road in front of him. With a grunt he shrugs it off, and pulls out slowly.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The same car we just saw fly by the Sheriff.

CLAY, a cocky young man, and MARY, His girlfriend, zoom down the freeway in a tricked out 1960 El Camino. Mary looks at herself in her sideview mirror. Her face is distorted by the glass, made long and exaggerated. She is pretty but has an ugly scar across her cheek. Clay searches the road with his eyes. Looking for trouble. They pass a beautiful Trans Am.

Clay looks down over his sunglasses at the driver. The other guy betrays no emotion, just looks. Clay shakes his head.

CLAY

What's the point? Car like that.

He looks in the rear view mirror.

CLAY (CONT'D)

Oh. Any way you want it pal.

MARY

Dammit, Clay.

CLAY

That's the way you need it.

He hits the play button on his stereo, and "Any Way you want It" blasts out. He jockeys for position in front of the Trans Am. The guy goes left, Clay blocks him. The guy goes right, Clay is there.

Trans Am goes way right into the slow lanes and cuts off a crappy truck. The truck swerves, but maintains control.

Clay guns it and flies into the carpool lane, crossing double yellow lines. Someone's going too slow in that lane so he cuts over two lanes.

The Trans Am is up ahead, he's hitting some traffic.

Clay cuts off the road and drives in the pull-off lane. Now he sees what the slow-ups for. Everyone's rubbernecking at a guy changing his tire. Clay tries to get back into traffic but there's no space, he hits the gas, bearing down on the man who's standing on the birm holding a tire and looking terrified.

At the last second Clay swerves back into the exit lane, cutting off another car. Then he's back into the pull off lane and gunning it.

He looks over and sees the Trans Am. Clay cuts across four lanes of traffic and gets in front of him. The driver freaks out and slows way down. He's had enough.

Clay smiles. He leaves the Trans Am in the dust. After a moment or two he exits the highway fast.

They cruise down a road in a small town.

MARY

I hate you. You have no respect for me, for yourself, or anybody else.

CLAY

I respect the Dali LLama, and Steve McQueen.

MARY

Everything's a joke.

CLAY

Baby.

He looks at her seriously.

CLAY (CONT'D)

You may not think I care for you
when you know down inside that I
really do, and it's me you need to
show. How deep is your love?

He starts to sing.

MARY

Bee Gees. You suck.

CLAY

I really need to learn. Cause we're
living in a world of fools

MARY

You're the biggest one of em.

CLAY

Breaking us down.

MARY

Seriously, it's not funny anymore.

CLAY

You used to love when I did the
lyrics.

MARY

Until I realized how reciting song
lyrics was symptomatic of your
immense insincerity and complete
lack of commitment to anything or
anybody.

CLAY

Huh? (acting dumb)

MARY

Huh?(imitating Him)

He turns the music on the radio way up, and she continues to yell at him though we can't hear what she's saying.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

CLOSE UP on a watch on someone's arm that reads 12:30 PM. We pan up and out to see dirt under the arm and then the tattoo "Stardust" which we saw earlier.

The arm is not attached to a body. The Sheriff looks down at his own watch. It says 12:40. He talks on his radio.

SHERIFF

What time you got?

JEWEL

12:45.

SHERIFF

Do me a favor and write down in the log I found an arm by the road at...12:42.

JEWEL

We got our first murder case.

SHERIFF

I didn't say I had a dead body. I got an arm.

JEWEL

Should I call the hospitals and ask if anybody came in without an arm?

SHERIFF

Don't be a smart ass. And don't get excited. If there was a murder the state police will handle it.

JEWEL

Where are you?

SHERIFF

I'm on the old river road.

JEWEL

If you found the body on the highway it would be for the states, but you're on a township road so the case is OURS! Don't touch anything, don't disturb the crime scene. We need to take pictures.

SHERIFF

I need to move it or there won't be any 'evidence' left.

He shoos away vultures which are eyeing the arm.

JEWEL

DON'T TOUCH IT!

SHERIFF

Calm down. Gotta go..

JEWEL

John...

The sheriff tries to figure out how to pick it up.

INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

A group of old timers sit around the potbelly stove, shooting the breeze. Everything stops when the sheriff hurries in carrying something wrapped in a towel. He goes up to the counter and motions for the owner of the store to come over.

STUMPY a creepy old man by the fire whittles a piece of wood with a giant knife. He holds the wood with one gnarled stump of a hand which is missing fingers.

STUMPY

Whatcha got there, Sheriff, a big fish?

SHERIFF

Yeah Stumpy, big fish.

The sheriff barely acknowledges him.

STUMPY

Looks like your fish is married.

The sheriff looks down and sees that a finger with a wedding ring is sticking out from under the towel. The old timers laugh. The sheriff hurriedly wraps up the item.

SHERIFF

This here's police business Stumpy, why don't you mind yours?

He speaks to ERNIE, the man behind the counter quietly.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Ernie, I need to buy a cooler and three bags of ice.

STUMPY

I might have information pertinent to the case.

Everybody reacts to his use of a big word.

SHERIFF
I'm listening.

STUMPY
What that there lonely appendage
signifies, sheriff is that the
Migration has begun.

Silence.

SHERIFF
Ok, I'll bite. What's the
migration?

STUMPY
Why don't you ask Hopalong? He
knows.

Everybody laughs. Even Hopalong seems amused, wagging his tail. The store owner has brought the Sheriff a cooler and ice. The Sheriff puts the arm in the cooler and drops the ice bags on top of it.

STUMPY (CONT'D)
I still remember the day John come
in here, what was it five years
ago? Just after he became sheriff.
John comes in all in a tizzy
looking for the Doc cause this here
dog come out of the desert with his
leg prit near ripped off, and
wearing no identification, no
collar, just that red bandanna tied
around his neck. And John says
'What do you reckon happened to
em?"

Everybody laughs.

The Sheriff walks toward the door. One of the old men gets up and starts to do a jerky legged backwoods dance on the floor.

Stumpy sways in his rocking chair and sings low.

STUMPY (CONT'D)
"Iffen their eyes is white you
better take flight, if they eyes is
red they already fed, and the
blood's gone to their head."

The creepy customers begin to sing and a smiling idiot plays the banjo.

OLD MEN

Stay out the dark, stay in the sun,
for the Migration has begun.

EXT. VILLAGE MARKET - DAY

The Sheriff carries the cooler across the porch of the two store. DALTON and CODY two ugly young punks are tormenting a fat kid. Their faces are inches from his and they spray spittle when they talk.

DALTON

Your ass is so fat, your asshole is
mistaken for a blackhole!

CODY

You're so fat you have bigger tits
than your mom!

SHERIFF

Hey! Knock it off.

DALTON

First amendment says we can say
whatever we want.

SHERIFF

Just get out of here.

DALTON

We don't have to this is public
property.

SHERIFF

I said get out of here.

DALTON

Make me.

The Sheriff takes a step.

DALTON (CONT'D)

You touch me, my parents will sue
your ass back to the Stone age,
when you were born!

SHERIFF

Someday you're gonna mouth off to
the wrong person Dalton.

DALTON

Whatever.

SHERIFF

Sammy, you go on home.

The fat kid takes off. The Sheriff stares at Dalton.

DALTON

What?

The Sheriff shakes his head and walks away.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

The Sheriff and Hopalong enter the office. He puts the cooler down on Jewel's desk. She opens it excitedly and looks at the severed arm.

SHERIFF

You ever feel like everyone else is in on a joke but you?

JEWEL

In this town? All the time. It's cause you're a transplant like me.

SHERIFF

You've been here twenty years haven't you?

She flips the arm over with a pencil.

JEWEL

Doesn't matter, ten years livin here, like you, 20 like me, even if you were born here, you can still be an outsider. You have to have family here, going back generations. It's about blood. Whatever secret this town has got, they ain't talking. Stardust?

She points at the tatoo.

SHERIFF

Judging by the watch, I'd say he was a hippy. So Stardust is probably that old song by Joni Mitchell. Woodstock.

She shrugs. The sheriff sings a little

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

We are stardust. We are golden. You know it.

JEWEL

No, sing it.

SHERIFF

Oh you know the song! Did you call the state police? Call them.

JEWEL

But it's not their case.

SHERIFF

Call them. It's not a puppy that followed you home. We can't keep the arm.

Once he's out of the room, Jewel picks up the arm and fingerprints it.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Make coffee will ya? The dog kept me up all night kicking in his bad dreams.

JEWEL

Yes sir!

She salutes.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Jewel enter and hands coffee to the Sheriff at his desk.

JEWEL

Jasper Willow.

SHERIFF

Who's that?

She throws down a printout on his desk. A picture of a smiling young hippy. His rap sheet.

JEWEL

The name of our victim.

SHERIFF

Whoever he is, he's not OUR victim unless you killed him.

JEWEL

Arrested for indecent exposure.
Streaking. Arrested for
trespassing, probably a
demonstration sit in somewhere.
Looks like a nice guy.

SHERIFF

Yeah.

JEWEL

Good police work?

She fairly skips out of the room

SHERIFF

Good police work. Call the state
police.

He looks at a pix of an older woman and a younger woman on
his desk, they are smiling on a sunlit beach. The Sheriff
throws a ball for Hopalong, who runs to retrieve it.

Jewel sticks her head back in the room.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Yes?

JEWEL

Van with lots of hippie stickers on
it, found on the highway. It's at
the impound in Pixley. Let's go
partner!

She jingles car keys in the air and heads out the door. He
sighs and follows her.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - DAY

The smashed up Hippie van sits dejected in a lot full of
junkers. The Sheriff and Jewel stand nearby. A GREASE MONKEY
smiles with bad teeth at the van's artwork.

GREASEMONKEY

Looks like a time machine!

The Sheriff sits in the front seat.

He sees a sticker on the sunshade above the driver's side.

"When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world
will know peace"

GREASEMONKEY (CONT'D)
Or when we're all dead.

The Grease Monkey's face is uncomfortably close in the window.

SHERIFF
You got a permit for that lethal
weapon?

GREASEMONKEY
Huh?

SHERIFF
Your breath.

The Grease Monkey backs off.

The Sheriff looks at the radio and pushes the play button on a cassette player.

VOICE
Well maybe it is just the time of
year, Or maybe it's the time of
man. I don't know who I am, But you
know life is for learning.

The Sheriff looks in the rearview mirror and sees his wife and daughter smiling in the sunshine.

VOICE (CONT'D)
We are stardust. We are golden.
And we've got to get ourselves back
to the garden.

He turns off the music. The women in the back seat fade away.

Jewel peers into the van.

JEWEL
Doesn't look like there's enough
blood for the killer to have ripped
the guys's arm off in here.

GREASE MONKEY
The killer?

SHERIFF
The killer was the windshield.

He points at the shattered glass.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Russ, can you take us out to where you found the wreck?

GREASEMONKEY

Ok. But I'f I'm working on a murder case you gotta deputize me.

SHERIFF

There's no no murder case, and I'm not gonna deptutize you.

GREASEMONKEY

That's not fair. You made **her** a deputy.

SHERIFF

She's not a deputy.

GREASEMONKEY

What is she then? Your girlfriend?

SHERIFF

I didn't get my second cup of coffee this morning Russ, and I've got a gun.

GREASEMONKEY

Say no more.

EXT. HIGHWAY -DAY

The Sheriff's car and Russ' tow truck are parked by the side of the road. The Sheriff follows a streak of brake skids across the road.

There's an empty spot of broken glass and disturbed dirt.

JEWEL

If this is where he died, then how come we didn't find his body here?

SHERIFF

An animal moved it.

JEWEL

What's big enough to move him all the way over to Sampson Road? Grizzlies are extinct in California, John.

SHERIFF

Pack of coyotes. Tore him up and carried the pieces here and there.

JEWEL

Or maybe we got a good Samaritan who's not too good. Pickin up road kill like people pick up hit deer. Maybe the party we're looking for is part of the Donner party.

The Sheriff stoops down to examine a goopy red mess. He scoops some up into a baggy.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

Yuck. That blood?

SHERIFF

I don't know.

Jewel notices tire tracks in the dirt along the road.

JEWEL

Looks like a couple of big rigs parked along here, doesn't it? Whatcha thinkin?

SHERIFF

I'm not thinking anything. I'm just looking. That's how we do it. Deputy.

She smiles.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

It's late in the day and the sun is going down. The Sheriff enters the reception area putting on his coat.

SHERIFF

Bout that time.

JEWEL

Good work today. See you bright and early tomorrow, we'll crack this case wide open.

SHERIFF

Ok.

JEWEL

Maybe we got a serial killer on our hands. Didn't you ever notice how so many people disappear around here?

SHERIFF

I used to. But since nobody seemed to care and no bodies showed up I figured people just left. It's not exactly paradise.

JEWEL

But now we got evidence.

SHERIFF

Of what?

JEWEL

Of something. Isn't it exciting?

SHERIFF

Not really.

JEWEL

Well, why did you get into law enforcement?

SHERIFF

Soldiers don't like war, cops don't like crime.

JEWEL

What about justice? Aren't you out for justice?

SHERIFF

Justice? Sure. Yeah. Of course. Been a long day See you tomorrow.

He leaves.

INT. - SHERIFF'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We pan in through the dark living room, past the silent piano, into the bedroom, where the Sheriff and Hopalong are sleeping.

INT. SHERIFF'S HOUSE - DAY

The Sheriff's wife and daughter are at the piano, mother playing, daughter singing the "Woodstock" song.

DAUGHTER

We are stardust, we are golden we
are billion year old carbon, and
we've got to get ourselves back to
the garden.

INT. SHERRIFF'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Sheriff wakes up, looks at the clock on his bedside table and sees it's midnight.

He lies looking up at the ceiling.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Sheriff walks Hopalong down the street. A souped up car zooms by.

SHERIFF

Slow down! I know where you live
Clay Valtos!

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT -

Clay drives too fast, the radio is blaring. Mary is yelling something, but can't be heard. She turns off the radio.

MARY

Where are we going?

He shrugs

MARY (CONT'D)

How can you drive so fast when you
don't even know where you're going?

CLAY

All I know is it's Friday night,
we're gonna make some money, we're
gonna spend some money, we're gonna
drink, we're gonna play the
jukebox. Sound like a plan?

MARY

Sounds like every Friday night for
the last five years.

He turns the car radio back on and head bangs to the music.

EXT. SUBURB STREET - NIGHT

Hopalong is pooping on a lawn in front of a small house.
Suddenly, a motion detector light as bright as a solar flare
clicks on.

The front door bursts open, and a shadowy figure appears in
the doorway, pointing a shotgun.

SHERIFF

Take it easy, I got a bag!

He holds up a poop bag. Jewel steps into the light.

JEWEL

Can't be too careful, we got a
serial killer on the loose.

SHERIFF

So I've heard. This your house?

JEWEL

No. I'm robbing somebody. Course
it's my house. You'd know if you
ever came over for dinner. Well
you're here now. Come on in, have a
drink.

SHERIFF

Probably not a good idea, you got
cats. Hopalong..

JEWEL

They won't kill him. Maybe scratch
out an eye. Come on in.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel sit at the kitchen table eating cookies
and milk.

SHERIFF

Good.

JEWEL

You need to taste them when they're hot. Matter of fact, I'll make some more right now.

SHERIFF

No, no, these are great.

JEWEL

Oatmeal raisin? I'll whip some up.

SHERIFF

No, no, please. I'm fat enough.

JEWEL

What was your bad dream about?

SHERIFF

Not bad. It was a good dream about things that are gone. A dream that's not bad until you wake up.

JEWEL

I miss Rose. She was a good friend.

SHERIFF

A good wife and a good friend. Those don't always come together.

JEWEL

Don't I know it. That's why I'm married to five cats.

SHERIFF

She didn't die of cancer you know, she died of a broken heart. After my daughter Savannah died, we moved here. To get away.

JEWEL

You don't have to talk about all that.

SHERIFF

I do because we didn't tell you the truth. Not much of it. My daughter didn't die in an accident. I wish you could have met her. Savannah was one of those souls, those spirits, I think was looking into this world and deciding when to come in.

(MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

And she saw Woodstock, all that love and music and joy, and she said "Wow", that's where I want to be. But of course, by the time she came in, Woodstock was long past. It was too late. But she herself was a little sliver of it, a slice of sunlight. A long time ago, I put a bad man in prison, he's never getting out. This guy sold cigarettes in prison and for a couple of years he gave another guy free cigarettes, if he would kill me when when he got. For "Justice". Well when the guy got out, he tried to kill me, but he messed up and killed Savannah. He died in a shoot out with the cops. I wasn't there. Don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing. If I got the justice I wanted I'd be in jail now. Me and Rose came here to get away from something we brought with us. And now I'm haunted by them both.

JEWEL

Wow. I'm sorry. But I'm glad you told me. I wish I could have talked about this with Rose.

SHERIFF

Well, you can come on by my house, apparently she's still over there.

JEWEL

Maybe I will. As long as we're telling secrets. Near the end, she gave me permission to take care of you.

SHERIFF

Well, you kept the bargain. You've kept the office running smoothly.

JEWEL

You don't get it. She said I had her permission to "Take care of you." If you know what I mean.

SHERIFF

Oh Lord.

JEWEL

I don't believe I've ever seen you blush.

SHERIFF

It's getting pretty late. Me and Hopalong better be headed home.

JEWEL

Didn't mean to scare you off.

SHERIFF

I'm not scared. Just, my hearts not in it.

JEWEL

I'm not talking about your heart.

SHERIFF

Oh Lord.

EXT. JEWEL'S PORCH - NIGHT- MOMENTS LATER

The Sheriff and Hopalong exit the house. Jewel leans against a porch post.

JEWEL

Do you hear that?

SHERIFF

I don't hear anything.

JEWEL

Exactly. It's Friday night. In the old days, in the town where I grew up, at night if you went outside you'd hear music being played somewhere out there. Not played on the radio, but people playing actual instruments. You play that piano over there, I'll hear it.

SHERIFF

I'm not too good.

JEWEL

Better than the sound of silence. See you tomorrow you two.

SHERIFF

All right then.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Tough guys, rascals and cowboys, seductresses and whores, and whisky, lots of whisky. Games of chance, tests of skill, and a jukebox playing loud.

Clay and Mary sit at a booth, drinking. Clay's eyes flit around the room, noticing every female worth noticing.

Mary drinks. With a finger she traces the outline of an infinity symbol carved into the table, (a figure eight on its side.) Inside the symbol are carved the words Clay + Mary.

From the corner, Red the cowboy watches the couple. He's got a beautiful and wild looking girl on each side of him. COCO and VIOLET scope the crowd like tigers. Red says something to one of his girls. She nods. The music suddenly is quiet, between songs. Red makes his way across the dance floor in slow motion, His gold spurs "cha-ching" on the bare wood floor. Men cringe from him, retreating subtly, eyes averted.

A collective shudder passes through the crowd. It parts before him like Moses and the Red Sea.

Red puts two drinks down on the couples table.

RED

They call me Red. I just wanted to buy a drink for the prettiest looking woman in the room and the toughest looking cowboy.

MARY

Well, A flirt **and** a liar. Pleased to meet you Red. I'm Mary, this is Clay.

She motions for him to take a seat. He does. Clay gives Mary a dirty look, then goes back to scoping out the room.

MARY (CONT'D)

I've never seen you in before. You from around here?

RED

I'm just passing through. But I was born right up the road in Weaverville. Feels like a couple hundred years ago, now.

CLAY

So what kind of car you got?

RED

Come again?

CLAY

I'll take your money, but I won't race you if your car is a piece of shit. I got a reputation to maintain.

RED

Fella, I'm just lookin for some good conversation. I drive a rig and the road is long and lonely. Like my Daddy told me, "Every stranger is just a friend you haven't met yet."

He pushes a beer across the table toward Clay.

CLAY

Well, like my Daddy told me "Stop thinking and start drinking".

He CLINKS bottles with Red. There is laughter and everyone drinks.

RING OF FIRE by Johnny Cash comes on the jukebox.

The camera circles the table slowly, then faster. The party goes on with drinking, and laughing and talking.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The back door to the bar opens and we briefly hear the roar of the noisy bar, two figures slip out into the night. The door shuts and we hear CRICKETS. A biker dude is lead toward his motorcycle by Coco. They hop on the bike.

The biker dude starts to put his helmet on, but she throws it against the wall, puts her hand in his crotch, and kisses him on the neck. He revs up the motorcycle and peels out of the parking lot, spraying gravel.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The couple zooms towards us down the highway, riding the yellow lines. Coco is whispering in his ear. He drives faster. She whispers again, he laughs and nods. She sinks her teeth into his neck and he screams.

The motorcycle flies past us, moving driverless down the road. Behind it in the distance, the faces of the feeding woman and the biker dude recede into darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

VAMPIRE POV

The motorcycle zooms away down the highway, its headlights illuminating the road ahead. Suddenly it falls over and flips through the air, it's light reveals the desert plants on this side of the highway, then the other, and then the light goes out with a distant CRASH.

A figure shrouded in darkness stands in the center of the highway making SUCKING SOUNDS. The biker hangs in the air struggling with all his might to escape.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT CONTINUOUS

An RV with a nerdy looking couple drives down the highway.

WADE a crewcut guy with glasses is listening to the old 70's song "We got a Convoy" and is reciting the dialogue along with the radio. DORIS his wife, is asleep in the passenger seat.

WADE

It was a dark a the moon on the sixth of June and a Kenworth pullin logs cab over Pete with a reefer on and a Jimmy haulin logs. We was headin for bear on 'I-One Oh' bout a mile out Shakey Town. I says Pig Pen this here's the rubber duck, And I'm about to put the hammer down. Chorus! Cause we got a little 'ole' convoy...

Suddenly the RV's light reveals a big blue nasty looking creature in the center of the road eating the face of the biker dude, dangling from its mouth.

WADE (CONT'D)

Holy shitcakes!

The creature snarls towards Wade with a mouthful of bloody teeth. In a split second it leaps off the highway into the darkness carrying the body in its mouth.

Wade pulls over, screaming. Doris wakes up screaming without knowing why.

DORIS
What's happening?

WADE
You're not going to believe this.
But I just saw a blue demon eating
somebody's face.

She stares at him.

DORIS
Well what are you stopping for! Go!
Go!

Wade guns the gas and gets back on the highway.

WADE
You believe me?

DORIS
I believe in Bigfoot don't I? Why
wouldn't I believe you saw a big
blue demon? Go faster Wade! For
Heaven's sake. You see a blue
demon eating somebody's face and
you stop the car? What's the
matter with you?

Fade out as the song "Convoy" plays on the radio.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Clay and Red are alone at the table. Mary is coming back to them across the dance floor. She holds up two beers and politely refuses a guy who comes on to her. She looks at the table and smiles without confidence.

RED
You love this girl? You gonna make
an honest woman of her? Gonna marry
her, give her some children?

CLAY
We'll see what happens.

RED
I'll show you what happens.

He jumps up, with surprising grace and speed, and sweeps Mary out onto the dancefloor.

They spin around and take command of the space. Mary's hair flies as she twirls and she looks beautiful and happy.

Clay watches her and smiles.

Red swings Mary around and ends up hanging her head over the table where Clay sits. Her long blond hair brushes across Clay's face.

RED (CONT'D)

Well what's it gonna be? Do you love this girl or should I steal her away from you?

CLAY

She's a big girl she can do what she wants to do.

RED

Oh, a woman is gonna do what she wants to do it don't take Socrates to reason that. But do you love her? A girl needs to know. She ought to know. And she's a big girl like you say. She can take it. She's been looking for the love of her life, and are you it? Or is he away out there somewhere, far or near, maybe in this very bar, just awaiting the chance, the one chance to show a good woman how good a good man's love can be.

CLAY

And are you that good man?

RED

Me? I'm no good at all. But at least I'm honest. What I'm saying is, there's nothing worse then to waste a persons time, cowboy. Do you love this woman?" Simple question.

A very tense, long moment. Clay is taken off guard, he tries to laugh it off, then thinks about it, looking at her. He stares for a second too long, and the music kicks back in. Red whisks Mary back to the dance floor.

RED (CONT'D)

Too late!

In slow mo, we see Mary's face as she is pulled away from Clay toward the crowd. Clay starts to say something, then falters.

He finds a use for his open mouth by taking another drink.

Mary disappears into the crowd.

Clay looks down at the tabletop. He searches it with his eyes. The infinity symbol with his and Mary's name in it is gone. Where it was, the wood is perfectly clean and undamaged. Clay rubs the wood with his fingers. Confused, he looks around himself, looks at the table behind his.

And he takes another drink.

The jukebox lights flash, the music gets louder. The faces of the crowd assert their existence, coming in and out of focus.

Clay sees people laughing, kissing, touching. He sees a sad old lady at the bar, smoking. Her eyes meet his and he stares at her.

The music on the jukebox cuts out, and there is relative silence. Scattered applause, laughter, talking. It fades out to Clay who is focused on the Jukebox. He watches the needle come down on the record. A tell tale piano riff starts up and he smiles. It is "Don't Stop Believin"

Everyone yells out, happy.

CLAY

They're playing our song baby!

He looks around and doesn't see Mary.

He rises and searches for her, moving faster and faster. She's not at the bar, she's not on the dance floor, she's not at the cigarette machines.

He rushes down a narrow hallway which is lit with a red bulb. A line of women stretch along the wall. He brushes past them and busts into the bathroom.

All the women yell and object. After a moment Clay bursts back out. He rushes back down the hallway. Women yell at him and hit him with their purses as he goes by.

EXT. BAR -NIGHT

Clay bursts out the front door of the bar, and into the parking lot. Dust flies up from his cowboy boots, swirling like snow in the glow of the streetlamp. He looks down the dark highway, the long road. He looks up at the stars.

CLAY

They're playing our song.

A group of smokers watch him, interested in the drama. One points, laughing. Clay takes off his jacket and throws it in the dirt. He walks fast toward the man. All the guys smoker friends back away from him. Clay punches the guy and he goes down. Another man steps in to talk to Clay. Clay punches that guy in the face. Now two or three guys jump on Clay to hold him back. He keeps punching. The guys get mad and start punching back. He twists and squirms striking out at anything. The three guys back off, hurting.

Someone hits Clay over the head with a log.

He's down and out.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Red drives down the highway, Mary sits in the cab next to him. She is looking out the window.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

CLOSE UP

A parking ticket lying in the dirt. It's torn in half and there is a big nasty clotted glob of red stuff on it.

Sheriff John picks it up by one clean corner and grimaces.

SHERIFF

What an asshole.

Hopalong barks in agreement from the squad car.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

The Sheriff and Hopalong enter. He takes off the dog's leash and it hustles to its little pillow in the corner.

SHERIFF

Any word on that sample we sent the Doc?

JEWEL

Yep. He said it was blood type "O" same as that hippie Jasper. It was blood clots, the chewy stuff. And saliva, some sort of animal.

He pulls out the baggy with the crumpled goo covered ticket in it.

SHERIFF

I found more of it. And the tickets I wrote our seasonal jerk-offs in the big black trucks.

JEWEL

Who are those guys?

SHERIFF

I'm gonna find out.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - LATER

The Sheriff is asleep on the phone, head rolling back in his chair, receiver laying against his ear. Loud, Bad Muzak plays out of the phone, past the Sheriff's ear. Then we hear a muffled voice coming through.

SHERIFF

Hello there. Is this a real person? Hallelujah. I'm trying to reach Detective Bob Davis. Is he still alive around there? No. No voicemail. I don't want to talk to no robot. The closest I get to talking to a computer is when I curse at the pinball machine. Thank you.

He's on hold.

The Sherriff looks over at Hopalong, who lies on his blanket in the corner. The dog is chewing on a big baggie of pot.

SHERIFF (CONT' (CONT'D)

Hey what you got there? Hell no, gimme that! You son of a bitch!

He drops the phone on the desk and grabs hold of the baggy in the dogs mouth, tugging at it. Hopalong growls. We hear a tiny voice come out of the phone.

BOB (V.O)

Hello?

SHERIFF

Yeah, Bob, it's me John. Let me put you on speakerphone. My dog is about to destroy some important evidence over here. (to Hopalong) I need that for my arthritis. You eat it you get no walks! Hear me?

BOB

You wanna call me back John?

SHERIFF

No I been on hold for forty minutes already.

He talks as he stalks the dog around the room, trying to trap him in a corner.

SHERRIFF

Listen Bob, those goddamn trucks I told you about are back.

BOB

What trucks?

SHERRIFF

The big black ones, that come once a year and I never see a driver. They used my tickets for toilet paper again, like always.

BOB

Ok.

SHERIFF

I go into the computer and put in their license plate numbers? Nothing. They are all bogus. All three of them. You are going to get the shits big time if you eat that.

He rushes Hopalong, but the dog skirts past him.

SHERRIFF

Dammit! So I thought of you.

BOB

What?

SHERRIFF

I say I thought of you with these trucks. I figure they must be hauling something **illicit** if they went to all the trouble of making fake plates and all. Maybe drugs?

He has gotten close to Hopalong and snatches the baggie of pot from his mouth. It rips open and pot sprays across the floor. Hopalong starts to gobble it up. The Sheriff tries to kick the dog away.

SHERIFF

Get away you crack whore! You're an addict. Stop it. You're an embarrassment.

BOB

John. John.

SHERIFF

Yeah bud. Sorry about that. Yeah.

BOB

These trucks. They have any kind of symbol on them. Like graffiti?

SHERIFF

Yeah! Like a Japanese character, in red.

BOB

Kinda looks like the drawing for a game of hangman?

SHERIFF

Yes! That's what it is. That's exactly what it is. You know who they are?

BOB

I think you got a tiger by the tail there John. And what do we do when we got a tiger by the tail? We let it go. Or we get bit.

SHERIFF

Well actually if you let go, that's when the tiger is gonna bite ya, cause he can reach ya then.

BOB
Seriously John. Let it go.
I gotta take a call here.

SHERIFF
Bob...

Click buzz. The line is dead. Hopalong sneezes loudly and shakes his head. The Sheriff looks at him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Bless you.

He pours himself a cup of coffee and looks out at the sun rising over the trees and blazing across his town.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Red walks through a field where the hay is shining like gold in the sun. The wind blows and countless birds sing.

Red smiles and takes off his hat, letting the sunlight bathe his face. Suddenly his skin begins to redden, now it is bubbling and he screams in agony. He falls to his knees. His skull is flaming and the camera zooms into the blackness of his eye and..

INT. TRUCK SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - DAY

He wakes up in the sleeping compartment of a Mack truck, bathed in red light like in a darkroom. Mary is lying beside him under the covers.

MARY
What was it?

RED
Just a walk in the park. And then I'm burning. The worst part is the realization. It's like forgetting someone you loved is dead, and then remembering. Except the person is yourself. Regret. That's what it is.

MARY
Thanks a lot.

RED

No, no, no. Not about last night.
You're like sunshine to me darling
believe me. Your smile warms my
heart. In fact I think I'll call
you sunshine from now on.

MARY

From now on?

RED

Forever.

MARY

That's what they all say.

RED

Believe me, I'm not like all the
rest.

MARY

They all say that too.

RED

What happened here?

He touches the scar on her face.

MARY

I was in an accident.

RED

Was it your fault?

MARY

It was my dumbass boyfriends fault.
No. It was my fault for being in
the car.

RED

You want me to kiss it and make it
all better?

MARY

Yeah.

He kisses the scar. It disappears. She doesn't even know it.

She closes her eyes, curled up in a ball in his arms.

INT. SHERIFF HOUSE - NIGHT

The Sheriff sits at the piano and opens the keyboard cover.

He gets up and opens the front door, then returns to his bench. Playing slowly and not too badly, he sends a simple tune floating out into the night.

Picking up his phone he dials.

JEWEL

Sounds good.

SHERIFF

Thanks. How'd you like to get out of your house?

JEWEL

A date?

SHERIFF

No. Better. Investigating.

JEWEL

Ooh.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel stand in front of an old man in a rocker on his porch. The Sheriff pulls out a piece of paper.

SHERIFF

Have you ever seen this symbol?

OLD MAN

Nope.

SHERIFF

I didn't even show you yet.

He shows the old man the piece of paper, the symbol from the side of the black mack trucks is on it.

OLD MAN

Nope.

SHERIFF

Come on.

He and Jewel leave the porch.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel drive down a country road.

SHERIFF

No one's seen anything, no one
knows anything, this is the only
clue we've got.

The piece of paper with symbol on it.

Suddenly, "KABOOM!" A dead and decimated cow plummets from
the sky and crashes onto the hood of the patrol car.

The desert is silent as the Sheriff and Jewel step out of the
vehicle. Smoke rises from the car, the Sheriff creeps up and
examines the dead cow. It is torn to pieces with missing legs
and gaping holes all over, it has been sucked dry of blood.
On its hindquarters, John sees the symbol he's been
following, branded into the animals skin.

JEWEL

I believe we got another lead.

Hopalong barks.

INT. COUNTRY STORE - NIGHT

Stumpy and the old men are sitting around the potbellied
stove, singing. Stumpy plays the guitar

STUMPY

You gotta know when to hold em.
Know when to fold em, know when to
walk away, know when to run.

The Sheriff and Jewel enter the store. The Sheriff grabs
Stumpy by the shirt and shoves the paper with the symbol on
it in his face.

SHERIFF

What is this? What does it mean?

STUMPY

Take it easy.

SHERIFF

Tell me or I'm going to break your
neck. I swear.

STUMPY

Well, I guess you been in the dark long enough. First you got to know what the Migration is. Lemme go, I'll tell ya. The Migration happens twice a year. You see there's these two cities. One a way up at the south pole and one away north at the north pole. Now this is where all the vampire's live, seeing as it's dark for six months at a time in these places. Cause of the way the Earth is tilted see, and the way the sun hits it. See while one city is all sun the other is all dark, and vice versey. You got a globe Ernie?

ERNIE

No I ain't got no globe.

STUMPY

Anyway. Twice a year, the vampires move from one city to the other, highway 49 is the most popular route. They move by night, only at night. And as they move, they feed. Now that symbol you got there represents one of these vampires, fella named Red...

SHERIFF

Vampires?

STUMPY

Yeah. That's what I said.

The old men laugh.

SHERIFF

Keep laughing. All of you. I'm gonna find out what's really going on here. It's just a matter of time. Come on.

He gestures for Jewel to follow him and storms out.

STUMPY

You got more questions about vampires you come and see me, ya hear?"

He waves a gnarled and diseased hand, black at the knuckles and missing fingers.

STUMPY (CONT'D)

And sheriff, if you love that dog.
Take off that there necktie. If you
don't hear nothing else, hear that.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD- NIGHT

The Sheriff walks angrily in silence. Jewel and Hopalong struggle to keep up.

JEWEL

Just out of curiosity, what's your
theory about the flying cow?

SHERIFF

Catapult. They built a catapult to
throw a cow through the air, to
land on my car, to mess with me.

JEWEL

Really?

SHERIFF

What's your theory?

JEWEL

Well vampires sounds better than a
catapult. Actually I was thinking
aliens. You know, tractor beams.

The Sheriff gives her a look.

SHERIFF

We need another vehicle to continue
our investigation. Can we use your
truck till the garage puts the
cruiser back together again?

JEWEL

No problem. But I drive.

INT. NIGHT - ROLLER SKATING RINK

Clay sits at the bar on a noisy disco night. Women in tight pants twirl around on the dance floor. The lights are hypnotic. There's a crowd jammed next to the bar crowding him. Someone bumps him and nearly spills his drink.

Someone tosses a note into his lap. A woman retreats through the crowd, he can only see the back of her head.

He opens and reads the note. Then gets up quickly and heads across the room.

INT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Clay enters the women's bathroom. A girl at the mirror fixing her face leaves in a hurry. He goes to the first stall and opens it.

Mary crouches on top of the toilet.

MARY

Come in. Close the door.

He does so.

CLAY

Your face. What happened to your face? Your scar. It's gone. You're perfect. Baby, you're beautiful.

He gets close up, touches her skin. He kisses her.

CLAY (CONT'D)

How is this possible?

MARY

He did it. Red. The cowboy. He healed me. He's a vampire and he has powers. Now listen, you can't see him in the mirror. He can levitate. Float in the air. He's fallen in love with me and if he sees you, he could hurt you or he could kill you. I'll get away from him and come back to you, cause I love you so much Clay, you know I do, this was just a stupid mistake. But look at my face. Like you said it's perfect. Don't you want to kiss me Clay. Clay.

CLAY

You're either crazy, or you're fucking with me. Either way, I want no part of it. Everybody's got to learn sometime.

Clay backs up.

MARY

You've got to believe me Clay,

CLAY

Everybody's got to learn sometime.

He exits the stall and walks out of the bathroom.

The music comes up with the lyrics of the song Clay started.

VOICE

And I need your loving, like the
ocean.

Mary cries.

INT. BAR -NIGHT

Clay hurries through the bar, looking confused and upset. He sees Red talking to some men. They all turn and laugh in his direction. SLOW MO. Clay exits the bar.

Mary comes out of the hallway looking for Clay, upset. Red walks up and holds her comforting her. He rubs her arm gently. The tattoo on her shoulder which reads CLAY, disappears, as if it were made of invisible ink. Red hands her a drink.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel drive up in an old truck. They stop and the Sheriff gets out.

SHERIFF

What do you want?

JEWEL

Chocolate bar. Surprise me.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Sheriff looks at rows and rows of beverages.

RON, a pimply faced teenager in an ugly clerk uniform reads a girly magazine and has his feet up on the counter.

DING DING. a little bell above the door rings. Someone enters. CHA CHING CHA CHING. A tinkly sound of metal.

CLOSE UP: Golden spurs on walking boots. The cowboys symbol is etched into the gold.

SHERIFF (UNDER HIS BREATH)
Spurs? Who the Hell wears spurs
anymore?

RON
Wow!

The Sheriff looks up at a large round security mirror above his head. He sees a distorted image of the teen aged clerk at the other side of the store, staring at something in his hand. The kid looks up and seems to be talking to himself. There's no one there. He hands a package of cigarettes forward to no one, and the cigarettes disappear.

The Sheriff turns and looks. The Cowboy is there. He tips his hat to the clerk and strolls toward the exit, spurs jangling.

DING DING. The little bell over the door goes off again. The Sheriff looks up at the mirror and sees the door opening by itself. The Sheriff walks like a man in a dream towards the front counter.

RON (CONT'D)
Dude paid with a chunk of gold!

He holds up the gold. It has the Cowboy's symbol on it. The Sheriff rushes over to the door and outside.

The Cowboy is gone. There's nothing but wind and night. the Sheriff looks up at the sky. He rushes over to Jewel who's napping in the truck and wakes up as he gets behind the wheel.

SHERIFF
Do me a favor, take Hopalong out
for a sec, he's got that look like
he's got to go.

JEWEL
Ok.

She piles out and walks to a patch of grass with Hopalong on his leash. The Sheriff guns the truck and sprays gravel everywhere. He roars off down the road.

JEWEL (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch! That's my truck.
What is he doing? (to Hopalong)

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Sheriff zooms down the night highway. He passes a scarecrow in a cornfield. SCREECH! The truck's brakes squeal, and the truck stops. The Sheriff jumps out.

CUT TO:

SCARECROW'S FACE

The truck peels out, spewing dirt onto the scarecrow. The scarecrow's stuffed face looks surprised and comical lying beside the road.

The truck cuts off the road and into a field, its headlights piercing the rows of corn.

EXT. HIGHWAY- NIGHT

A stretch of lonely highway. Red's convoy snakes along. Suddenly the trucks stop on a straight and deserted stretch of road.

Their bright lights shine on the Sheriff in Jewel's old truck. He stands with an eight foot tall cross in the middle of the highway. He's got his arms crossed, shotgun in hands.

Red opens his door and hangs halfway out to talk.

COWBOY.

Have we met?

SHERIFF

No. I'm Sheriff John Sampson.

COWBOY

They call me Red. You look very familiar to me.

SHERIFF

I don't know you. But I know who you are. I know what you are. Who's the woman?

RED

Just a new friend.

SHERIFF

Girl I suggest you come down out of there.

MARY

What's he done?

SHERIFF

Illegal parking. And probably murder. Come on down out of there, you're under arrest Mister.

Red laughs. Suddenly he zooms down from the truck's cab, impossibly fast and crosses the distance to the Sheriff. He rips the shotgun from his arms.

RED

My father told me I'd know the man who was going to kill me when I met him.

He grabs hold of the Sheriff's hand and squeezes it, staring into his eyes.

RED (CONT'D)

You're slow.

He pushes him and the Sheriff tumbles to the ground.

RED (CONT'D)

You're not strong. Run away.

The Sheriff stands but doesn't run.

RED (CONT'D)

And you're not smart. How do you expect to kill me?

SHERIFF

I didn't say I was going to kill you.

RED

No I reckon you didn't.

He saunters back toward his truck.

RED (CONT'D)

Well I know it's not good parenting to encourage children to play with their food, but my kids just love it so.

He hits a button, and the top of his rig rolls open. Up into the sky fly the vampires, funneling up like a tornado. John watches them go, his head craning backwards on his neck.

RED (CONT'D)

Evening Sheriff. You can shoot at my boys they don't mind it. But take my advice and save a bullet for yourself. You might want it.

Red drives off the road and around the Sheriff's roadblock. The other two trucks follow him.

The Sheriff stands alone in front of the giant cross, lit up by the headlights of Jewel's old truck. Outside the circle of light, creatures circle in the darkness.

The Sheriff hears a SCRITCH-SCRATCHING on the pavement.

He strains his eyes trying to make out what's there. Something starts to take shape, a large beak emerging into the light. A giant bird head with bright red grizzled looking skin. Evil looking eyes blink in the bright light.

SHERIFF

What in the Sam Hill are you?

The vampire looks like a giant turkey buzzard. It is ten feet tall. Giant bird talons Scritch-scratch on the blacktop of the highway. The creature spreads its black wings twenty feet wide and croaks at the Sheriff.

Another vampire swoops down from the sky and tries to grab the Sheriff. He ducks and backs up.

The vampires land around the Sheriff but shy away from the big cross. They won't come near.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

You don't like that cross do you? No sir. That's right you just stay back cause Jesus is watching you bad birds. That's what that there cross means.

He slides slowly into the old truck and tries to start the engine. It makes a TERRIBLE NOISE and then goes silent.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch.

He tries the ignition again. Nothing. The vampires are eyeing him, circling on the ground.

One of them finds a rock by the side of the road and throws it at the truck. It smashes through a window. Another rock thumps against the metal of the truck. The vampires are all throwing them now. It's like a hailstorm of baseballs.

The Sheriff gets down in the cab of the truck, covering his head. Stones smash the headlights and the highway goes dark.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A crowded, rough looking bar, with far too few women. Red's escorts, Coco and the Violet are cooking up trouble at the pool tables, strutting their stuff and getting men riled up in competition over them.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Red goes to the bar and the bartender sets him up with whiskey.

Clay enters and goes straight up to Red.

CLAY

Where is she?

RED

Buy me a drink.

Clay signals to the bartender.

RED (CONT'D)

She's out in the cab of my truck. Getting her wind back. Poor thing's been sleeping all day. Sometimes when a horse is ailing all it needs is to be taken out for a good hard ride, just something to remind it that it's still alive. The earth under her feet, the wind in her mane, and the sound of thunder. Whoo! I'm getting worked up all over again." "You know what they say, one man's trash is another mans treasure.

CLAY

I want to see her.

RED

She don't want to see you. Ever again. I believe if she could by some miracle go back in time, she'd take a left turn instead of a right just before she met you.

CLAY

We'll see.

RED

All right, I'll take you out to truck, and you can plead your case.

They start walking toward the door. Red lays down a single bright gold piece to pay his tab. He sees that the piece has caught Clay's eye.

RED (CONT'D)

You like shiny things? This here is an antique. Pure gold. Each one is worth about a thousand dollars. It's the smallest denomination I have, and I just can't bear to trade em in for dirty, shabby looking bills. Bartenders love me.

The BARTENDER takes the gold.

BARTENDER

Thanks Red.

Red and Clay start toward the door again, halfway there, somebody yells across the room from the poker table.

MAN

You in Red?

RED

Just a minute. (To Clay) I'll be straight with you. I'm a pretty good judge of character and you ain't got none. She was sleeping like a baby when I left her. I say, let the innocent sleep while the wicked play. That's what you came for wasn't it Clay, to play with me? To try and take from me, like I took from you. That's why God created poker boy. Well maybe it wasn't God. --Like the man said are you in?"

INT. TRUCKERS SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

In the bed up behind the cowboys cab, under the darkroom red light, Mary stirs in her sleep. She is having a nightmare. She reaches out with her hand.

INT. BAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

In the bar, Clay seems to feel her pull. He hesitates. Red smiles at him. He turns and heads towards the table. Clay takes a step forward.

INT. MINI-VAN - NIGHT

A family with several kids. Some inane childrens program is blaring from the overhead TV. A purple creature dances and sings in a fairy-tale land of mushrooms and lollipops.

The mother is asleep in the front seat. The father looks grim and tired staring at the road.

POV

The father looks out at the hypnotic yellow lines of the road. Suddenly there is something coming up on him fast, right down the center of the road. He slams on the brakes and slides for forty feet. When the car comes to a stop he can see clearly what he almost hit.

It's the Sheriff, bloody faced and sweaty, dragging the cross on his back down the center of the highway. Hopalong is right beside him, tail between his legs.

The father of the family sticks his head out the van's window and stares at the Sheriff. The Sheriff tries to talk but his voice is a dry croak.

SHERIFF

Vampires.

FATHER

What?

A flock of vampires fly by perilously close overhead. The wind is huge and blows back the hair of the father. His mouth falls open.

SHERIFF

Vampires!

He picks up the big cross and puts it through the sunroof of the van so it's sticking up in the air.

Opening a door of the van, he lets Hopalong jump up in the backseat with the kids, and then dives in himself.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

How fast does this thing go?

FATHER

I don't know.

SHERIFF

Find out.

A vampire screeches above. The Father hits the gas and burns rubber on the highway. The van lurches away at high speed.

The purple creature on the TV seat is singing loudly.

A kid in the back is crying and screaming.

The vampires fly alongside the car, diving and clawing at the windows.

The Sheriff loads his gun and pops up through the sunroof. His back is against the cross as he fires his shotgun into the air. He swings it around in another direction and fires again.

The Sheriff sees a sign along the road. "Pixley"

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Exit here!

The van veers off the freeway into a small town. They careen down the main street, veering back and forth under the vampire assault.

FATHER

Where are we going?

SHERIFF

Turn left!

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

A largely black congregation sings "Go tell it on the Mountain". A spirited PREACHER struts in the front of the church, playing it big.

CRASH!

The van crashes through the front doors of the church and halfway down the center aisle. Rubble and debris fly everywhere, and the congregation screams out.

The van comes to a stop. There is an amazed silence. We can hear the purple monster on the TV inside the car still singing his stupid song.

The Sheriff crawls out of the wreckage, a bloody, dusty mess.

PREACHER

Are you people drunk or out of your mind? This is the house of God.

The Sheriff points behind the preacher.

SHERIFF

Vampires.

PREACHER

Say what?

The Sheriff points.

The Preacher turns slow, feeling a shadow looming over him. A big ugly buzzard vampire stands in the doorway. It hisses and saliva drips from its beak onto the ground.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Holy Mary Mother of God!

The Preacher freezes with a look of terror on his face.

CUT TO:

RED LAUGHING JOYFULLY

MONTAGE

Shots of the poker game, sped up, and then slowing down for the moments of truth. The throwing down of cards, the disgusted looks, and Red laughing and having a great time.

There's a big roar of disbelief at the table, and everyone throws their cards down. Red rakes in money.

RED

Where'd all my friends go to?
Where's all them smiling faces?
It's like magic. Don't pout boys.
It ain't manly. I got a better
game, anyway. A chance to win all
your money back, and much, much
more. See here.

He tosses his hat to the center of the table.

RED (CONT'D)

I'll put two gold pieces in this hat . Whoever can grab it first, gets to keep it. And...every ten seconds I'll double the number of gold pieces in that there hat.

He drops two pieces of gold in the hat. Immediately some loser snakes his hand in and grabs the gold.

LOSER

I win!

Clay hits the man in the back of the head.

RED

Wanna play again.?

Clay nods.

Cowboy puts two more pieces in the hat, the same guy goes to grab them. Clay grabs the guys arm and stops him.

CLAY

Wait.

He stares everyone down. They wait. The gold doubles, and doubles again. The tension mounts. Red and the Clay stare at each other.

Eventually someone grabs, and they all start grabbing. The table gets knocked over, the gold flies everywhere, they are fighting on the floor. It's pandemonium. A huge barfight.

Red whoops and hollers, laughing. The bartender shoots a shotgun in the air. Everyone stops moving. Red chuckles.

RED

Now that's the sorriest bunch of fools I've seen in a long time.

CLAY

I think you're the fool, and I think a fool that throws gold around like that must have a lot more where it came from and that's why he doesn't care. What I was thinking is, someone could kick your ass, take your keys, and get the gold that I bet you got in your truck.

RED
Someone like you?

CLAY
I'm a lover not a fighter.

RED
Well ain't you just a shiny little
snake? I see where you're going.
Let me help you out. Yeah I got a
shitload a gold out in my truck.
It's the big black one. And here's
the keys.

He drops them in his shirt pocket. Clay walks to the jukebox. He gives a meaningful glance around. A few very big men rise from a booth in the back of the room. A biker puts on a pair of brass knuckles.

The bartender puts the shotgun away under the bar and starts washing dishes. The group closes in on Red.

EXT. BAR -NIGHT

CUT TO

High in the sky above the bar, huge black forms circle and CROAK to each other.

INT. BAR- NIGHT

RED
Could someone be so kind as to
watch out for my lady friends.
They're the fragile kind.

A big bald guy makes an arm movement toward a back door. The ladies walk out, tottering on high heels and jiggling all the way.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Outside under a humming streetlamp the bald guy tries to make time with the two girls.

BALDIE
Smoke?

He holds out a pack of cigarettes.

Inside we hear yelling and shouting, chairs being smashed.

BALDIE (CONT'D)

Don't worry they won't kill him. We only want the money.

One of the girls speaks to him in Latin, getting very close to him.

BALDIE (CONT'D)

Ooh baby, I don't know what you're saying but I like how it sounds. You guys Latina?

The two girls suddenly morph into nasty looking vampires and jump on him. As they suck his blood, they hump and ride him as if in a sexual ecstasy.

INT. BAR -NIGHT

Red is kicking everyone's ass, one at a time, two at a time, all at a time. He is superhuman. Clay hides under a pool table, watching. By the end, the men lie all over the place, knocked out, hurting. Red looks around for Clay, but doesn't see him.

RED

Now where did that big talker crawl off to?

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT -SAME TIME

The giant vampire buzzard is leering down at the Preacher, whose face is still frozen with terror. Suddenly he finds his tongue and lets loose.

PREACHER

Holy Mary Mother of God and Sweet baby Jesus. Lord Almighty! And the Holy Spirit preserve us. Get thee behind me Satan, ass face ugly demon bird thing! Thou shalt not enter up in here. Not into my Father's house. Get thee to a nunnery. Cease and desist, the power of Christ compels you, do not enter, You shall not pass! Do not pass Go. Get back, get back to where you once belonged and still do, in short my fine feathered bald headed redskinned foul smelling beast, Go to Hell!

The creature cocks its head and looks at him quizzically. It steps forward into the church with one of its hideous taloned feet. The foot begins to smoke and burn.

The buzzard yanks his foot back and screeches. The group of vampires circle about in the air outside. Another buzzard peeks around the corner of the door.

Far off on the highway a Mack truck horn sounds, like a distant train. The buzzards turn reluctantly and fly off towards the sound. The congregation claps and praises the preacher.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
Someone fetch me my medicine.

Someone hands him a flask. He takes a big swig.

INT. BATHROOM -NIGHT

Red comes into the bar's ratty looking restroom. He stands in front of the mirror but does not appear in it. All we can see in the reflection is the toilet stall behind him. Red's face is a destroyed mess from the fight, as are his hands, which are torn up and bleeding.

He takes off his shirt, and we can see stab wounds, and what looks to be a broken rib sticking out through his flesh. He washes his face, hands and body, and as he does so, we see that he is healing. The cuts close up, the bloodshot eye clears, etc etc, in a moment, he is good as new.

Red moves to the urinal and pisses long and happily. He speaks out loud apparently to no one.

RED
I don't like you much boy. I think I'm starting to hate you. You know why? Because when I look at you I see myself oh about 200 years ago, when I still had a chance. You are a mirror of my regrets.

He is still pissing.

RED (CONT'D)
Dammit! No matter how much I drink I can't get drunk. Now that's what I call Hell.

He steps away from the sink, his spurs jangling. Suddenly he rips the door off the toilet stall and reveals Clay crouched like a bird, feet up on the toilet.

RED (CONT'D)

I'm trying to teach you something
boy!

The scream is huge and deep, and for a moment, Red's face turns into a horrible vampire face, Nosferatu all the way, blue and boiling with rage. He draws himself up to his full height which seems to make him reach the ceiling. Clay cowers in fear.

Red's boot explodes into flames. He stares at it uncomprehending. Then it starts to hurt. He shouts out and hops over to the sink, sticking in his boot and dousing the flames, as he does so he slowly morphs back into being human.

The Cowboy's foot is wet and smoking. He smiles and laughs.

Looking around the bathroom he sees that Clay is gone.

INT . CHURCH - NIGHT

The parishioners clean up their church. Several men are trying to fix the front doors. A woman nurses the family that was in the van. They are in shock.

The Sheriff and the Preacher talk privately by the altar.

SHERIFF

You see what I'm dealing with here,
Preacher, I'm out of my element.
Can you help me?

PREACHER

I'll pray for you, we all will.

SHERIFF

Will you come with me? Help me hunt
this guy down?

PREACHER

I'm a Shepard, I need to stay with
and protect my flock. But if
there's anything else I can do.

SHERIFF

I could use a ride home?

PREACHER

You got it.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Red is back to normal. He walks through the destroyed bar with his spurs jangling. He goes to the bar and reaches over it, pulling out a shotgun. He crosses toward a beaten man lying on the floor.

POV

The man watches Red's boots striding across the floor, gold spurs jangle eerily in the silence. Red cocks the gun. The beaten man holds his bloody hands up in front of his face.

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM. Red shoots three times into the ceiling, making a big hole.

Red pushes his way through the old western style swinging doors of the bar, heading out into the night. Light streams through the hole in the building's roof. Red looks up into the sky.

RED

Come and get it!

POV

From the sky they descend. Dark flying slices of night.

INT. BAR - NIGHT- SAME TIME

A bloody cowboy crawls towards the exit. He looks up at the light coming from outside. Shadows flicker across his face, he shields his eyes and tries to see what's out there.

The western doors swing open and shut rhythmically. In flashes we can see giant creatures gathering outside. White shiny eyes. Huge, ugly taloned feet are seen beneath the doors.

Clay runs out the back of the bar and into the woods. We hear screaming and crashing from inside the building.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAR - NIGHT -SAME TIME

The Cowboy stands looking up at the stars as screams and tearing can be hear from inside. His cell phone rings.

DUSTY (V.O.)

Hey Red. This is Dusty.

RED
Speak up Dusty. Can't hear ya.

DUSTY
You at a party?

RED
Yeah, a Hell of a party.

DUSTY
Listen, we are so crowded over here, you wouldn't believe it. No one's checked out for like two months. Could you send your boys by? Please?

RED
Yeah.

DUSTY
Thanks Red, I really appreciate it. I'll put em in the room with the big window.

RED
You're a sick man Dusty.

DUSTY
I know.

He hangs up. Red whistles and one of the buzzards lands next to him.

RED
After you're through here, head over to Dusty's place. You know the place with the bad smell? Bad smell place. After this.

The buzzard nods its head.

Another Buzzard lands and limps up to him on a hurt foot.

The bird offers its claw and the Cowboy takes it in his hands. It's burnt and raw.

RED (CONT'D)
You got a Boo boo huh? Let's take care of that. Now hold still.

The bird squawks and struggles. Red concentrates on the claw in his hands. The burn wounds fade away and disappear.

RED (CONT'D)
 All better! You big baby! Don't
 worry, we'll get the fella did that
 to you. Now fly! Go have fun.
 Follow your brothers!

The bird takes flight into the night.

INT. TRUCK SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Red slides into the sleeping chamber next to Mary, who wakes slowly under his hands.

RED
 You're quite a sleepy head.

MARY
 You keep me up all day. What are
 you up to?

RED
 Boy games.

Red gets on the CB and puts his finger over his lips for Mary to be quiet.

RED (OVER CB) (CONT'D)
 Citizens of Trinity! This is Red.
 Somebody gave me a hotfoot tonight.
 A boy with a star on his chest. a
 boy named John played a joke on the
 teacher. It was a good joke. But
 I'm a little sore. Now the rest of
 the class has to pay, you follow?
 Tomorrow night, you need to bring
 me some apples. Fresh apples, pure.
 I'm looking for a volunteer.
 Tomorrow night. Don't disappoint
 me. You'll still get your Gold. I'm
 not unfair. You always get what you
 deserve with me.

INT. NURSING HOME - NIGHT

A room full of senior citizens listening to an old lady play the piano terribly. ROSE a smiley old lady sings to accompany herself.

ROSE
 Raindrops keep falling on my head.

Some of the group sings along, some stare into space.

The camera tracks along a big long window on one side of the room. Beyond the glass, lights shine into a dense and forbidding stand of trees. The camera discovers two giant buzzards standing there, staring into the room.

And old lady screams out, spotting them. More old people scream. There is a mad rush to get out of there, a chaos of chairs being knocked over, people falling, and screaming.

Three old people drop dead of heart attacks on the spot.

An orderly in a white coat and holding a clipboard, smiles.

His nametag reads "DUSTY"

EXT. JEWEL'S HOUSE - DAY

The Sheriff and the Preacher ride up in an old Cadillac.

Jewel and Hopalong storm out onto the porch.

JEWEL

Are you ok? Where were you? Where's my truck!?

SHERIFF

Out on route 49. She wouldn't start for me at just the wrong time.

PREACHER

I'll vouch for him, maam. He wasn't cheating or gambling. He was beset by foul monsters from Hell.

JEWEL

Vampires?

PREACHER

You are familiar with these beasts?

JEWEL

Hot damn!

SHERIFF

If you saw them, you wouldn't be so excited.

JEWEL

Like Hell I wouldn't! Aliens,
Bigfoot, vampires, werewolves, Star
Trek, I'm into all that shit. You
saw it? (to preacher)

PREACHER

Talk to your husband. Don't let
this ruin your marriage. Sleep on
it. Take care Sheriff.

He drives off.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jewel and the Sheriff sleep on the bed in each other's arms.
Hopalong is at their feet.

The Sheriff tries to sneak out of bed.

JEWEL

Where you think you're going?

SHERIFF

Home?

JEWEL

You're not getting out of my sight
again. I'm not asking you, I'm
telling you.

He lays back down, and closes his eyes.

Fade to black

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

The ocean like you remember it.

Two figures silhouetted against the sunset move in the ocean.
They are playing in the waves. Their faces start out blurry
and slowly coalesce into two women, younger and older, the
Sheriff's wife and daughter. They turn and look toward the
camera. The daughter shouts out silently, and then the sound
comes in, the sound of waves, and her voice.

SAVVANAH

Dad!

EXT. FIELD - DAY -SUNRISE

Red and Mary walk through a field where the hay is shining like gold in the sun. The wind blows and countless birds sing.

Red smiles and takes off his hat, letting the sunlight bathe his face. He holds Mary and kisses her. Suddenly his skin begins to redden, now it is bubbling and he screams in agony.

Mary screams in horror. Red falls to his knees. His skull is flaming and the camera zooms into the blackness of his eye and..

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT -SAME TIME

...into the blackness of sky over a midnight field of corn.

Hopalong, (with all his legs) is madly running after or away from something. A giant Buzzard swoops down above the dog and bats its wings, making the corn stalks rattle and sway. Hopalong turns to fight, baring his teeth.

The bird swoops toward him and catches his leg in its bony mouth. CRACK! Hopalong's point of view goes upside down and then up into the sky.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Hopalong squeals in his sleep waking himself and the Sheriff and Jewel.

SHERIFF

Don't you ever have good dreams boy?

JEWEL

How about you? How was your dream?

SHERIFF

Good till I woke up, again. Been a lot of em since we found that hippie's arm. We were all at the ocean. Seemed so real. Why do you think they haunt me? Why are they hanging around?

JEWEL

Maybe they can't go where they're supposed to go cause you're following them.

SHERIFF

How'd you know I was dreaming?

JEWEL

Because you've got...

SHERIFF

Oh Lord. That's very awkward.

JEWEL

It's natural. Men saw logs and get wood. Let nature take its course. Go back to sleep and it will go away. Or whatever.

He turns away and fluffs his pillow.

SHERIFF

We'll sleep a couple more hours and then start the investigation up again. We got to get your truck towed and fixed.

JEWEL

She'll start for me, just gotta have the right touch.

INT. TRUCK SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - DAY

Red wakes up in the sleeping compartment of the Mack truck, bathed in red light like in a darkroom. Mary is lying beside him under the covers.

MARY

What was it?

RED

Just a walk in the park. And then I'm burning. The worst part is the realization. It's like forgetting someone you loved is dead, and then remembering. Except the person is yourself. Regret. That's what it is.

MARY

Thanks a lot.

RED

No, no, no. Not about last night.
You're like sunshine to me darling
believe me. Your smile warms my
heart. In fact I think I'll call
you sunshine from now on.

MARY

From now on?

RED

Forever.

BOOM! Something hits the truck. Red flicks a switch and a small screen reveals what's happening outside the truck. DALE and DWAYNE, two dumb brothers, are trying to break into the cab with sledgehammers, and other tools.

RED (CONT'D)

They've come to kill me. Take my
gold. Sometimes folks get it in
their minds they're gonna get
something for free. Nothing's for
free.

We hear footsteps on the roof.

RED (CONT'D)

Don't worry they can't get in here.

He kisses her, they start to get sexy.

EXT. HIGHWAY -DAY

DALE and DWAYNE, two dumb brothers, standing on the roof of Red's truck. Dale finds a crack and traces it with his finger. It forms a square. There is another square next to it.

DALE

Check it out Dwayne. There's some
kind of door over here.

Dwayne comes over and stands next to him. The doors they are examining open up and they fall in.

INT. MACK TRUCK- BACK COMPARTMENT -DAY

The space is lit by red light, giant buzzards sleep curled up and piled on one another for warmth.

It looks like a hatchery for chickens. The two brothers are caught inside separate cages a few feet apart.

DWAYNE

"There's some kind of door over here" (imitating his brother) You know what kind of door it was Dale? A trap door. You know how I know that? Cause we are trapped! You're an idiot Dale, why do I listen to you? Why?

CLOSE UP

Dale's face. His eyes are wide and he has his finger over his lips. For the first time, Dwayne turns and sees what's behind him. The Buzzards are waking up, blinking and yawning, stretching their wings.

INT. - TRUCK CAB - DAY

Mary and Red listen. Screams begin beyond the metal wall beside them. Mary covers her ears. Red kisses her on the neck.

RED

You get used to it.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Jewel and the Sheriff drive main street in her old truck.

Everybody gives them the fish eye. An old man with a walker stops and gives the Sheriff the finger.

EXT. RAMSHACKLE HUT - DAY

The Sheriff, Jewel, and Hopalong jump out of the truck in front of a crazy, ramshackle house.

They walk the creaky porch. The Sheriff knocks on the door.

SHERIFF

Stumpy! Stumpy!

STUMPY (O.S.)

I'm in the back!

They make their way through the mess.

There's all kinds of crazy stuff in this place. Taxidermy, weird art, and crosses everywhere.

They find Stumpy sitting on a little toilet.

SHERIFF

Dammit Stumpy! We don't want to see you on the toilet! There's a lady here, I got Jewel with me.

STUMPY

I ain't shy.

SHERIFF

We'll be out here when you're done.

STUMPY

Might be an hour or more, my insides don't work so well.

Jewel waits in the next room.

The Sheriff comes back, keeping one hand over his nose.

He holds out Red's piece of gold.

SHERIFF

I saw your vampire and his birds.

STUMPY

Is it ill gotten gains?

SHERIFF

Huh?

STUMPY

Is it stolen?

SHERIFF

I'm the Sheriff. I don't steal.

Stumpy takes the gold and holds it up to the light. He sees the mark.

STUMPY

Yep, on his gold, his women, and his unholy buzzards he puts his mark. This boy is a local, he was born, born again, you might say just up the road in Weaverville. He's got a gold mine there, that has held a curse for 200 years.

(MORE)

STUMPY (CONT'D)

When I was young and foolish I stole some gold from it. Just a little chunk. Soon enough I got cancer in the hand that took the gold. One by one all my fingers rotted off.

SHERIFF

What's his name?

STUMPY

Some call him Red. Some call him the cowboy, I call him..

He spits on the floor.

SHERIFF

Well, whatever he is, I gotta bring him in. I'm looking to get together some folks..

STUMPY

You gonna make a posse?

SHERIFF

Something like that.

STUMPY

You don't get it Sheriff. You'd better watch your back, and not from the vampires, from everybody else in this town. He likes it that way. He likes to see us biting and chewing each other up. It's all for his amusement. Nobody's gonna help you. There's an arrangement here. But it's like the vampires. You got to see to believe. Go over to the Johnson's tonight they're making an offering. Don't ask me no more questions. I think I'm gonna pass a kidney stone. I got to concentrate.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The sun goes down.

Jewel and the Sheriff ride down the road. Hopalong stands in the back of the truck gulping down air.

It's a cold and mysterious night, full of shadows and suspicions. Every face seems to hold a secret. Deals are being done in the dark.

People move into the shadows when they see the Sheriff look their way. He's seeing his county in a way he's never seen it before.

As they drive along the highway, John notices that the symbol he saw on the black mack truck keeps popping up. At bars and hotels, he sees it on the "welcome signs" with no explanation.

They drive slowly past a farm by the highway. There's a flashlight on the ground pointing into the sky. There is a goat roped to the mailbox, with a red bandanna tied around its neck.

Its eyes meet the Sheriffs, and seem to stare into his soul.

SHERIFF

This is a real creepy town.

JEWEL

You're just noticing that?

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A weird man on a ham radio in some dark basement, mumbles incoherently spouting in tongues a fervent message.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

A farmer picks a cow out of the herd and puts a red cloth around its neck like a bandana. He walks the cow out to the end of his driveway and ties it to a post alongside the road. He crosses himself and hurries to get back inside his house.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A group of men drag another man out of his bed kicking and screaming.

In the middle of a field, they tie him up and put a red bandana around his neck.

The man in the field tied to a post is surrounded by giant buzzards. Their heads are bowed in silence.

From behind a tree nearby, ZEKE and LUKE, two dumb rednecks watch the proceedings.

ZEKE

What are they waiting for?

LUKE

They're saying Grace. Their daddy
raised them right.

The buzzards peck and tear at the man tied to the pole. One of them sinks its beak into his neck and sucks with all its might. It's eyes turn from white to blood red.

Another buzzard hops toward the men behind the tree. This buzzard has a little bag around his neck.

LUKE (CONT'D)

See, I told ya. This is how it
works. Well, go and take it.

Zeke looks terrified. He creeps forward toward the buzzard and with a shaky hand he opens the little bag around the buzzards neck and pours out several gold pieces.

ZEKE

Got it .

He hurries away. Bringing the gold back to Luke.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

We're rich!

LUKE

I'm rich.

Luke stabs him. Zeke falls to the ground, dying, trying to reach the blade in his back.

He pulls out a loop of red cloth and puts it around Zeke's neck.

A buzzard steps out of the shadows and pulls Zeke's body out of sight into the darkness. Another buzzard with a little bag of gold steps toward Luke. Luke smiles wide. He's got one gold tooth.

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE - NIGHT

A family; WANDA, a young mother, ARLAND, her husband, a baby and GRANDMA sit at a kitchen table. ARLAND, the father is crying.

ARLAND

I won't let you do it.

GRANDMA

You can't stop me. It has to be somebody. I can't work, I'm no use. I'm old, and weak. They'll give you gold. The crops will be blessed and grow prodigious. You know their magic.

ARLAND

It ain't magic it's evil.

GRANDMA

I choose. Your hands are clean.

EXT. RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

An outside patio overlooking the river. Geese float in the water below and nibble on bread thrown down to them. Mary and Red are sitting at a table. They are both dressed up. Mary wears a dress and Red has on a clean hat and a lasso necktie.

Far in the distance, they hear a scream. Red cocks his eyes in that direction and smirks. Mary shakes her head disapprovingly.

Red calls the waiter over. RICK is a scared teenager.

RED

What's your name son?

RICK

Rick.

RED

Rick, I'm nobody to speak of, but this lady here is a princess. Visiting from a foreign country name of Sunshineland. Now it's very important diplomatically for America, understand, for this here dinner to go off well. In consideration of which, Congress has authorized me to give you this.

He slips the guy a piece of gold.

RED (CONT'D)

And the senate has another one of these for ya at the end of the night. If it goes off without a hitch.

RICK

Yes sir! Let me get you some bread.

He takes off for the kitchen.

RED

It isn't real, you know. Money.
It's as easily created as anything
else, including misery.

MARY

If misery were money, I'd be a
millionaire.

RED

Do you know how they train
elephants to stay in one spot? When
they're babies, they put a big
chain around their neck and attach
it to a stake driven deep into the
ground. That elephant is not going
anywhere. Anywhere outside his
circle, that is. A ten foot circle.
Now as the elephant gets older and
bigger, they don't increase the
size of the chain holding him. No.
They keep making it smaller and
smaller. Till you've got a two
thousand pound beast being held
back by a clothesline around his
neck. In the end you don't need
anything at all but the stake.
Anywhere you put the stake, the
elephant will stay within ten feet
of it. The most powerful thing in
the world is habit.

He lights a cigarette and laughs at her. He pushes the carton
toward her provocatively. She takes one and lights it.

MARY

Oooh. How'd you get to be so wise?

RED

That's part of the curse of living
long. You keep getting smarter and
smarter and everyone around you
keeps getting dumber and dumber.

MARY

And what's the stake for you? What
do you stay within ten feet of at
all times?

RED

I'm not held back by anything.
There are no restrictions on my
reality. There are no consequences.
There is no end and there is no
joy. It's a hoot, you should try
it.

MARY

Maybe I will.

RED

It isn't your choice. It's mine.

The waiter brings bread and drinks.

RED (CONT'D)

Thanks Rick. (to Mary) Did you
ever consider that I might not want
you. That you might not be good
enough? Or maybe I care about you
and want to spare you the
suffering. The world is a circle.
There is nothing outside the
circle. You will be within the
circle, but not of it. You will be
separate in a way you can't
imagine. You will be truly alone.

MARY

Can you feel love?

RED

Vampires say if you do, it means
you're going to die.

MARY

Well, are you going to die?

Rick arrives breathlessly at the table, carrying food.

RED

There he is, my man Rick. Arriving
just in the nick of time.

Rick starts handing out the food.

RED (CONT'D)

Look at that. Life is good.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The cow tied to the post at the end of the farmers driveway, moos and rolls its eyes in terror. A huge black shadow swoops in from the sky, and the cow is swept up and away, gone in an instant.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

A typical white trash backyard, with kiddie pool, BBQ, and a plastic picnic table. Grandma is standing on the picnic table with a red bandanna around her neck crying and praying. Her son holds a flashlight pointed at the sky. Several other flashlights dot the backyard, pointing up.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT -SAME TIME

The Sheriff and Jewel stand on a front porch. He knocks but there's no answer. Jewel sees the flashlight beams rising to the sky. She points.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Jewel and the Sheriff peek through the bushes at the scene in the back yard.

ARLAND

Oh great God Horus eater of light
see our offering, hear our prayer.

The wind rises, and the trees in the backyard shake and dance. A giant buzzard swoops down from the darkness spreading huge wings.

The Sheriff shoots his gun in the air.

SHERIFF

Everybody get in the house now,
move!

He shoots at the giant bird. It screeches and spits at him.

GRANDMA

NO!

The Sheriff grabs her and pushes her into the house, the father, and mother carrying her baby are standing in the living room.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)
You defile the ritual! Blasphemer!

He pulls her inside and slams the door. A sharp beak tears through the wood. John pushes a big piece of furniture to block the door.

SHERIFF
Help me with this.

Arland jumps up and helps push.

We see buzzards peeking through the windows, shiny white eyes in the dark.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
You got guns?

Arland hesitates.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Fight dammit. Fight for your life.
Fight for your soul!

A buzzard smashes through a window and sticks its ugly head inside, screeching. The Sheriff shoots it in the face and it shrieks and retreats.

Arland runs off and grabs two shotguns from the top of the cellar stairs. He quickly loads one and hands it to his wife.

INT. RESTROOM - NIGHT

Someone is in one of the stalls, throwing up.

A JOLLY MAN enters the bathroom and uses the urinal. BRACK!

The person in the stall throws up again.

RED
Sorry. I've got food allergies.

JOLLY MAN
What are you allergic to?

BRACK! The sound of someone throwing up.

RED
Food.

He opens the stall door.

JOLLY MAN

Well, you won't get fat...

He looks up in the mirror and sees no one there. Confused, he turns around and sees Red, who's got his vampire face on, blue and nasty. He looks sick. Vomit hangs from his chin.

He grabs the Jolly Man by the back of the head and drags him into the stall. The man grabs Red's arm and tries to break free. He kicks wildly. Red sinks his teeth into the man's neck and sucks hard. He takes a long drink and then takes a quick gasp of air, like a kid drinking too fast at a drinking fountain.

RED

Ah, that really hits the spot.

GLEN, the owner of the place, walks in. He sees the bloody mess and corpse.

OWNER

Everything alright Mr. Red?

RED

Fine. My compliments to the chef.

OWNER

That was the chef.

RED

Sorry about the mess.

He gives the man a chunk of gold, and walks out.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A buzzard slams into the front door pushing the piece of furniture blocking it forward half a foot. John rushes over, he sticks his shotgun through the crack of the door.

The buzzard grabs hold of it and tugs. The Sheriff nearly loses his weapon. He fires and misses. The buzzard croaks as if laughing at him and spreads its wings wide. It moves fast and disappears around the side of the house.

GRANDMA

Stop it you damn fools. We'll get no gold and they'll curse our crops. Poop unholy mess on them. Let them take me or they'll take us all!

There is the CRACK! of breaking wood from a back room.

A vampire buzzard tiptoes into the room, its talons gently clicking on the wood floor. It spots grandma with her red bandanna and lunges for her.

SHERIFF

Look out!

Jewel pushes grandma to the floor and shields her.

The Sheriff shoots the bird in the neck. It squeals and dodges away. Clearly it feels pain. When another vampire goes after the baby, snapping at him in his high chair, it's too much for the father.

He takes the bandanna off of grandma and puts it on himself.

ARLAND

Take me!

A vampire grabs him and flies out the big living room window, smashing it.

GRANDMA

It's over. They got what they came for.

EXT - RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

Red and Mary slow dance to the music of a live band.

RED

Where have you been all my death?

He slaps at his neck.

RED (CONT'D)

Ow.

MARY

Mosquito? Aren't they relatives of yours? Family?

He smiles grimly.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT -SAME TIME

Wanda, Grandma and the Sheriff stand where we last saw them. Exhausted and afraid to move. SCRITCHSCRATCH something with scaly feet is walking on the wood floor. The humans tense up again, looking around. In the next room a single bare bulb is shining. A giant buzzard creeps up to the doorway and peeks around the corner. It blinks.

The sheriff lifts his gun.

GRANDMA

Wait.

A little bag hangs from the buzzards neck.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Get the gold, Wanda.

Wanda edges toward the vampire. By the front door she stoops down and picks up a sharp splintered piece of wood which was broken off when the house was attacked. She puts the wood behind her back and moves forward.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Don't do it girl. Your baby lost his daddy tonight, is she gonna lose her momma too? Just take the gold.

Wanda rotates the stake in her hand facing it downward.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

You do it and they'll take us all, they'll burn this place to the ground. And he will come. You hear me? These here ain't nothing compared to him.

Wanda's hand is inches from the gold around the vampires neck. She cries and trembles. Then suddenly, she plunges the stake into the vampire's heart. It reels and squawks, backing away from her.

EXT- RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

Red and Mary dancing. Red suddenly grabs at his heart. He reels around in pain and fury, screaming loud. His face turns blue and insane and he projectile vomits purple goo all over the patrons of the restaurant who run all directions in horror.

RED

Get me back to the truck.

Mary helps him across the patio.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - SAME TIME

The vampire slowly, in great agony, changes back into a man. DEVON, a skinny nerd, looks around in wild fear and pain. He stares wide eyed at the stake in his chest.

SHERIFF

Take it easy. You're free now.

DEVON

Is he dead? The Cowboy.

SHERIFF

Not as far as I know.

The ex vampire wails in misery.

DEVON

Then I'm damned.

He looks down at his arm. The Cowboy's symbol is branded there in pinkish scar tissue.

The man dies in agony. His skin bubbling and burning. He becomes a pile of ash.

SHERIFF

I quit.

He gets up and heads toward the door. He looks down at Hopalong who is staring up at him. John takes the red bandanna off his dog and throws it into the corner.

INT. SLEEPING COMPARTMENT TRUCK - NIGHT

Mary holds Red and comforts him.

MARY

What happened?

RED

That Sheriff, he killed one of my boys.

MARY

Why don't you just kill him? Why are you afraid of him?

He takes hold of her arm and CRUNCH! Breaks it. She wails and screams. He puts his finger over his lips and gets on his CB.

RED

Citizens of Trinity. It displeases me to inform you that you are fucked! Someone killed one of my boys. And that means its OPEN SEASON tonight. No one is innocent, no one is safe. No gold! Only death. That is all.

He comes back to Mary and takes her arm in his hands.

RED (CONT'D)

Sorry, my temper gets away from me sometimes. Love means never having to say you're sorry right?

He heals her arm. She lifts it, moves it, is afraid but doesn't take her hand away from him.

RED (CONT'D)

You're in the safest place in this town right now, darlin. Get some sleep.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A middle aged couple, sleeping. From somewhere outside the room comes a BUMP. FLORENCE wakes up, and shakes FRED

FLORENCE

Fred. I heard a noise.

Fred doesn't open his eyes.

FRED

It's just the wind.

The BUMP comes again. Louder.

FLORENCE

There it is again. Fred get up and check it out.

FRED

It's just the wind.

FLORENCE

Fred.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Fred comes down the stairs with a flashlight. He shines it around the living room. Nothing.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Fred walks out on the porch, and flashes his light around the yard. Nothing. Strong wind blows across his face. BUMP. There's the sound. He sees a shutter swinging in the gusts of wind and hitting the wall of his house.

FRED

What did I say, It's just the wind.

Wind blows down on his face from above, he shines his flashlight up into the trees. He sees ten giant vampires hovering in the air, their wings beating widely and sending down air as if a helicopter were taking off.

He screams.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A FAT MAN watches TV. The flickering white light of the set illuminates a trashy living room and a porch beyond.

He hears a sound and grabs his remote. He hits Mute and the room becomes silent. SCREECH. A cat leaps across the porch.

FATMAN

Trixie. What are you doing?

SCREECH. The cat goes by again.

FATMAN (CONT'D)

Trixie knock it off.

The fat man gets up and goes to the sliding glass door. He opens it and looks to the right. He sees a giant buzzard with a big Grey cat squirming in its mouth. The buzzard tosses the cat across the porch, SCREECH, where it is caught in the mouth of another buzzard. This buzzard looks at the fat man, and drops the cat. He spills beer on his gut, shouts out, and slams the sliding glass door shut.

One of the buzzards collides with the glass. THUMP. It looks confused. It moves forward again. THUMP. It rears back its head and pecks powerfully at the glass, which explodes inward. The man turns and runs.

The buzzards run into the house and pursue him. Up the stairs he goes. They are right on his tail. One grabs his leg and pulls him back down. He screams and claws at the stairs. The buzzard chomps him right in the square of his back with its beak. He screams louder.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

We see a man being dragged through the dirt by a horse. His leg is caught in the saddle and he struggles to get it free. We pan up the man's legs, over the horse's butt and see that the horse is also being dragged, by a buzzard that's got him by the bridle. The horse whinnies in terror.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Two men are fishing in a rowboat on a gigantic lake. MARSHALL, a tall man with big ears, casts his line out into the water. KEITH, a hippy looking guy with glasses, sits drinking beer. At his feet are about a dozen fish.

MARSHALL

This is wonderful. I'm so glad I came out. Only three hours from the city, but it's like a whole different world. It's like we're back in prehistoric times. What is that?

KEITH

What?

MARSHALL

Oh my God, what is that? There.

Keith looks where he's pointing. There is a big black eye in the middle of a red fleshy head, looking up at them from the water.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Is that an alligator? What is that?

Keith puts his finger to his lips. Shh. He picks up a fish off the floor of the boat and tosses it toward the eye in the water. CHOMP. The buzzard takes the fish with its sharp beak and gobbles it down. Marshall gasps and puts his hands up to his mouth, he's freaking out.

KEITH

Be very quiet if you want to live.
I'm going to start rowing us in.

(MORE)

KEITH (CONT'D)

You keep throwing fish. Ok? Stay calm. Stay quiet. Throw a fish.

Marshall throws a fish in the water. The Buzzard swallows it up. Marshall picks up another fish.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Slow down. We got a ways to go.

MARSHALL

Oh my God. I hate the woods. I hate the wild. I'm never leaving the city again. Here monster. Good monster.

He throws a fish.

INT - TRAILER - NIGHT

An old man with a poodle sits in a tiny trailer. He's writing quickly, longhand on a yellow legal pad. He finishes the page and rips it off, adding it to a pile about three feet high sitting on the table next to him.

Something slams into the trailer. The poodle starts barking crazily. The old man grabs a baseball bat and peers out one of his windows. BOOM, the trailer is hit again. The old man stumbles.

Now the trailer rocks and bounces as if an earthquake were taking place. The old man loses his footing and falls to the floor. The dog barks and barks.

As soon as it began it is over. All is still. The old man rises slowly. He crosses to the metal door of the trailer. He opens the door, and falls forward with a scream discovering that he and his trailer are thousands of feet in the air, flying along, carried by several giant buzzards.

The old man twirls and falls, screaming all the way. His poodle stands at the edge, of the trailer's doorway, looking down and barking.

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Marshall and Keith are almost at the shore. Marshall throws a fish overboard.

MARSHALL

...There's no shops around here, no dance clubs, nowhere to get a decent cappuccino. And there's monsters in the water.

KEITH

Stay calm, we're almost there.

MARSHALL

We're out of fish. Now what?

The buzzard eye stares at them. The monster squawks. Marshall moans in terror.

KEITH

Ok. You remember what I told you to do if you see a bear? Get real big. Make a lot of noise, wave your arms around. On the count of three.

MARSHALL

Are you going to do it too?

KEITH

Yeah. One. Two. Three.

Marshall starts to yell and scream like a maniac. He throws his arms in the air and tries to "Look big". The buzzard flies up out of the water grabs him by the chest and shoots into the sky with him.

Keith steadies the boat. Its very quiet now on the water. He starts to row the boat ashore.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Thanks Marshall. Way to take one for the team.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Red's trucks are parked alongside a large field of wheat. A boy walks towards us from the distance, running his hand over the top of the hay, lost in childhood innocence.

We pan to a tiny camera on the side of Red's truck.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK SLEEPING COMPARTMENT- DAY

A small monitor screen on the wall displays exactly what we saw outside. The boy is getting closer. Red's face is a foot from the screen. Mary lays with her head on a pillow.

MARY

It's like a memory.

RED
Yep. That's me.

He taps on the screen.

MARY
Where are you going?

RED
I could be coming or going. At that
age it doesn't mater. Wherever you
go. There you are.

He plays with a control like a video game joystick.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The rear view mirror on Red's truck rotates and bright sunlight hits the boy in the face. The light flashes across his eyes and away, several times. The boy starts walking toward the source of the light.

INT. TRUCK SLEEPING COMPARTMENT - DAY

On the monitor, we see the boy walking toward the truck.

RED
Life wouldn't be so bad if it were
never good. But in the beginning,
if you're lucky, the world feels
like your home. You feel safe
there. Like you belong. And then
one day you step outside the house,
and when you turn around the door
is locked and you can't get back
in.

As he speaks he is manipulating another control. The boy is standing right next to the truck. Red pushes a button. A metal arm with a claw at the end shoots out of the truck and catches the boy around the neck. The boy screams and grabs hold of the mechanism trapping him, trying to escape. Red uses the camera control to zoom in on the boy's face.

RED (CONT'D)
Your life is ruined and you can't
fix it. All you can do is ruin it
for other people.

MARY
Does it make you feel better?

RED

For a moment. Like catching a fish.

MARY

That one's pretty small. I think you should throw it back in. For me?

She wraps her arms around him.

RED

Anything for you Sunshine.

He pushes a button and the claw around the boy's neck opens. He falls to the ground, then gets up and starts running.

RED (CONT'D)

The one that got away.

He kisses Mary.

Red gets on the CB

RED (CONT'D)

Citizens of Trinity. Good morning. How was your night? You can expect another night like that tonight, and every night, until someone brings me the head of John the Sheriff. As a bonus, you'll get five times the gold I normally give for an offering.

EXT. STUMPY'S HOUSE - DAY

The Sheriff knocks on the door. Jewel and Hopalong are with him.

SHERIFF

Stumpy! You home?

STUMPY

Come in, come in.

INT. STUMPY'S HOUSE - DAY

He pulls down the shades of the windows.

STUMPY

Anybody see you come in here?

SHERIFF

I don't know. Why?

STUMPY

Red's put a bounty on you, John. You need to disappear before you disappear. She's probably not safe either. They'd use her to get you. I got a cabin you can hide out in, I drew ya a map. Take these blankets, it gets cold up there.

SHERIFF

Who says I'm going?

STUMPY

The vampire, all his demon birds, and everyone you see is after you till your dead. You're going. Just for a couple of days. The Migration is on a schedule, his spawn are birds, and they feel the pull of the darkness down South. The Cowboy spends his birthday, also his Deathday! in the town where he was born. Weaverville. Right next door. Two days from now. He'll be sleeping in his gold mine. And then he'll move on. And take his gold with him. The bounty hunters will cool down. Now get going and don't stop for nobody!

SHERIFF

Thanks Stumpy.

They leave. Stumpy crosses the room to look at the piece of Cowboy Gold the Sheriff brought him. He looks at Red's symbol and the sparkly gold. He reaches forward to touch it with a finger, then pulls back.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Stumpy stands by the side of Red's Mack truck. He pushes a button that looks like a doorbell.

RED

You rang? That shit's funny. Laugh.

Stumpy laughs unconvincingly.

STUMPY

Sir, I got information about the John the Sheriff you're looking for.

RED

I'm not looking for the Sheriff, Stumpy. Just his head.

STUMPY

Well I know where all of him is. Including his head! I made a map.

RED

Put it in the box, and I'll give you a nice chunk of gold for it. Put it in the box.

Stumpy looks back and forth between his hands, the good hand with full fingers, and the stumpy ugly hand.

With his crippled hand, he pushes the map into a rectangular box on the side of the truck, a chunk of utter darkness.

RED (CONT'D)

Push it in further. All the way.

Stumpy puts his hand into the darkness, pushing the map. Immediately he screams in agony, tries to pull his hand out. Finally his hand comes free and he falls back on the ground ten feet. His hand is completely healed, and in his fisted palm, there is a big chunk of gold.

He smiles with a gold tipped tooth.

INT. STUMPY'S CABIN - NIGHT

The sun is going down as the Sheriff, Jewel and Hopalong arrive in Jewel's truck at a beat up old cabin in the woods.

They push open the door and dust flies, while the creaking door sounds like the gate of Hell.

The place is a dump. Jewel jumps. There is a stuffed taxidermied bear towering behind the door.

JEWEL

Take a nap for a few hours. I'm going to clean this place up. Get in a sleeping bag and don't touch anything.

He starts to say something. She gives him a look, he goes to find a place to lie down.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel lay in two sleeping bags on a mattress covered with a tablecloth. They look up at the ceiling which has a big hole right over their heads, revealing the stars.

The Sheriff laughs.

SHERIFF

When Savannah was a little girl we were poor and the house was unfinished. The roof in her room was wide open. At night we'd lay side by side and look at the stars. I didn't know squat about stars so I made up names for the constellations. Each night the names would change cause I couldn't remember what I called them the night before. I told her the names changed because "It's a brand new universe every day." She asks me "What will happen if it rains?" I said "The glass ceiling will keep out the rain. The glass ceiling? Yes. Well of course, one night it rained. I got woke by this terrible screaming. She's jumping up and down on the bed soaking wet, yelling "Look Dad, the rain is coming down so hard, it broke the glass ceiling!" I was glad she saw it that way. That's how she saw everything. She said everybody was made of stardust, I said she was made of stardust but most people were made of bullshit. I think she and my wife got off at the wrong stop. They belonged in a better world, they trusted, they had faith. I belong in this crappy world.

JEWEL

Hey, you spent your life trying to make it a better world for them. I think that makes you pretty spectacular.

SHERIFF

If I live through this, I want to get to the ocean. It's been too long. You want to go with me?

JEWEL

Sure.

They hold hands.

EXT - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Red and his convoy move down the highway. Mary is in the passenger seat.

We hear the DRONE of a high powered motor. Red looks out his window and sees a Citron zooming up beside him. DAD, an older man, is driving. He's dressed to the nines in an expensive suit. He grins and waves.

Red tries to ignore him.

The driver sits up on the back of his seat and drives the car with his feet.

MARY

You know that guy?

RED

That's my Dad.

He slows down and pulls his rig over.

The man pulls over behind them.

Red swings down from the cab of his truck. Mary follows suit. She walks around to his side of the truck

RED (CONT'D)

Don't speak unless spoken to, and don't look directly at his eyes.

Dad saunters up to them, grinning widely. He throws open his arms inviting an embrace. Red does not move to him.

Red's Girls get down from their trucks. They open up the back of the last rig. We hear the sound of a car engine.

DAD

You haven't changed a bit. Still a dirty smelly cowboy. You know they've made this marvelous invention it's called a shower.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

I believe I could have even enjoyed the middle ages if I had a hot shower to come home to at the end of the days labors.

Coco drives a sooped up 69 Red Mustang and parks it beside them.

DAD (CONT'D)

Oh lovely. And what will be the wager this year? Of all this world's riches, pleasures and mysteries, you desire...

RED

My freedom.

Dad sighs.

DAD

As usual. If you win you get your "freedom" and if I win, I get, let's see. Oh, you haven't introduced me to your friend, Red. What's your name young lady?

RED

No.

DAD

No? No? You lost the privilege of saying that word to me a long time ago. If I win I get the girl. Isn't that how it's done in America?

He gets in his car.

DAD (CONT'D)

First one to Indian Rock wins. Ta-ta.

He hits the gas and peels out. Red jumps in his car.

RED

Get in.

Mary hops in with him. He floors it.

He flies up fast on Dad's car. Dad switches lanes back and forth boxing Red out.

Red finally gets past him. He shifts down and hits the gas. They pull ahead. Dad smiles and weaves his car sideways toward them. Red swerves away from him.

They are even neck and neck, and a car is coming toward Red. He tries to get ahead, then has to cut in behind Dad at the last second. The car goes by slamming on its horn.

Dad gets right in front of them. He bends down in his seat and then comes back up, holding a lit Molotov cocktail. He tosses it into the air.

A ball of flame smashes through Red's windshield and catches him on fire. His face and hair smokes and burns.

He points into the back seat , Mary sees a bottle of Evian. She grabs it, opens it and dumps it on Red. The flames are extinguished. He puts his head out the window and the wind blows charred pieces of flesh from his cheeks. He hollers into the wind.

RED (CONT'D)

Woo!

His face contorts and grows. The flesh getting thicker and turning blue. His giant vampire teeth gnash. His whole body is bigger and now his head is sticking out through the broken windshield of the car.

He zooms up behind Dad and slams into his car from behind.

Once, twice, three times. Dad looks back, his face now bright Yellow, thick and muscular.

DAD

Do you have any idea how much this car costs!?

They continue the race on a straightaway. It's neck and neck but Dad pulls ahead and finishes first, flying by a big granite rock alongside the road.

Dad swings his car around. The wheels squeal on the pavement. He gets casually out and heads towards Red's car.

He points up at a bunch of petroglyphs drawn high on the rocks.

DAD (CONT'D)

Can you read the writing on the wall? The drawings near the top are over two hundred years old. The ones at the bottom could have been made last night.

He points at gang signs and names that have been painted on the rocks.

DAD (CONT'D)

But they both say the same things.
I was here. I loved. I fought. I
triumphed. I existed. Where are
they now? When you get caught up in
the drama, you're part of the play.
And the play will end. But when
you're merely a spectator, you just
sit in the theater and wait for the
next performance to begin.

He applauds.

Red steps out of his car.

DAD (CONT'D)

No attachments, world without end,
Amen. Do what you will, it's all a
dream. Remember? Mary. Please get
in my car.

She immediately starts walking toward the other car.

Red smiles and puts out his hand to shake.

RED

Congratulations. But I warn you,
you'll have your hands full with
that one.

Dad grabs his hand and shakes it. Their eyes meet. Dad
suspects something is up.

A stake falls down out of Red's left shirtsleeve into his
hand. He grips it tight. Lifting Dad's right hand with his
own, he stabs for his heart with the other hand. Dad grabs
the stake with his left hand and squares up with Red.

His face morphs with rage and becomes bright yellow, with
long gleaming fangs. He snaps forward like a rabid dog with
his jaws. Red bobs and avoids the bite. He comes back up blue
faced and hissing. They wrestle and roll across the ground.

Dad breaks free and reaches inside his car. He pulls out a
stake and shifts it back and forth between his hands,
circling Red.

The two clash again, thrusting and parrying each other with
the stakes.

Dad kicks Red's leg at the knee and we hear a CRACK! Red goes
down onto one knee. Dad thrusts with his hand and sticks his
fingers right into Red's chest.

RED (CONT'D)
What's going on inside this dead
Heart? Love? Love?

He grabs Red's heart squeezes it.

RED (CONT'D)
I am not dead!

He throws Dad off. The battle intensifies. It's all Dad can do, to fend off the ferocious attack. He blocks every fatal thrust but seems to be tiring out. He falls to the ground and Red kneels on top of him, slowing driving the stake towards his heart. Suddenly Dad grabs a rock and slams Red on the head. He goes down. His face fades from a furious blue and blood streams down his forehead.

DAD
See you next year.

He starts to walk away, toward Mary. Red is on his back looking straight up at a full sky of stars.

RED
You told me when I was born, that you could see my end. You said 'Stardust'. You told me that I'd know the man who was going to kill me when I took his hand. Well. I met him. He was in the wreck of a car on the highway. Some dying hippie. I took his hand and zowie I got an electric shock, and I knew. He had a tatoo that said "Stardust" on his arm.

DAD
And...

RED
I killed him.

DAD
You're quite sure?

RED
Fed him to my boys. Then some time soon after, I met another man, who gave me that same shock when I took his hand. So I'm supposed to believe I'm going to be killed by an old man sheriff, and a dead hippie?

(MORE)

RED (CONT'D)
I think your God doesn't exist.

Dad laughs.

DAD
Oh, he's not MY God. And I assure
you he exists.

RED
Did your Father see your end?

DAD
He told me I would starve to death
because there would be no one left
alive to eat.

RED
When is that going to be?

DAD
Tomorrow? In a hundred thousand
years? I don't know. I don't care.
I'm easy.

Dad bends low by him and kisses him on the head.

He comes away with blood on his lips.

DAD (CONT'D)
You were my favorite.

RED
I bet you say that to all your
children.

DAD
I wouldn't be a good father if I
didn't. But I'm not a good father.
I'm just..

TOGETHER (RED AND DAD)
An asshole with too much time on
his hands.

DAD
Exactly. What did I tell you about
love?

RED
I know.

Dad turns to leave.

DAD
Keep the woman. She's not my type.

RED
Blond?

DAD
Breathing. Ta ta.

He gets in his car and guns it, disappearing down the highway. Red concentrates and the wound on his head heals up quickly.

MARY
Thanks. No one's ever fought for me before.

RED
I find that hard to believe.

MARY
I've had men fight over me. To decide who I was going to go home with, like cavemen. But never on my behalf. To defend my honor, or to save me or anything like that. You kicked his ass.

RED
Doesn't feel like it.

She helps him up.

INT. STUMPY'S CABIN - NIGHT

Stars shine through the roof. Down below in the darkness, Jewel and the Sheriff and Hopalong sleep. Suddenly there is a big commotion. Dog barking, people shouting, figures wrestling.

INT. STUMPY'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

A lantern is lit and the Sheriff and Jewel stand with black bags over their heads, their arms tied behind their backs. There are five seedy looking backwoods guys standing around. One holds a squirming, barking burlap bag.

BJ
Wow, the place looks great! I don't think Stumpy cleaned it for 20 years.

JEWEL
Stumpy! You asshole!

JARED
He's not here maam.

JEWEL
That you Jared? I recognize your
voice.

JARED
No maam.

MIKE
Shut up you old bag! Get it?

He laughs. Jewel follows the sound of his voice and kicks him in the nuts. He doubles over, everyone else laughs.

B.J.
Watch her legs, get em to the car.

EXT. LEMON TREE FIELD- DAY

Rows and rows of lemon trees stretch out in all directions.

The car comes bumping along a dirt road. It stops and everyone piles out.

BJ
Tie him to that tree.

Several men drag the Sheriff to a tree and tie his hands behind his back.

BJ pulls a chainsaw out of the trunk and revs it up. He crosses towards the Sheriff.

Inside the car Jewel is screaming and yelling but she can't be heard over the noise of the chainsaw. Jared laughs at her and mocks her from the front seat. He rocks back and forth in excitement, clapping his hands.

Two men hold the Sheriff's head up exposing his neck.

BJ brings the chainsaw closer, closer.

Suddenly he spasms. A strange look comes across his face. He drops the chainsaw and falls forward. His back is a bloody mess. The men holding the Sheriff look confused. Mike grabs at his leg and screams.

We can't hear the scream over the roar of the chainsaw. He lifts his hand and finds it covered with blood.

The three men take cover behind trees. They get their guns out, and peek around their cover. BOOM. Another shotgun blast and the bullets hit the tree one of the men is hiding behind. He jumps back. One of the men signals to the other. "go around"

BJ lifts his face from the dirt and REVS UP the chain saw. He starts crawling toward the sheriff.

Hopalong barks and jumps out the window of the car he's been sitting in. He runs into the middle of the gunfight.

JEWEL

Hopalong! Come back here!

Mike lays against a tree, in a pool of his own blood. He takes off his coat and pushes it onto the wound on his leg. Looking up, he sees Clay run from one tree to another.

He points and yells but no one can hear him over the chainsaw.

MIKE

There he is!

Clay sees BJ heading toward the sheriff. He posts up against a tree and takes aim. BANG BANG, shots hit the tree he's leaning on. He twirls and runs another direction.

The Sheriff is still tied to the tree with a bag over his face. He tries to stay low and his head turns in the direction of every shot.

BJ stands and revs the chainsaw.

Hopalong barks up at him. BJ swings the chainsaw at him, but he jumps back and gets away.

Clay sees one of the guys hiding behind a tree. He runs down the row of trees straight for him. The guy doesn't hear him coming and when he turns and looks, Clay is almost on top of him. Clay stops and shoots. The guy twitches and dies.

Clay walks by Mike, the guy who was shot in the leg. He's unconscious or dead. Hopalong sniffs the man, and then pees on him. Clay takes his gun. He sees movement behind him. One of the remaining guys is sprinting away through the trees. Clay lets him go.

BJ brings the chainsaw towards the Sheriff's neck.

Clay steps out from behind the tree and hits BJ in the face with the butt of his shotgun. BJ drops the chainsaw and it sputters off.

Jared opens the back door of the car and throws Jewel out on the ground. He gets behind the wheel and peels out spraying dirt. The car careens through the field of trees.

Clay takes the bag off of the Sheriff's head.

CLAY

Are you the sheriff named John?

SHERIFF

Oh, Lord, give me a break.

CLAY

We got a common enemy. I'm looking for a piece of shit named Red. You know where he is?

SHERIFF

I believe I do.

They pile into his car. He hits the stereo and "Anyway you Want It" wails out of the radio. He peels out and drives madly down a dirt road.

The Sheriff and Jewel roll all over the place in the back seat. They yell out protests which can't be heard over the music. Hopalong barks, and skitters across the linoleum seats.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Red drives down the highway. A road sign reads " Weaverville" one mile. The cowboy smiles.

RED

Home sweet home.

The CB pipes up.

MIKE

Uh this here is SurfNinja, with a message for Red. Uh, due to unforeseen circumstances, that package we was gonna deliver to you got lost in the mail. That little punk Clay butted in and stole the package. Sorry. Over.

The cowboy growls like an animal.

He sees a campfire in the distance and drives down a side road towards it. He hits his horn and it echoes over the lonely prairie, calling the vampires to him. They turn and fly in the direction of the sound.

A group of boy scouts sit around a campfire singing songs. The cowboy parks just down the road from them.

RED (CONT'D)
Stay Here.

He kisses her on the cheek.

She sits and watches him enter the woods, looking very uncomfortable " what's he doing?"

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

An older scout master takes a leak in the woods. He is a geek in shorts and has the typical red bandana around his neck.

RED
I like your necktie.

The scoutmaster looks around in the darkness to see who spoke. The Cowboy appears. One of the giant vampire buzzards descends gracefully from the trees above and stands next to Red.

RED (CONT'D)
Ugly son of a bitch ain't he? A
face only a mother could love. Or a
Father.

He pets the thing on its head.

The scoutmaster tries to run. Everywhere he turns there are more vampires. Closing him in a circle.

RED (CONT'D)
Looks like a bald eagle gone bad.
Corrupted by greed and pride. Ugly
and evil as they are I love them. I
lost one last night. Very painful.
He was stolen from me by parties
who will pay with pain and blood.
But they ain't here right now. Now
there's just you and me. And my
boys and your boys.

The Scoutmaster begins to weep.

RED (CONT'D)

Cheer up. This is your chance to be a hero. I've got to even the score, but I'll let you choose. I'll take you or your boys.

The Scoutmaster falls to his knees.

SCOUTMASTER

Please, I don't want to die.

RED

You don't have to die. You can become one of these majestic fellas here. A creature of instinct. When something moves, you chase it. Eating shitting and fucking, the immediate satisfaction of your most basic desires forever. Freedom. And your little ones get to live. What do you say?

The scout master takes off running. The buzzard starts after him. Cowboy chastises him.

RED (CONT'D)

Leave it! He made his choice. Like you made yours, long ago.

The buzzard squawks.

RED (CONT'D)

What's that? Don't take that tone with me child. You're spoiled rotten.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Cowboy comes out of the woods and saunters towards the Boy Scouts sitting around the fire.

RED (CONT'D)

Gentleman, My name is Red. I'm a friend of your scoutmasters. He had to... well he had to run. But he asked me to watch over you guys for a spell. Want to hear a story? A scary story?

They respond excitedly.

RED (CONT'D)

Once upon a time there was a cowboy who came to this very area looking to find his fortune during the gold rush. He happened upon a rich vein of gold near the rustic town of Weaverville. God bless her, and all her righteous inhabitants. The people of Weaverville. They all got together and stole the mine from him, framing him for a murder he didn't commit. A group from the town took him out to the hanging tree. They left him hanging there slowly strangling. They put a piece of firewood under his feet so it would take longer.

FLASHBACK

We see the hanging tree, the cowboy dangling, struggling. The sun setting and something moving in the shadow of night as it creeps across the mountain. The vampire's form crouches on the branch of the hanging tree next to the noose. A yellow, savage looking face peers out from under a black hood. The figure leans in and whispers in the cowboy's ear.

RED (CONT'D)

The cowboy was Looking up toward God in the failing light of that beautiful sunset, when a shadow came. There was the cowboy hanging by his neck and this big ole vampire landed on the branch he was hanging from. It was watching his hopeless soul, like as close as all them buzzards were waiting for his skin. It offered him life and revenge. The cowboy might have gone to his just reward but there weren't no love left in him. Only hate and burning desire for vengeance. Well, his prayers were answered.

FLASHBACK

The vampire decimating the town. Dragging a judge with a noose around his neck down the center of a dusty street.

The vampire is huge and blue and vicious, and his boots ching as he marches down the street with his gold spurs.

A shadow killing everyone. Men, women and children, screaming and running for their lives. Houses burning.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Far up the mountain, we see the entrance to a cave. The darkness is deep and impenetrable

RED

I lived up in that mine for many a year. Those who stole from me lost of themselves in equal measure to their greed. My wisdom and power grew. Pilgrims traveled from far and wide to find me there on the mountain. Souls seeking dark enlightenment, which is only to say, a place to hide, found me, and chose to become of me. The last thing I saw in my life, hanging on that tree, was them deadly cold eyed buzzards waiting, waiting. And that is why, relishing the irony, I chose that my children should appear like so. Behold!"

One of the giant birdlike vampires descends and alights on the wood in the fire. The tongues of flame don't hurt it at all. All the boys scream, at the horrific creature in their midst.

RED (CONT'D)

I guess you boys weren't prepared for that!

Blood spurts on cowboys face. He laughs and licks it off with a long snake tongue.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Mary hears screams from the woods. She hugs herself and shrinks down in her seat. The screams are high pitched and terrible.

She turns on the radio. ANGEL, a syrupy loveline voice come through the air to her.

ANGEL

This request is going out to Mary,
from Clay.

(MORE)

ANGEL (CONT'D)

He hasn't given up on you and he hopes you haven't given up on him. He's searching for you and he's going to find you no matter what. He's sorry for the things he's said and done to hurt you. He's been a fool, and he knows it. If you can get away he's waiting for you at the bluff where you used to park in High School. He'll be there all night waiting for you, with "Open Arms"

"Open Arms" by Journey plays on the radio.

Mary opens the truck door and climbs down out of the cab. She runs down the road out of the trucks headlights and into the darkness.

EXT. BLUFF - NIGHT

Clay is sitting in his car listening to the same song. He opens his car door, and steps out. He stands on the top of the cliff, looking out across the valley.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT -SAME TIME

Mary runs as fast as she can down the middle of the road.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

POV

From the point of view of an animal? Something running fast and low through the trees and bushes, leaping over rocks and logs.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Mary sees car lights coming around a bend in the road. The lights fall on her and she stands in the middle of the road and waves. The car stops.

GLEN, a forty something nice guy rolls down his window.

GLEN

What's the problem honey?

MARY

You have to give me a ride.

GLEN

Ok.

Suddenly, something leaps out of the bushes into the road. The shadow rises from all fours and we can see the bright blue of Red's vampire face. He rushes at the car, grips it on its underside and flips it over and down the mountain.

It CRASHES several times, the sound growing fainter.

RED

Where you headed Sunshine? I thought we had a good thing going on.

He slashes across her face with one long sharp nail. The flesh opens up and starts to bleed.

RED (CONT'D)

Maybe that will help you remember who you are. You're a scarred person, Mary, a broken person. Damaged goods that no man wants, except the worst kind of man. And that's why you're with me. The way I look outside is the way you are inside. You're horrible. You knew what I was what I had done. What I do. And you stayed with me. You're free to go to him now. But I'll follow you. And I won't kill him. Oh no. I'll just tell him everything. What would he think? How long before his love would turn to revulsion at your sickness? Your ugliness? Could you bear to see it in his eyes, where love once shined? Could you bear it?

Mary cries.

EXT. BLUFF- NIGHT

Clay looks out over the valley. Waiting.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Back in the truck. Red drives silently .

As they pass along the highway, he looks out at the forest flashing by.

Mary is shaking uncontrollably next to him.

RED

No need to fret yourself.
This is all a dream you know.
There's signs everywhere. The
longer you live the more you
experience, the easier it is to see
through the veil. That's the real
curse of living long. I see him
everywhere, laughing at me.
Watching and waiting.

Just then, along the road in the moonlight, they see a dead
wolf, sprawled in the dust, it's tongue hanging out.

Behind them along the road, one of the buzzards sweeps down
and takes the dead wolf.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Jewel, the Sheriff and Hopalong sit by a campfire under a big
oak tree in a field. Jewel's truck is parked nearby. The
cooler sits next to them, and they are drinking beer.

JEWEL

Did you sleep?

SHERIFF

Little bit.

JEWEL

Did you dream?

SHERIFF

A lot. Always do. My dreams feel
more real than my life, especially
these last few days. I see them at
the beach, singing at the piano.
Just now, we were all at Woodstock
together. Which never happened. My
wife and I both missed it by a
heartbeat, and Savannah, by a
lifetime.

JEWEL

You know what? I was there. And I
am there. The tragedy is not that
Woodstock is over and in the past.
It's ironic you think that because
the point of Woodstock is that
there's no such thing as time.

(MORE)

JEWEL (CONT'D)

It is now. There's no tomorrow, no yesterday either. You can't grieve for something that isn't dead. We are in the Garden. So... Let's dance. No, I mean let's dance!

She pops the Hippie's tape into the truck's tape player. "Woodstock" starts to play.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

I got a message from Jasper Willow, and your wife and your daughter, and all the dead. You're not.

VOICE

We are stardust. We are billion year old carbon. We are golden.. Caught in the devil's bargain And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden.

Clay drives up.

SHERIFF

Did she show?

Clay shakes his head.

CLAY

Any beers left in there?

SHERIFF

Couple. Help yourself.

Clay opens the cooler.

CLAY

Holy shit! What's that doing in there?

SHERIFF

Long story.

EXT. STUMPY'S HOUSE - DAY

The Sheriff and Jewel and Clay and Hopalong stand on Stumpy's porch. The Sheriff knocks on the door. Stumpy opens it and finds a gun under his chin.

STUMPY

Now hold on John, don't..

SHERIFF

Don't lose my head?

STUMPY

At least you got a sense of humor about it all. It's a dog eat dog world, John.

SHERIFF

Dogs don't eat dogs. You ever see a dog eating another dog?

STUMPY

No.

SHERIFF

All right then. I got another funny joke for you. You're gonna take us to the Vampire's gold mine.

STUMPY

Whatcha gonna do there?

SHERIFF

We're gonna kill him.

STUMPY

You and what army?

SHERIFF

This army. Me and her and him and him and you Stumpy, you as the Drum major leading the parade right down into Hell.

Stumpy looks scared.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The Preacher presides over Choir practice. An angelic choir boy sings a solo.

BOY

Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin, And be washed in the blood of the Lamb;
There's a fountain flowing for the soul unclean,
O be washed in the blood of the Lamb!

There is clapping from the back of the church. The Sheriff, and his gang stand in the doorway. Stumpy wears handcuffs.

PREACHER

Well, hey John. Always good to see ya. In the daytime. You bring me some converts?

SHERIFF

Christian soldiers. We could use your help.

PREACHER

Great.

INT. PASTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The Sheriff finishes packing a big duffel bag. The Preacher pours them glasses of whiskey.

PREACHER

Well, you're all set. Crosses, holy water, bibles. Don't worry about all this stuff. I don't expect to get it back. I mean, I don't need it back.

SHERIFF

Do you think we have a shot?

PREACHER

You got a shot right here.

They drink their whiskey. The Preacher goes behind his desk.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Actually John. I been holding out on you. I got something you can use.

He rummages around in his desk, and pulls something out. He sets it in front of John. It's a bullet.

MANNY

That'll fit your gun right?

SHERIFF

I got enough bullets.

MANNY

This is a holy bullet. It was made from the nail driven into Christ's right hand, forged in the depths of the Vatican and blessed by the Pope. It has been handed down through my family for generations.

SHERIFF

Thanks.

He takes the bullet with a poker face. He heads for the door.

MANNY

John. You're standing on the edge of a cliff now. If you step out, I believe God will catch you.

SHERIFF

Did he catch you?

MANNY

I never stepped.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

In the church the sheriff humbles himself on bended knee. Many candles flicker around him.

SHERIFF

God. I'm afraid.

He tries to load his gun with the holy bullet Manny gave him but his hand is shaking too much.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Give me strength Lord.

In a moment he looks at his hand and sees that the gun is steady. He puts the bullet in.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Jewel and the Sheriff ride in her truck. Clay and Stumpy are in Clay's hotrod.

The Preacher blesses their cars.

SHERIFF

Sure you don't want to join us?

PREACHER

I'll be with you in spirit. And
I'll keep pestering the almighty to
watch out for you. I get the best
broadcast range on my prayers when
I'm in my church. Good luck.

The cars pull away.

INT. CLAY'S CAR - DAY

Clay gets on the CB.

CLAY

I got a message for a chickenshit
cowboy name of 'Red". I'll meet you
tomorrow, on the main street of
Weaverville. Midnight.

INT. JEWEL'S TRUCK- DAY

Hearing Clay's announcement, the Sheriff gets on the CB

SHERIFF

Clay, what are you doing?

CLAY

I wanna meet him face to face, but
I don't know, do vampires have
balls?

RED

Tomorrow night it is. There's a
full moon. You'll look extra pretty
when I kill you. You gonna be there
too Sheriff? Bring your dog. My
boys got a bite of him a few years
ago and they tell me he was tasty!

Hopalong growls.

SHERIFF

Damn right I'll be there. I'm gonna
shut your mouth forever. Nobody
fucks with my dog.

RED

That's the spirit.

Stumpy stares at Clay.

Clay turns off the CB.

CLAY

If we're coming by day, all the better that he thinks we're coming by night.

Bunkie laughs.

STUMPY

You don't outsmart the devil boy.

CLAY

He's not the devil. He's just some asshole.

EXT. HOTEL - DUSK

The group arrives at a small hotel and files into two separate rooms. Bunkie and Clay are in one room, John and Jewel are in the other room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The sheriff looks down at the one bed.

SHERIFF

I'll sleep on the floor.

JEWEL

Don't be ridiculous. You're all beat to Hell. I won't jump your broken old bones.

Clay appears in the doorway.

CLAY

Bunkie and I will trade keeping watch tonight. Sleep in tomorrow. Get your strength up. We'll leave about one o'clock.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Stumpy is looking out the window at the night, smoking his pipe.

CLAY

You take the first watch. Wake me up in three hours.

STUMPY

He won't come here. He wants you to come to him in his hole, in the dark. to move deliberate toward your terrible demise. He can feel your fear from here.

CLAY

How do you know that?

STUMPY

We're connected.

He holds up his stumpy hand.

CLAY

Be ready to go at first light.

STUMPY

But you told them...

CLAY

This ain't no job for seniors. I only need you to show me where the mine is. Get some sleep.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jewel wakes up to see the Sheriff watching her sleep.

SHERIFF

Clay and Stumpy took off without us.

JEWEL

Should we go after them?

SHERIFF

We don't know where the mine is.

JEWEL

What do we do?

SHERIFF

Well I got an appointment with a vampire tonight. I say we go. Hope he doesn't show up. Hope he's dead. More dead.

JEWEL

You think those two have a chance?

SHERIFF

Young and foolish, old and greedy.
I don't know. We'll have to wait
and see. I'm sure they both got a
plan. I know I got one. Wanna hear
it?

JEWEL

Sure.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY - EARLY MORNING

Stumpy and Clay hike up a rocky mountain. A mule follows with
a pack on its back.

They arrive at a cave on the mountainside.

STUMPY

This is it. My ass is not going
down in that mine. Mr. Boswell is
claustrophobic.

He pets his mule on the head.

Clay removes several stakes from the pouch on the mule's
back, a big flashlight, and a shotgun.

He turns on the flashlight and starts down the mine shaft.

INT. MINE -DAY

Deep in the mine, Clay finds two female vampires lying naked
on a big animal skin. They look like normal, albeit beautiful
women.

Clay steps forward and stabs one of them through the heart.
She screams and laments, turning briefly into the horrendous
blue vampire she really is, and then into a normal woman,
dying in agony.

CLAY

That was too easy.

Clay approaches the second woman. He stabs her through the
heart, she contorts, screams and reaches out to her side.
Something is buried in the dirt. It's the top of a detonator.
She smiles and pushes it down.

BOOM! A huge explosion. The mine collapses.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Dust and debris WHOOSHES out the front of the cave enveloping Stumpy.

STUMPY
Nooooooo! My gold!

INT. GOLD MINE - NIGHT

Clay wakes up. He is injured and trapped under rubble. The first thing he sees is Mary looking down at him.

MARY
Hey baby.

CLAY
I messed up. I'm so sorry Mary. I love you, I always loved you.

The cowboy emerges from darkness.

RED
Too late.

He turns Mary's arm and shows that she bears his mark.

She weeps, slowly changing into a terrible vampire. She fights the hunger and animalness of the evil inside her.

MARY
I'm sorry Clay, I can't stop myself, I'm so hungry.

CLAY
Babe. I just want you to know, I would give anything I own, give up my life my heart, my home. I would give everything I own, just to have you back again.

She sinks her teeth into him, feeding.

Clay fights for his life. Mary's eyes shine with light.

The music continues

"Is there someone you know, you're loving them so, but taking them all for granted. You may lose them one day, someone takes them away, and they don't hear the words you long to say."

Clay slowly and painfully turns into a vampire. His face is Purple and hideous.

Red takes the stake Clay was carrying and drives it through Clay's heart. He screams in agony. Mary screams, clutching her own heart. Clay dies.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Sheriff and Jewel ride into a ghost town.

The road sign says "Weaverville".

It's a small town on the prairie underneath the shadow of a mountain. As they drive toward the outskirts of town, they see a bunch of cars. A large group of men with guns stands waiting, blocking the road.

The Sheriff steps out of his car. A FARMER points his shotgun.

FARMER

We can't let you past Sheriff. You got to understand. There's a system here and it's way bigger than you, and me and all of us put together. You can't fight it.

The Sheriff walks forward. He looks up at the big wide sea of stars that stretches above them all.

(CONT'D)

SHERIFF

Now you all listen here. I'm just a man. And sometimes not even that. I know what it's like, looking up at that big sky of stars that makes you feel so small. Fear takes your heart and it feels like the weight of all that bigness is pressing down on it, and there ain't nowhere to hide, nowhere safe. It gets so bad sometimes, a man will do anything just to not feel alone, and afraid. And the more folks he's got by his side, the bigger he feels, whether they're doing wrong or right. But I say that just makes us all alone together. Cause next time it could be you. But what if all them stars is on our side, every one of them watching and waiting to see what we're gonna do, right now.

(MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

All that bigness up there isn't meant to crush us, but to give us something to aspire to be. What if that there big sky is hoping we can be just a little bit bigger then we thought we could be. I don't know much, but if the stars ain't a cowboys friend, I don't know nothing.

Silence.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

That's all I got. Are you guys gonna shoot me or what?

There's a chorus of "No's" and "Hell no's" "We're with you". Their heads come up, their guns are ready. TOM a middle aged man with a gun smiles at the sheriff.

TOM

Nice speech John.

The sheriff notices the man has a burlap bag in his hand. Tom notices the sheriff noticing and hides the bag behind his back.

He lifts his gun in the air.

TOM (CONT'D)

Let's get these sons of bitches!

Everyone cheers.

INT. GOLD MINE - NIGHT

Cowboys eyes open in the dark of the mine. They are bright Red. He howls with rage.

EXT. GOLD MINE - NIGHT

Outside the mine, Stumpy digs with a shovel. With only one workable hand, he's having a hard time.

The Cowboy marches up out of the darkness of the cave. He lays his hands upon the wall of stone blocking the passageway. He uses his power to blast it out and away. A giant boulder flies through the air like an asteroid.

The Sheriff stands in the center of town and watches it fly. It lands next to him with a tremendous "whump" he doesn't move a muscle.

High on the mountain, the Cowboy stands in front of the mine. Wind whips through his hair. He looks down into the town and sees the Sheriff standing next to the rock.

The wind rises.

RED

Fly! Kill them all.

The vampires rise into the air and fly toward town. A great whirling tornado of destruction coming down.

The Cowboy marches through the dust past the 'hanging tree' on the way to his destiny.

Stumpy hides behind a tree and looks at the now open mine.

STUMPY

Thank you lord.

Vampire silhouettes move across the moon. The Cowboy gets on a vampire and uses his spurs on it, flying off toward town.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT- SAME TIME

The Preachers congregation praying into frenzy, stamping feet. Clapping hands and singing.

EXT. WEAVERVILLE - NIGHT

A firetruck pulls up with the Preacher riding in the cab.

SHERIFF

Where's the fire?

PREACHER

Down below. And we got a truck full of holy water to cool that Brimstone! Blest by yours truly.

SHERIFF

Thanks for showing up.

PREACHER

Thank you. You revitalized my faith. You brought the Devil to my door. So I know that angels must be around too! Circle up the wagons boys! Here they come.

He points to a cloud of giant birds approaching.

A parade of ragged country trucks and rusty vehicles rolls out across the dusty field under moonlight, to form a large circle facing out.

The Preacher and the firetruck park in the middle of the circle of cars. The Firemen roll out their firehose. Fast and resolved.

Unholy screeches and screams from the air.

The army of men is ready. They crouch behind car doors, lay down in the back of pickup trucks with their rifles sighted.

FARMER

Don't shoot until you see the red
of their eyes!

The vampires descend. A hundred men fire up at them. Smoke billows above the plain.

It's a chaos of bullets and screeching, attacking vampires.

The men stick together defending each other, blasting vampires. The vampires don't die of course, but all this fierce resistance puts them off.

The Cowboy flies over on a vampire buzzard. He settles down in the middle of the street. Dismounts. He slaps the vampire buzzard on the butt and it flies away.

The Sheriff walks out into the street, with a stake in his hand.

Red walks toward him, the bright moon shines overhead. It's high noon at midnight.

RED

You got a lot of friends John.
They're all gonna die tonight.

Suddenly Red's Mack truck comes barreling through a building and crashes down the street.

The rig is driven by Mary, now a horrible snarling vampire. She glares with hatred at John. The truck barrels toward him.

At the last second, another Mack truck comes flying out of a side street and slams into Red's truck from the side. The rig smokes and ignites into fire. Mary screams and writhes. Jewel hops down from the cab of the other Mack truck.

GRANDMA

Don't mess with my man, bitch.

The Sheriff turns back to face Red. Their eyes meet sizing each other up.

INT. MINE SHAFT - NIGHT -SAME TIME

Stumpy stands in an underground cave, holding a lantern.

His smile is ecstatic. He is looking up at golden walls, a golden ceiling. Chunks of gold lie on the floor at his feet. He uses a piece of cloth to pick up a big chunk of gold. He shows it to Mr. Boswell, his mule.

STUMPY

Just look at it Mr. Boswell. Ain't that the prettiest thing you've ever seen? I got it all figured out. If they kill the vampire tonight, then I get all this gold free and clear. If they don't kill him we'll still get as much gold as me and you can carry out of here tonight. But we won't touch it, see we'll just pass it along to other poor suckers who don't know about the curse and they'll get the cancer. There's always a way around the problem, if you use your noodle Mr. Boswell.

He taps himself on the head. Mr. Boswell suddenly turns and runs away. He's gone before Stumpy can grab him.

STUMPY(CONT'D)

Mr. Boswell, you lazy SOB. You don't carry gold you don't get your cut. No fucking carrots for you. That's it, you're out!

We hear voices singing in the darkness not far away.

BOY SCOUTS

Someone's laughing lord kumbaya,
someone's laughing lord kumbaya.
Someone's laughing lord kumbaya. Oh
lord, kumbaya.

A troop of boy scouts march down the mineshaft.

STUMPY

What the Sam Hill are you boys doing here? This is no place for kids. It's dangerous.

(MORE)

STUMPY (CONT'D)

In the middle of the night, no
less. Where is your scoutmaster?

BOY SCOUTS

Someone's dying lord, kumbaya,

They begin to morph into vampires. They're faces turn green,
their teeth grow.

BOY SCOUTS (CONT'D)

someone's dying lord, kumbaya,
someone's dying lord, kumbaya, Oh
Lord, Kumbaya.

STUMPY

I always did hate that song.

They descend on him, all teeth and nails.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The sheriff pulls his gun to shoot. Red runs at him with
impossible speed. As soon as John pulls the trigger the
vampire is upon him, pushing his arm straight up in the air.

BANG!

The bullet flies up into the sky. Red rips off the Sherriff's
arm, which was holding the gun, and throws it away from him
in contempt. It lands in the dust.

Red crouches over the Sheriff, savoring his victory.

RED

I had a dream you killed me. It
kept me up all day. Imagine that,
you killing me. Why are you smiling
old man?

Red is truly puzzled. He's missed something. He looks over at
the Sheriff's arm in the dust and notices a string tied to
the trigger of the gun, and that the gun is taped onto the
hand. His eyes go wide. It's the dead man's arm. He reads
the tattoo on it "STARDUST"

John stabs Red with a stake, held in his hidden hand.

Red staggers back and falls.

The sheriff pulls a ticket out of his pocket and impales it
on the stake sticking out of Red's chest.

SHERIFF

You owe the county of Tulare one
hundred and thirty five dollars and
twenty cents. For illegal parking!

Red dies slowly, his body turning into dust bit by bit.

He suddenly grabs hold of the sheriff and pulls him close.

He morphs into an ugly blue faced vampire, big fangs and
hatred. We see him from a point of view high above--- Gods
point of view it seems. The camera rushes down through the
clouds faster and faster.

The bullet which had been shot straight up in the air comes
back down and hits Red right in the forehead. He's dead. The
sheriff looks up at the stars and moon, real slow.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Thanks.

The vampire's dust swirls around the sheriff's legs and
boots. The Sheriff bends down and picks up his 'lucky bullet'
and puts it in his pocket.

The vampire buzzards screech and writhe. They fall to the
ground and shrink. They become human again.

A naked man stands there shivering in the street.

NAKED MAN

Oh God, I've done so many terrible
things. What do I do now?

SHERIFF

Finding yourself some pants might
be a good start.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY

The sun is coming up.

Jewel, the Sheriff and Hopalong get into Jewel's truck.

SHERIFF

Time to ride off into the sunrise.

JEWEL

Let's go to the ocean.

SHERIFF

Now?

JEWEL

If not now, when?

SHERIFF

You gonna jump in? It's gonna be cold.

JEWEL

Doesn't matter. You got to jump in.

SHERIFF

Go.

They drive up to an entrance for the highway. Trucks and cars pass by. John notices a fellah looking at him.

The man tips his hat and smiles. John doesn't know him. But he does notice a symbol on the side of his rig. It's a totally different symbol than Red's, but it's very similar in appearance.

John gets a strange look on his face. We notice several other Mack trucks. All have symbols, all different. We pan back and up and the glowing symbols appear up and down the highway, hundreds of them, perhaps thousands, moving, moving in the night.